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State to make drip irrigation mandatory through MIS

System To Be Promoted In Narmada Canal Command Area

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TO GIVE a further boost to the booming agriculture sector in Gujarat, efforts are on to promote Micro Irrigation Systems (MIS) by the state government. Steps are being taken to promote drip irrigation in the command area of the Narmada canal and making it compulsory for farmers drawing water from wells of Gujarat Water Resources Development Corporation (GWRDC).

Traditionally, Gujarat has been a drought-prone state, with seven out of ten years being severe or normal drought years (although past few years have been exceptionally better). With a long-term perspective, the state government plans to encourage farmers to utilise water efficiently.

The drip irrigation scheme will be promoted under the aegis of Pressurised Irrigation Network System (PINS), a project undertaken by Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Limited



ed (SSNNL) in the command area of Narmada Canal. "Normally water is diverted from main canal to its sub-canal and finally to the fields. However, MIS requires water with pressure and the interface of PINS is utilised for this purpose. It can save water up to 35-40%," said

an official of SSNNL. 24 pilot projects have been undertaken in various agro-climatic regions of the state. On the basis of reports of these projects, steps will be taken to implement PINS in the entire command area of the Narmada Canal. The total command area of the canal is 18

lakh hectare, out of which about 5 lakh hectare is already utilised. In the remaining area, steps will be taken to implement PINS, wherever conducive, added the official.

The state government is also considering drip irrigation to be made mandatory for the farmers drawing water from the wells of GWRDC. "The matter is under consideration. Soon a decision will be taken," said an official of GWRDC.

Due to efforts of Gujarat Green Revolution Company (GGRC), the agency that promotes MIS in Gujarat, the area under MIS has crossed 1.5 lakh hectare mark. "95,387 hectare is covered under drip irrigation, while 55,732 hectare is covered under sprinkler irrigation. More than 38,000 small and marginal farmers have also benefited from it. 1,08,856 hectare is utilised for agricultural crops, while 42,254 hectare is utilised for horticultural crops," said Shyamal Tekedar, MD of GGRC.