

## **Pesticide Poisoning in Maharashtra**

### **Why in news?**

\n\n

\n

- Recently, around 20 people have died due to pesticide related infections in Vidarba.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the crux?**

\n\n

\n

- Those spraying pesticides in cotton fields started taking ill recently.
- 20 died and over 800 people are now in hospital - with symptoms of diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea, stomach ache, and vision loss.
- The Maharashtra government has ordered a probe & announced compensation for the families of the diseased.
- The damage seems to have been caused by excessive inhalation of organo-phosphate and organo-chloride groups of insecticides.
- It first enters the fat below the skin, and then the blood.
- Bombay High Court issued notices on a PIL seeking criminal action against the officials concerned and pesticide firms.
- Agriculture Department has meanwhile initiated a 'Quality Control' probe to check the pesticides.

\n

\n\n

### **What aggravated the current crisis?**

\n\n

- \n
- As height of the crop this year was around 5 feet or more, it necessitated spraying at head level.
- \n
- The winds & high temperatures that made pesticides stick on the skin of sprayers were also critical factors for the episode.
- \n
- Also, the spacing reduction between rows & increased mono-cropping of cotton aggravated the situation.
- \n
- The agri-department also admits the rampant use of pesticides with little information.
- \n
- The grade of the pesticide used and its potency needs closer scrutiny.
- \n

\n\n

### **What can be done?**

\n\n

- \n
- Pesticide spraying is more remunerative than other farm options due to the risks involved.
- \n
- While the labourers were aware of the hazards, they didn't seem to have received any advice on precautions to be taken.
- \n
- Stricter adherence to the Insecticides Act, 1968, that requires the agricultural department to train farmers in pesticide use is needed.
- \n
- Also, the government is planning to make it compulsory for Krushi Seva Kendras that sell fertilizers to provide proper advisories.
- \n
- There is also a need to enhance the reach of protection kits.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Indian Express**

\n



**SHANKAR**  
**IAS PARLIAMENT**  
*Information is Empowering*