West Asia War & Its Impact on Kharif Yields

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The ongoing conflict in West Asia has raised concerns about its potential impact on India's Kharif agriculture. While there is no immediate direct effect on crop yields, the conflict can indirectly influence agricultural output through disruptions in fertiliser supply, rising energy prices, and global trade uncertainties.

Importance of Kharif Season:

The Kharif season, sown during the southwest monsoon (June–September), contributes nearly 60% of India's total agricultural output. Major crops such as rice, cotton, and maize are cultivated during this period, making it critical for food security, rural livelihoods, and overall economic stability.

Fertiliser Supply & Import Dependence:

India is heavily dependent on imports for fertilisers and their raw materials, especially phosphatic and potassic fertilisers. A significant portion of these imports comes from regions affected by the conflict. Disruptions in supply chains, particularly through key routes like the Strait of Hormuz, can lead to shortages and price volatility, affecting timely availability for farmers.

Energy Linkages (LNG Dependency):

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is a crucial input for urea production, and India imports a large share of its LNG from West Asia. Any disruption or price rise in LNG can increase fertiliser production costs, thereby raising the overall cost of cultivation and affecting farmers' profitability.

Impact on Farmers & Agricultural Output:

Rising fertiliser prices and supply uncertainties may compel farmers to reduce fertiliser usage or alter cropping patterns. This can potentially lower productivity and impact overall agricultural output. If such disruptions coincide with adverse monsoon conditions, the effects on Kharif yields could become more pronounced.

Government Preparedness & Mitigation Measures:

The government has taken several steps to mitigate risks, including maintaining adequate fertiliser stocks, increasing subsidies under the Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme, and promoting domestic production through initiatives like the New Urea Policy (2015). Additionally, efforts are being made to promote nano fertilisers and diversify import sources to reduce dependency.

Overall Assessment:

In the short term, India appears relatively well-prepared, and Kharif yields are unlikely to be significantly affected. However, prolonged geopolitical instability in West Asia exposes structural vulnerabilities in India’s fertiliser and energy dependence. Addressing these through self-reliance, diversification, and sustainable agricultural practices will be crucial for long-term resilience.