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## Soil survey bureau launches survey to help Ytl farmers

### Crop, Land, Irri Plans To Increase Yield, Income

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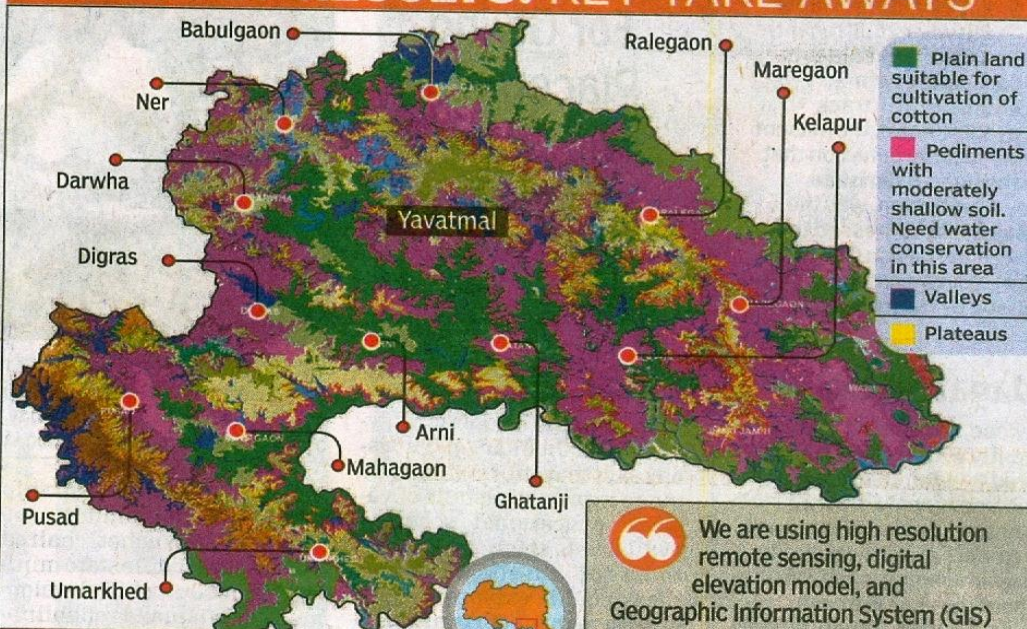
**Nagpur:** In an attempt to find a solution to farmers' woes, Nagpur-based ICAR-National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP) is carrying out an extensive land resource survey in Yavatmal—the state's epicentre of farmers' suicide for over a decade.

Covering an area of 1.3 million hectare, the first-of-its-kind survey is being conducted khasra-wise for individual land holding in the district. "We are using high resolution remote sensing, digital eleva-

tion model, and Geographic Information System (GIS) to prepare specific advisories for farmers, so as to minimize losses and go for sustainable agriculture. This will include the type of crops suitable and profitable for their land, investments and income for specific crops, and land use management," said Surendra Kumar Singh, director of NBSS&LUP.

Four teams of scientists are simultaneously monitoring the areas and compiling all information related to soil and agriculture. Apart from this, the database also aims to provide scientific backup to government schemes like Jal Yukta Shivar. The digital map is expected to be completed within three months and will be available on the bureau's

### SURVEY RESULTS: KEY TAKE AWAYS



### TODAY'S SPECIAL

➤ First-of-its-kind land resource survey in Yavatmal

➤ Being conducted khasra-wise for individual land holding

➤ Covering an area of 1.3 million hectare

➤ Bureau to prepare

digital map using survey results

➤ To issue advisory for farmers on crop plan, land use plan, use of fertilizers, and irrigation plan

➤ Information to be available on bureau's 'Bhoomi' portal



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**SURENDRA KUMAR SINGH**

DIRECTOR OF NBSS&LUP

'Bhoomi portal'. "Every farmer will get access to information pertaining to his land in the portal," said Singh.

Scientist Sudipta Chattaraj said the black cotton soil of Yavatmal has low moisture retaining capacity. "This is a major reason for poor yields," he said.

There are a lot of soil variations in the district, and this will be plotted on a digital map. "We will do an in-depth study to analyse the variations and accordingly suggest crop plan, land use plan, and irrigation plan. Currently, in the absence

of such information, farmers go by a blanket advisory without understanding the intricacies of their soil," said Singh. Also, soil erosion is a major problem in the district, and the bureau will also suggest scientific measures to prevent it.

Based on the survey results, farmers will be given alternate crop options too, along with irrigation schedules, and application of fertilizers. The bureau has already prepared a base map with details of land topography.

Last year, around 30 far-

mers in Yavatmal died due to toxic chemical pesticides. The bureau states the advisories will aim at reducing farmers' dependency on chemicals.

As reported by TOI recently, a special task force of the bureau constituted in Nagpur carried out an extensive study for one-and-a-half-years using remote sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) in Goa, and identified 13,408 hectares of fallow land on which contract farming will be introduced by the state government.