

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to check such total crop failures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, there has been less production of mango crop in parts of Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The low production in Andhra Pradesh is attributed mainly to the adverse weather conditions like extended rainy season, failure in pollination and pollen germination. In the case of Uttar Pradesh low production is attributed mainly to the off year in the alternate year bearing cycle of mango crop aggravated by adverse weather conditions like prolonged cold spell during the flowering season, coupled with rains and occasional hail storms during the post flowering season.

(c) The concerned State Governments have taken a number of steps to avoid crop failure. These steps include organising training programmes to the orchardists in adopting integrated pest management, plant protection measure, ensure optimum supply of inputs like insecticides, pesticides, water for irrigation and power supply.

Committee to Study Poor Financial Condition of Farmers

154. SHRI KULDIP NAYYAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to appoint a Committee to study the bad financial condition of farmers in the country in view of suicides committed by them in certain States during the last two years;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, what measures Government propose to take to provide easy credit to farmers to save them from borrowing from money lenders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Government have, however, constituted a Study Group in the context of the distress caused by indebtedness of farmers in Andhra Pradesh. Briefly, the Group will

(a) examine in depth the nature and extend of indebtedness among the farmers in the State and the magnitude of its incidence particularly in respect of poor farmers,

(b) identify constraints, if any, standing in the way of greater institutionalisation of the flow of rural credit in the State and

(c) suggest measures for increasing the role of public financial institutions in the purvey of credit to the agricultural and allied sectors.

With a view to improving the flow of credit to farmers in the agriculture and allied sectors, following steps have been taken:—

(i) A proposal has been initiated for revamping of Cooperative Credit Structure.

(ii) The State Governments have been advised to constitute Standing Committees to assess the requirements of agricultural Credit for the Rabi and Kharif seasons and to review the performance thereof.

(iii) Steps have been initiated for reformulation of Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, with a view to restoring the autonomy of the cooperative institutions.

(iv) Action has been initiated to amend the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) Act 1962 to give the NCDC greater operational freedom and access to resources.

(v) For maintaining increased credit flow at the ground level and ensuring adequate coverage of

neglected/backward regions including North-Eastern Regions, NABARD has been requested to relax its norms relating to minimum recovery for sanction of credit limits and norms in the discipline of Minimum Involvement.

- (vi) As a part of comprehensive restructuring package, equity support has been provided to Regional Rural Banks.
- (vii) The share capital of NABARD has been increased by Rs. 1000 crores during the last two years.
- (viii) State Level Agricultural Development Finance Companies have been set up in the States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka with the objective of strengthening the flow of credit for commercial or high technology agriculture, export oriented agriculture and allied activities including infrastructure support systems.
- (ix) The Cooperative Bank of India has been registered for being set up in order to enable the Cooperative Credit Structure to impart greater internal mobility to its resources and access to external sources of assistance.
- (x) Guidelines in regard to requirement of collateral security by way of mortgage of land/charge on land or third party guarantee have been liberalised.
- (xi) State Governments have been requested to introduce Agricultural Credit Cards by the banks for the farmers to enable them to secure production credit instantly.

Committee to Study Indebtedness among Farmers in Punjab and Haryana

155. SHRI KULDIP NAYYAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government had appointed a committee last year to study

the problem of indebtedness among farmers in the States of Punjab and Haryana;

(b) whether the Committee has submitted its report; if so, the details of the findings and recommendations made; and

(c) the action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) With a view to examining the issues relating to indebtedness among farmers in Punjab and Haryana and to suggest necessary remedial measures, a High Level Committee on indebtedness among farmers in the States of Punjab and Haryana was constituted by the Government of India. The recommendations of the Committee which has submitted its report, are under examination for taking a view in consultation with the concerned agencies/Departments of the Government.

Inclusion of Commercial Crops under Crops Insurance Scheme

156. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
DR. MOHAN BABU:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a resolution passed by Andhra Pradesh Assembly urging inclusion of commercial crops like cotton, chilli, tobacco etc. under a comprehensive scheme; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The contents of the resolution would be kept in mind at the time of formulation of a Modified Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (MCCIS) which is under consideration.