

[17 May, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

Suicides by Farmers in the Country

SHRI SYEDAZEEZ PASHA (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, it is a matter of grave concern that the farmers are still committing suicides. About 48.6 per cent farmers are indebted. Even though banks and other cooperative societies are offering loans but their procedural conditionalities are compelling farmers to fall into the trap of private moneylenders who charge higher rate of interest. As a result, 70 per cent of farmers are frustrated with their profession as per the 59th round of National Sample Survey Organisation 2005, and nearly 40 per cent want to leave their profession if they find any alternate profession. Seven million peasants disappeared from agriculture profession between 1991— 2001. Globalisation is having direct negative impact on our farming sector. In spite of minimum support price and crop insurance schemes, the majority of farmers are ignorant about these schemes, and for many it is not available. Hence, the onus lies upon the Central and State Governments to propagate these schemes extensively. Secondly, the corporate houses are coming in a big way and introducing contract system which is bound to increase rural unemployment and migration. Recently, the Union Ministry of Agriculture, Shri Sharad Pawar convened a meeting of Chief Ministers of Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh to discuss about the issue of farmers' suicides at Hyderabad, and we are yet to know the recommendations and the future course of action to be adopted to mitigate the sufferings of farmers. Farmers should get loans at four per cent interest rate, quality fertilizers, seeds and pesticides at reasonable subsidized price, besides remunerative price for their products.

Hence, I urge upon the Government to take up farmer-friendly schemes which should be implemented with firm commitment. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

The House then adjourned at fifty-three minutes past six of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday, the 18th May, 2006.