

**Pension for widows of farmers committing suicide**

1872. SHRI SANJAY RAUT :

SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether suicide by farmers is on the rise in Vidarbha, Kerala, Bundelkhand and West Bengal;
- (b) whether unviable farm conditions are pushing farmers to the verge;
- (c) whether Government intends to cover widows of 18 year under the pension plan scheme from the present 40 years in view of more young farmers committing suicide, leaving young women behind with no source of income; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHARAN DAS MAHANT) : (a) Since implementation of Rehabilitation Package in identified districts in 2006 coupled with various other measures to revitalize agriculture sector and improve condition of farmers in the country on sustainable basis, number of suicides by farmers due to agrarian reasons, as reported by State Governments of Maharashtra, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh has not risen. Government of West Bengal has informed that process of investigation to ascertain suicides due to agrarian reason has been initiated.

(b) To improve viability of farming, Government has taken various measures, which include provision of quality inputs, substantial increase in Minimum Support Price of agricultural commodities, increase in credit flow to agriculture sector, interest subvention for pre-harvest and post-harvest loan, debt waiver, debt relief etc.

(c) and (d) Eligibility criteria for widow pension under Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, which is administered by Ministry of Rural Development, was recently modified to lower the range of age group of widow from 40-64 years to 40-59 years.

**Farmers' suicides in West Bengal**

1873. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of farmers committed suicide in West Bengal during last six months; and
- (b) the reasons for such suicides?