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Reasons for suicide by farmers

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of farmers who committed suicide in the country over the past five years, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) whether Government has investigated the reasons for these suicides, if so, the outcome thereof, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) whether losses in agriculture sector and debt burden are the major causes of farmers' suicide; and

(d) the measure being taken by Government to ensure that such suicides do not take place in future?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs compiles and disseminates information on suicides in its publication titled 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' (ADSI). These Reports on suicides upto 2016 are available on its website. The State-wise data on suicide committed by farmers in 2014, 2015 and 2016, is given in the Statement (*See below*). The Reports for the year 2017 onwards have not been published.

(b) and (c) Taking cognizance of the problem of Agrarian distress and consequent farmers suicide in the country, Government had undertaken a study "Farmers Suicide in India: Causes and Policy Prescription" as an all India coordinated study in the work plan 2016-17 through the Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru. The study covered 13 states of the country which included Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

The study concluded that frequent crop failure due to vagaries of monsoon, absence of assured water resources and attack of pest and diseases are the most important causes of farmers' distress. The study had made inter-alia following suggestions to address the above problems:—

- (i) Bringing individual farmers under the ambit of crop insurance;
- (ii) Judicious use of available water is required;
- (iii) Government intervention through MSP covering cost of production plus reasonable profit margin;
- (iv) Risk hedging through crop and enterprise diversification should be encouraged to reduce farmers' distress aiming at sustainable income; and
- (v) Regulate informal credit market.

(d) Agriculture being a State subject, the State Governments undertake implementation of programmes/ schemes for the development of the sector. Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments through various schemes/ programmes. The various schemes/ programmes of the Government of India are meant for the welfare of farmers by increasing production and remunerative returns to farmers. A list of various interventions taken by the Government is given in the Statement-II (See below). All these steps of the Government of India are for the welfare of the farmers of the country.

The Government had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee in 2016 to recommend a strategy for Doubling of Farmers' Income (DFI) by the year 2022 for the farmers in the country. The DFI Committee submitted its report and thereafter the Government constituted an Empowered Body on 23.01.2019 for monitoring the implementation of the recommendation of the DFI Strategy.

Statement

State-wise and year-wise details of Farmers suicide, for the year 2014-2016

	State/UT	2014	2015	2016
1.	Andhra Pradesh	160	516	239
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	7	6
3.	Assam	21	84	6

	State/UT	2014	2015	2016
4.	Bihar	0	0	0
5.	Chhattisgarh	443	854	585
6.	Goa	0	0	0
7.	Gujarat	45	57	30
8.	Haryana	14	28	0
9.	Himachal Pradesh	32	0	0
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	12	0	0
11.	Jharkhand	0	0	3
12.	Karnataka	321	1197	1212
13.	Kerala	107	3	23
14.	Madhya Pradesh	826	581	599
15.	Maharashtra	2568	3030	2550
16.	Manipur	0	1	1
17.	Meghalaya	0	2	2
18.	Mizoram	0	0	0
19.	Nagaland	0	0	0
20.	Odisha	5	23	20
21.	Punjab	24	100	232
22.	Rajasthan	0	3	4
23.	Sikkim	35	15	12
24.	Tamil Nadu	68	2	36
25.	Telangana	898	1358	632
26.	Tripura	0	1	4
27.	Uttar Pradesh	63	145	69
28.	Uttarakhand	0	0	0

	State/UT	2014	2015	2016
29.	West Bengal	0	0	0
30.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	8	0	3
31.	Chandigarh	0	0	0
32.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0
33.	Daman and Diu	0	0	0
34.	Delhi (UT)	0	0	0
35.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
36.	Puducherry	0	0	2
	TOTAL (ALL INDIA)	5650	8007	6270

Source: Report on 'Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India' for relevant years, National Crime Records Bureau.

Statement-II

Various interventions taken by the Government for welfare of farmers

The strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. The schemes of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare focus on directly benefitting farmers through various interventions and schemes and include:-

- (i) Implementation of flagship scheme of distribution of Soil Health Cards to farmers so that the use of fertilizers can be rationalized.
- (ii) "Per drop more crop" initiative under which drip/sprinkler irrigation is being encouraged for optimal utilization of water, reducing cost of inputs and increasing productivity.
- (iii) "Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)" for promoting organic farming.
- (iv) Launch of e-NAM initiative to provide farmers an electronic transparent and competitive online trading platform.

- (v) With a view to provide better insurance coverage to crops for risk mitigation, a crop insurance scheme namely Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was launched from Kharif 2016 season. This scheme provides insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks in specified instances, with low premium contribution by farmers.
- (vi) Under "Har Medh Par Ped", agro forestry is being promoted for additional income. With the amendment of Indian Forest Act, 1927, Bamboo has been removed from the definition of trees. A restructured National Bamboo Mission has been launched in the year 2018 to promote bamboo plantation on non forest government as well as private land and emphasis on value addition, product development and markets.
- (vii) Giving a major boost for the farmer's income, the Government has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSPs) for all Kharif & Rabi crops for 2018-19 season at a level of at least 150 percent of the cost of production.
- (viii) Under Price Support Scheme (PSS) Pulses & Oilseeds are procured at MSP announced by Government of India as & when the market prices of these commodities are running below the MSP.
- (ix) Giving a major boost to the pro-farmer initiatives, the Government has approved a new Umbrella Scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)'. The Scheme is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce as announced in the Union Budget for 2018. This is an unprecedented step taken by Govt. of India to protect the farmers' income which is expected to go a long way towards the welfare of farmers.
- (x) Bee keeping has been promoted under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) to increase the productivity of crops through pollination and increase the honey production as an additional source of income of farmers.
- (xi) Extending the reach of institutional credit to more and more farmers is priority area of the Government and to achieve this goal, the Government

provides interest subvention of 2% on short-term crop loans up to ₹3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment.

- (xii) Government sets annual target for the flow of credit to the agriculture sector, Banks have been consistently surpassing the annual target. The current year's agriculture credit flow target has been set at ₹ 13.50 lakh crore.
- (xiii) Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2018-19, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. In order to discourage distress sale by farmers and to encourage them to store their produce in warehouses against negotiable receipts, the benefit of interest subvention will be available to small and marginal farmers having Kisan Credit Card for a further period of upto six months post harvest on the same rate as available to crop loan.
- (xiv) The Government has approved for giving the facility of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to the farmers practicing animal husbandry and fisheries related activities and has also decided to extend the Interest Subvention Facilities to such categories of farmers.
- (xv) With a view to provide income support to all farmers' families across the country, to enable them to take care of expenses related to agriculture and allied activities as well as domestic needs, the Central Government started a new Central Sector Scheme, namely, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN). The scheme aims to provide a payment of ₹ 6000/- per year, in three 4-monthly installments of ₹ 2000/- to the farmers families, subject to certain exclusions relating to higher income groups.
- (xvi) Further with a view to provide social security net for Small and Marginal Farmers (SMF) as they have minimal or no savings to provide for old age and to support them in the event of consequent loss of livelihood, the Government has decided to implement another new Central Sector Scheme for providing old age pension to these farmers. Under this Scheme, a minimum fixed pension of ₹ 3000/- will be provided to the eligible small and marginal farmers, subject to certain exclusion clauses, on attaining the age of 60 years.