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Title: Regarding the plight of the tobacco farmers in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh due to the prevailing drought conditions.

SHRI MANNE SRINIVAS REDDY (MAHBUBNAGAR): Thank you very much Sir. The plight of the tobacco farmers in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh is very pathetic due to the prevailing drought conditions. Due to this situation, low grade tobacco yield is as high as 60 per cent against the normal 20 per cent. That is why, the cost of production of tobacco has become very high. So, the buyers are buying at a lower rate of Rs.80 per kg. Farmers are expecting about Rs.100 per kg. I would request the hon. Commerce Minister, through you, Sir, to intervene in this matter immediately and pay a compensation of Rs.20 per kg. The Government of India is getting Rs.34,000 crore revenue by way of collecting taxes on tobacco products. If the Government pays compensation to the poor farmers, it would only be spending Rs.40 crore. If the Government of India's policy is to discourage tobacco farming, at least the Government has to pay compensation of a minimum Rs.7 lakh for the tobacco barns so that they can think of going out of tobacco farming and go for alternate crops.