

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI SOMPAL: Bhajan Lalji has asked about the completion of Satluj-Yamuna Link Project....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed Half-an-Hour Discussion. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMPAL: There is some difference of opinions between the Punjab and Haryana Governments regarding the Satluj-Yamuna Link Project. Hon. Home Minister had convened a meeting of Northern Zonal Council in Surajkund last month to resolve the differences. This issue was discussed extensively in that meeting also. The Union Government want to resolve these differences at the earliest so that the so long pending project could be completed. The Union Government is endeavouring to bring unanimity of opinions between the two States and as soon as unanimity of opinions comes, the progress in the work on this project would become possible.
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed Half-an-Hour Discussion. Please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

Suicide by Farmers

*204. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH:
DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that suicide was committed by a large number of farmers in various States especially in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh during last three years;

(b) if so, the number of such cases reported during the above period;

(c) whether the Government have appointed any high level Committee to investigate the reasons for large scale suicide by farmers in various States; and

(d) if so, the remedial measures taken by the Government to curb this suicidal trend by farmers.?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) and (b) The information on suicidal deaths, as reported by various States, is indicated below:—

Andhra Pradesh

No Suicide cases were reported during 1996-97, From 1.12.1997 to 30.6.1998, there were reports of 315 suicides by the farmers. 43 cases of suicides have been reported from 30.6.1998 onwards.

Karnataka

60 suicide cases by farmers came to the notice of the State Government in the year 1998.

Punjab

As per State Police Statistics, 349 and 418 farmer committed suicide during 1996 and 1997, respectively. 3 cases of suicide were noticed during November, 1998.

Rajasthan

No suicide by farmers was reported during the last one year.

Uttar Pradesh

No suicide was committed by farmers during the last three years.

The other State Governments have been requested to supply the requisite information.

(c) A Study Group was constituted by the Government of India in January, 1998 to examine the issues relating to distress caused by indebtedness of farmers in Andhra Pradesh. The State Government of Punjab got conducted a detailed study at the base level with a view to know the real cause of suicides by the farmers.

(d) The Study Group constituted by the Central Government recommended several measures for action by the Central Government, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Banks, and NABARD which include assessment of the agricultural credit so as to enlarge the flow of

credit particularly to small & marginal farmers; strengthening the input distribution system, expansion of the integrated pest management and nutrient management programmes; taking up special programmes by the States Seeds Corporations to meet quality seeds requirement of the farmers, strict enforcement of the existing provision of the Insecticides Act to ensure supply of quality pesticides and widening the scope of the existing Crop Insurance Scheme to cover more crops.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the condition of farmers is so bad that they were compelled to commit suicide...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is another question. Please take your seats.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I want to know from the Government that what action is proposed to be taken to conduct an enquiry to find out the causes which compelled the farmers to commit suicide and what steps have been taken to prevent the farmers in other States from committing suicide?

12.00 hrs.

What steps do the Government propose to take to provide all the resources like irrigation, seeds, loans, crop insurance etc. to the farmers so that the farmers are not compelled to commit suicide...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMPAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, regarding the suicide committed by the farmers...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is another question. Please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are not given opportunity to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMPAL: MR. Speaker, Sir, regarding the question of Prof. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh ji, the Government had sent two study groups to study such situations in which farmers are compelled to commit suicide. According to their recommendations several measures such as making good quality seeds available

to the farmers, amendment to the Insecticides Act, simplifying the procedure of loan and providing more loans and creating awareness about other crop procedures and technologies and crop insurance among the farmers are being adopted.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Agricultural Production

*205. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agricultural production has declined by 25 per cent towards the end of 1990 as a result of constant use of poor quality of agricultural inputs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to take adequate measures to improve the quality of agricultural inputs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Agricultural production has maintained an increasing trend in the decade of the nineties. The likely production in 1998-99 is expected to be 3.9 per cent higher than that in 1997-98.

(c) and (d) The Government has taken various measures to improve the quality of various inputs. In order to ensure the adequate availability of fertilizers at reasonable prices throughout the country, Government has enacted the Fertilisers (Control) Order, 1985 which ensures that the fertilisers which meet the standards of quality laid down in the Order, are sold to the farmers.

Quality Control of Seeds is being organised through notification of varieties of seeds, Seed Certification, Seed Testing and Seed Law Enforcement. These elements of quality control have statutory support under Seeds Act, 1966 and Rules made thereunder. Seed has also been declared as an essential commodity under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to regulate the distribution of seed and its quality.

Supply of quality pesticides to the farmers is being regulated under the overall purview of the Insecticides