

Regarding the increasing number of suicides among the paddy farmers of Kerala

KUMARI RAMYA HARIDAS (ALATHUR): Thank you Chairman Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government to the increasing number of suicides among the paddy farmers of Kerala. The main reason that abets suicide of farmers is the inability of Civil Supplies Corporation, in paying procurement price. The PRS receipt given by the civil supplies corporation at the time of procurement, has to be produced in the banks, if the farmers are to get loans from banks. These loans are not repaid by the civil supplies corporation in time, and that pushes the farmer into debt trap. If his civil score is poor, he cannot avail loan from other banks as well. When the banks, go ahead with the procedures for confiscating the farmers property, he is forced to commit suicide. The paddy procured by supply is distributed through ration shops. The minimum support price, for paddy is given by the Centre. The State Government says that Centre is not providing the MSP, in time. It is because the farmers are not getting the MSP, in time, at least twelve paddy farmers in Kerala committed suicide in the last two years. There was a demand that the minimum support price, for paddy should be fixed at Rs. 35 per kg. This is a common demand of all paddy farmers across the country, including the paddy farmers of Palghat, Kerala. Also, the farmers are saying that the interest due to delay in payment of procured paddy should be paid by the Government.

Sir, Palghat and my constituency Alathur is irrigated by the waters from Parambikulam, Aliyar irrigation projects. We depend on waters from Chittar and Bharathapuzha for drinking as well as farming. Sir, the Government should ensure that the water supply from these irrigation projects should be made available uninterruptedly.

The Central Government should also ensure that there will be a regular mechanism for procurement of crops, and the produce should be directly procured from the farmers. Dairy farmers are also a community that urgently needs Government help. The expenses for rearing cattle are going up. The prices of fodder are increasing. Veterinary medicines are also becoming expensive. Central Government should control the prices of fodder and medicines. The problems faced by coconut farmers, need to be addressed. The Centre, should directly procure coconut from

our coconut farmers. I hope, that through you, these pertinent demands will reach the Government.

Thank you very much.