

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1103
ANSWERED ON:20.08.2007
SECOND REPORT OF NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FARMERS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether National Commission on Farmers has called for conducting a census on farmers' suicides and in-depth research into its causes and possible remedies in its second report;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith other recommendations made therein; and
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA)

(a) & (b): National Commission on Farmers, in its Second Report, recommended a census of suicides for a proper understanding, assessment of reasons and count of suicides. The Commission made some recommendations needed to prevent farmers' suicides including, inter-alia, a corpus for assisting farmers affected by crop losses, reduction of rate of interest on loans, waiver of interest on loans in areas hit by drought and floods, moratorium on debt recovery or staggering the same in easy installments, crop insurance to cover the entire country and all crops, farmers' livelihood security etc.

(c): A Special Rehabilitation Package has already been launched by Government of India for 31 Districts in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala from where high number of farmers' suicides was reported. The package is being implemented over a period of 3 years and includes both immediate and medium term measures and involves a total amount of Rs.16978.69 crore. Besides, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to alleviate the problems of the farmers including small and marginal farmers. These, inter-alia, include the announcement of a credit policy in the year 2004 to increase the flow of institutional credit to the Agriculture Sector. From Kharif 2006-07, farmers are being provided crop loan up to Rs.3 lakh at reduced rate of 7% per annum. For the smaller borrowers who may not have the necessary assets as collateral, the banks have been advised to waive margin/security requirements for agricultural loans upto Rs.50000/-. The Government has also announced a package for revival of cooperative credit structure. A major effort has been initiated for diversification of agriculture. National Horticulture Mission has been launched since the year 2005 for ensuring end-to- end approach with backward and forward linkages covering research, post harvest management, processing and marketing. Other initiatives taken by Government include expanding the area under irrigation, improved water management with watershed development and rain water harvesting and establishment of National Rain-fed Area Authority.