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14.06 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, Matters under Rule 377 shall be laid on the Table of the House. Those who have been permitted to raise matters under Rule 377 today or are desirous of laying them may personally handover slips at the Table within 20 minutes. Unless those are handed over to the Table those only shall be treated as laid for which slips have been received at the Table within the stipulated time. The rest will be treated as lapsed.

Title: Need to address the problems faced by Agriculture sector and allocates adequate funds to boost agricultural produce in the country-laid.

SHRIN.S.V. CHITTHAN (DINDIGUL): Agriculture and allied sectors like forestry accounted for about 17% of the GDP, employed 52% of the total workforce and despite a steady decline of its share in the GDP, it is still the largest economic sector which plays a significant role in the overall socio-economic development of India.

Slow agricultural growth is a matter of great concern as approximately two-thirds of India's people depend on rural employment for their livelihood. India's yields in respect of many agricultural commodities are low. Poor maintenance of irrigation systems and almost universal lack of good extension services are among the factors responsible for it. Farmers' access to markets is hampered by poor roads, lack of basic market infrastructure, and excessive regulation. Adoption of modern agricultural practices and use of technology is inadequate, hampered by ignorance of such practices, high costs and impracticability in the case of small land holdings. Irrigation facilities are inadequate, which result into dependability of farmers on rainfall, specifically during the Monsoon season. A good monsoon results in a robust growth for the economy as a whole, while a poor monsoon leads to a sluggish growth.

The required level of investment for the development of marketing, storage and cold storage infrastructure is estimated to be huge. The Government have implemented various schemes to raise investment in marketing infrastructure. Government have targeted four percent growth in Agriculture Sector during 11th Five Year Plan which is still to be achieved.

In view of the above, I request the Union Government to take concrete steps to solve the problems faced by Agriculture Sector and allocate adequate funds to boost agricultural produce in the country.