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Title: Need to take necessary measures for the welfare of drought affected farmers in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI M. VENUGOPALA REDDY (NARASARAOPET): I would like to draw the kind attention of the august House regarding the important national subject of drought situation and its effect on the farmers in Andhra Pradesh in the current year.

Madam Speaker, I would like to say that out of the 18 districts in Andhra Pradesh, drought is prevailing in about 750 mandals. But the Government has declared only 456 mandals in 15 districts in Andhra Pradesh as drought-hit. This is very absurd despite the onset of rabi season in October. As the House is aware that Andhra Pradesh farmers have observed crop holiday recently especially in Godavari areas but neither the Central Government nor the Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken any concrete steps to solve this national issue so far except sending the team of Mohan Kanda Committee to study and submit the report. Mohan Kanda Committee Report is not beneficial to the farmers in Andhra Pradesh. In 2011 Kharif season, the drought situation up to October 28, 2011 for Paddy is 3.64 lakh acres, cotton is 10.08 lakh acres, groundnut is 18.42 lakh acres, maize is 2.27 lakh acres, Yellow Lentils/Toor Dal is 1.86 lakh acres, amudham oil is 3.53 lakh acres . This drought situation has affected 40.46 lakh acres of land and such situation has dampened the lives of the farmers in Andhra Pradesh. Due to such situation, 48.6% farmers are in heavy debts and out of these figures, 82 per cent of farmers are hailing from Andhra Pradesh. In October itself, more than 25 farmers have committed suicides. Appointment of Vice-Chancellors in agricultural Universities is not taking place in Andhra Pradesh and such situation is adding to the woes of farmers more and such situation is affecting the experiments in agricultural universities badly. Inadequate power supply is also adding to the drought situation in Andhra Pradesh badly. Bank officials are showing negligence to the farmers in giving loans and only 21 per cent of farmers are getting the crop loans and book adjustments in banks are not being maintained properly. Moreover, fertilizer rates were increased 12 times in the current year. On one side, farmers are facing drought and on the other side, they are facing floods. To overcome such situation, every farmer, including tenant farmers who crossed the age of 58 should be provided pension. To face drought situations, crop insurance should be provided by bearing the 50 per cent of total value.

I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, through the Chair, to kindly help the farmers to tackle drought situation in Andhra Pradesh.