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Title: Need to send a Central special team to suggest ways and means to tide over the problem compelling farmers to commit suicides in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (NAGPUR): I intend to raise a very important matter concerning the plight of the farmers of Vidarbha region. It is an admitted fact that there is an acute shortage of water and irrigation facilities in Vidarbha region as compared to other regions of Maharashtra as a result of which the farmers are the worst sufferers. Unfortunately, no worthwhile step has been taken to mitigate the harsh effect of the problem and consequently there has been regular failure of crops in Vidarbha. This problem is further accentuated for not giving remunerative price to farmers for their crops, lack of irrigation facilities, damage to the crops due to natural calamities, non functional of pumps for irrigation purposes due to long loadshedding etc. The establishment of thermal power plants will aggravate the already acute water shortage problem in the region that has suffered due to lack of tardy pace of development of irrigation projects. This pitiable situation is being regularly faced by the farmers of the Vidarbha region and has not found any substantive solution both at the Central and State level. This pathetic situation has led to regular instances of suicides by the farmers. From 2001 to 2013 about 9390 farmers committed suicides in one district of Nagpur division and five districts in Amravati division. From June 2012 to April 2013 alone 1605 farmers committed suicides in one year. The financial help rendered to the farmers from time to time by the Government has not completely mitigated their condition and suicides continue to occur.

In such a situation a serious thought is required to be given to this problem not only to overcome the problem of suicides by the farmers but also to take concrete and positive steps to provide sufficient financial and other assistance to the farmers.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government that a special team be sent there to assess the seriousness of the situation and suggest ways and means to overcome the continued hardships of the farmers while recommending financial assistance to the tune of atleast 5,000 crores and other remedial measures.