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Title: Need to rescind rate of interest announced in the Budget and to extend interest-free loans to farmers.

SHRI S. SELVAKUMARA CHINNAIYAN (ERODE): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that the Union Government has increased the rate of interest on agricultural crop loan from nine per cent to 11 per cent and from four per cent to 7 per cent. When the Government claims that it is pro-farmer, the announcement in the Budget of 2015-16 to increase the rate of interest and withdrawing the subsidy on interest paid by farmers proves to be contrary.

I would like to point out that already the farming community in our country is affected by various problems like flood, drought, increase in the cost of fertilizers and also increase in the cost of labour.

So, I would urge upon the Union Government to rescind the increased rate of interest announced in the Budget and to extend interest-free loans to farmers. I would also request the Government to provide loan waiver on the existing credit to farmers on loans obtained from the nationalized and cooperative banks. Thank you.