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Title: Need to take remedial steps to deal with drought condition in Santhal pargana and their adjoining areas, Jharkhand.

SHRI NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Of late, Jharkhand and the regions of Santhal Pargana and their adjoining areas are slowly turning into drought prone areas where truant monsoons are playing havoc very frequently. ...(*Interruptions*)

Normal rainfall has become rare in these regions of the State. ...(*Interruptions*) A large number of areas in various parts of our country have either turned drought prone or have been affected by drought sometimes or other bringing miseries to the people and their livestock in such areas. ...(*Interruptions*) When drought conditions engulf any area, the worst sufferers are the farmers and other inhabitants, having no food to eat and water to drink for their survival, resulting in their exodus. ...(*Interruptions*) In such areas, starvation deaths are very common. ...(*Interruptions*) The worst sufferers are the mute livestock. ...(*Interruptions*) Their owners leave them stray and without fodder and water ultimately resulting in their death. ...(*Interruptions*) The farmers lose their crops and hopes. ...(*Interruptions*) The indebted farmers do not have money to restart agricultural operations even if they want. ...(*Interruptions*) Frustrated with dashing hopes, many of them take extreme step of committing suicides. ...(*Interruptions*) Santhal Pargana region of Jharkhand has become synonymous with suicides of farmers. ...(*Interruptions*)

It has been observed that in Jharkhand and other parts of the country, the farmers have started growing water-intensive cash crops to earn more money, resulting in decline of ground-water levels to dangerous levels which make such areas drought prone. ...(*Interruptions*) Hence, diversification of crops from water-intensive ones to crops needing very less water has become necessity of the day. ...(*Interruptions*) Promotion of water bodies like Punasi, Burhi, Suggabathan, Bateshwar Sthan, Harnabeer, Kajhiabeer, Trivenibeer, Trikut, Krishna Sagar and new projects proposed by 2nd Irrigation Commission of India and Bihar, have become necessary for the drought-affected and drought-prone areas. ...(*Interruptions*)

At the same time, it is necessary that the supply of food, potable water and fodder is maintained uninterrupted on priority so that people do not have to leave their places and their livestock is not left to die. ...(*Interruptions*) The farmers need to be given ex-gratia and financial assistance so that they do not take the extreme step of committing suicide. ...(*Interruptions*)