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Title: Need to evaluate agrarian situation properly in Uttar Pradesh to address the agricultural crisis in the state.

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI (SULTANPUR): Madam, I rise to draw attention of this House to the severe agricultural distress in my State of Uttar Pradesh. Of all the States in India, Uttar Pradesh has had the highest deficiency in rainfall this year, leading the State Government to declare 50 of 75 districts as drought hit.

The latest survey by the economist Jean Dreze, which I just read, which covered 1,200 households across seven districts of Bundelkhand, recorded that the *rabi* crop, which has just been sown, has been damaged by more than 75 per cent in the seven districts. Ninety per cent of people said that for the last three months, not only have they not consumed any pulses, but they have not even consumed any milk, leading to a serious nutritional deficit.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 38 per cent villages have reported at least one hunger death. This is the third consecutive year of drought in Bundelkhand and the situation is very similar to famine in other parts of the world.

Madam, if you look at the three basic bigger crops in Uttar Pradesh, namely, sugarcane, rice and wheat, the fact is that in UP, for the last three years, there has been no change in the State Advice Price of sugarcane which is now Rs. 280 per quintal which was raised from Rs. 240 per quintal in 2012. The production cost of sugarcane itself is Rs. 253 per quintal which does not take into account either labour or transportation, which means that per crop, the farmer is actually losing money. The issue of drought is, of course, another debate.

If you look at the wheat sown this year, it is reduced by 10 million hectares this year. Even if you look at the average return for the paddy farmers, we are looking at a monthly income of Rs. 1,306. This is as per the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices. If you take into consideration that a labourer gets about the same price, you can understand the absolute desperation of the farmers right now.

Madam, what is the role of banks in this? A variety of banks have lent Rs. 1,578 crore to the farmers of Bundelkhand alone. Why is the situation still so desperate? For the first six months of the cropping season, the interest rate is four per cent *per annum*, but if you fail to pay the principal over one year, it is 22 per cent *per annum* as compared to urban home loan which is 12 to 13 per cent *per annum*.

The truth is that the suicides that are taking place either go unreported or go under-reported. I was reading about the death of Kadore Kushwaha in Lalitpur, and the local NGO *Sai Jyoti Sansthan* has mentioned that last year more than 40 suicides have taken place just in Lalitpur, which have gone completely unreported. There is an astonishing statistic that just in one District Jalaun 24 deaths have taken place in the month of March this year.

HON. SPEAKER: You should not mention the whole thing. You can say that the agrarian crisis should be looked after and that is all.

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI: Madam, if you could just give me a minute because it is rather important.

माननीय अध्यक्ष : जीरो ऑवर में संक्षिप्त में बोला जाता है।

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI: Madam, just in the District of Banda, 56,000 people have migrated over the last one year and it is not just because of the fact that these crops are failing. It is also that there is no access to finance. You get a bank loan, it is so draconian that you cannot pay it back and then there is a naming and shaming in your local area. उनकी कुर्की लग जाती है। Who gets the money from these loans? According to statistics, only 25 per cent of the money goes to marginal farmers of under 3 acres or less, and 60 per cent goes to farmers of over 15 acres, which means

(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Now, please conclude.

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI: Madam, give me just one minute. I will just wrap it up. All that I am saying is and I have a lot to say, but I will respect your verdict.

HON. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI: I just want to say that although the Swaminathan Committee Report was rejected by several Governments of 50 per cent plus MSP, but if we can look at just two things. One is the deficiency price payment, that is, when prices fall below a threshold level the farmers will get that level or, second, if we look at price intelligence in the Agriculture and Food Ministries, which can see where the prices are going and where farmers are going to get extremely destitute and they look at a planned way so that the gap can be fulfilled. Thank you, Madam.

माननीय अध्यक्ष :

श्री भैरों प्रसाद मिश्र,

श्री सुधीर गुप्ता,

श्री येड़मल नागर,

श्री भानु प्रताप सिंह वर्मा,

श्री अजय मिश्र टैनी,

कुंवर पुष्पेन्द्र सिंह चंदेल और

श्री केशव प्रसाद मौर्य को श्री फिरोज वरुण गांधी द्वारा उठाए गए विषय के साथ संबद्ध करने की अनुमति प्रदान की जाती है।