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Title: Need to waive bank loans for mango and potato growers in West Bengal.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Madam, I would like to draw your attention regarding the plight of the potato farmers. In the country during this period, the potato growing States have achieved bumper production. The potato farmers in West Bengal have also achieved bumper production. So, they have to go in for distress sale. They are being compelled to sell potato at Rs.3 to Rs.3.50 per kilogram, which is below their cost of production. It is a very pathetic situation.

The Government of West Bengal is purchasing potato from them at the rate of Rs.5 to Rs.5.50 per kilogram for its ICDS and Mid-Day Meal programmes.

Similarly, Mango is a very tasty fruit and there is going to be a bumper production during this summer. These farmers normally take loan for their farming. If the loans taken by those farmers who have been affected by severe rainfall are waived off by the Government of India, then I would like to urge the Government of India that the loans taken from the banks by these potato and mango farmers can also be waived off.

I hope that the Government of India will interact with the State Chief Ministers and also with the Ministers of the Department concerned and will take a positive decision in order to save the potato and mango farmers of the country as a whole and particularly of my State, West Bengal.