

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION & FARMERS WELFARE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 224
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 9TH JULY, 2019

POLICY TO CONTROL FARMERS' SUICIDES

*224. SHRI KANUMURU RAGHU RAMA KRISHANA RAJU:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Supreme Court has suggested the Government to bring out a national policy on farmers' suicides in order to ascertain the reasons for their suicides and the need for proper protection of their crops from natural calamities and also for holistic approach for their well-being;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 224 DUE FOR REPLY ON 9TH JULY, 2019.**

(a) & (b): In the case of Citizens Resource and Action Initiative (CRANTI) Vs. State of Gujarat & Ors., while listening the submissions by the learned Attorney General, about the various measures/schemes initiated by the Government of India to secure the livelihood of individuals involved in agriculture, the Supreme Court in its order dated 6th July, 2017 has stated that an issue like this cannot be dealt with overnight, and it is justified for the Attorney General to seek time to work out the schemes appropriately. Further, Supreme Court has stated that it will be for the Union Government to determine whether and if so what, course should be adopted for this purpose.

(c): Agriculture being a State subject, the State Governments undertake development of perspective plans and ensure, effective implementation of the programmes/schemes. Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments through various Schemes/ Programmes. The Government has been reorienting the agriculture sector by focusing on an income-centric approach as against the earlier production centric policy. This focuses on achieving high productivity, reduced cost of cultivation and remunerative price on the produce, with a view to earning higher profits for the farmers. A list of various interventions taken by the Government is as **annexed**.

Statement in respect of Part (c) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 224 due for 09.07.2019 regarding 'Policy to Control Farmers' Suicides'

The strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. The schemes of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare focus on directly benefitting farmers through various interventions and schemes and include:-

(i) Implementation of flagship scheme of distribution of Soil Health Cards to farmers so that the use of fertilizers can be rationalized.

(ii) "Per drop more crop" initiative under which drip/sprinkler irrigation is being encouraged for optimal utilization of water, reducing cost of inputs and increasing productivity.

(iii) "Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)" for promoting organic farming.

(iv) Launch of e-NAM initiative to provide farmers an electronic transparent and competitive online trading platform.

(v) With a view to provide better insurance coverage to crops for risk mitigation, a crop insurance scheme namely Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) was launched from Kharif 2016 season. This scheme provides insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks in specified instances, with low premium contribution by farmers.

(vi) Under "Har Medh Par Ped", agro forestry is being promoted for additional income. With the amendment of Indian Forest Act, 1927, Bamboo has been removed from the definition of trees. A restructured National Bamboo Mission has been launched in the year 2018 to promote bamboo plantation on non forest government as well as private land and emphasis on value addition, product development and markets.

(vii) Giving a major boost for the farmer's income, the Government has approved the increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSPs) for all Kharif & Rabi crops for 2018-19 season at a level of at least 150 percent of the cost of production.

(viii) Giving a major boost to the pro-farmer initiatives, the Government has approved a new Umbrella Scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA)'. The Scheme is aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their

produce as announced in the Union Budget for 2018. This is an unprecedented step taken by Govt. of India to protect the farmers' income which is expected to go a long way towards the welfare of farmers.

(ix) Bee keeping has been promoted under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) to increase the productivity of crops through pollination and increase the honey production as an additional source of income of farmers.

(x) Rashtriya Gokul Mission to enhance milk production and productivity of bovines and to make milk production more remunerative to the farmers.

(xi) National Livestock Mission to increase productivity and genetic improvement of livestock.

(xii) Foreseeing high potential in fisheries sector, a Blue Revolution with multi dimensional activities mainly focusing on fisheries production, both inland and marine is being implemented.

(xiii) Extending the reach of institutional credit to more and more farmers is priority area of the Government and to achieve this goal, the Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to Rs.3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment.

(xiv) Government sets annual target for the flow of credit to the agriculture sector, Banks have been consistently surpassing the annual target. The current year's agriculture credit flow target has been set at Rs. 13.50 lakh crore.

(xv) Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2018-19, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. In order to discourage distress sale by farmers and to encourage them to store their produce in warehouses against negotiable receipts, the benefit of interest subvention will be available to small and marginal farmers having Kisan Credit Card for a further period of upto six months post harvest on the same rate as available to crop loan.

(xvi) The Government has approved for giving the facility of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to the farmers practicing animal husbandry and fisheries related activities and has also decided to extend the Interest Subvention Facilities to such categories of farmers.

(xvii) With a view to provide income support to all farmers' families across the country, to enable them to take care of expenses related to agriculture and allied activities as well as domestic needs, the Central Government started a new Central Sector Scheme, namely, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN). The scheme aims to provide a payment of Rs. 6000/- per year, in three 4-monthly instalments of Rs. 2000/- to the farmers families, subject to certain exclusions relating to higher income groups. About 14.5 crore farmers are expected to be covered under the Scheme.

(xviii) Further with a view to provide social security net for Small and Marginal Farmers (SMF) as they have minimal or no savings to provide for old age and to support them in the event of consequent loss of livelihood, the Government has decided to implement another new Central Sector Scheme for providing old age pension to these farmers. Under this Scheme, a minimum fixed pension of Rs. 3000/- will be provided to the eligible small and marginal farmers, subject to certain exclusion clauses, on attaining the age of 60 years. The scheme aims to cover around 5 crore beneficiaries in the first three years. It would be a voluntary and contributory pension scheme, with entry age of 18 to 40 years. The Government has approved a budgetary provision of Rs. 10774.50 crore for the scheme till March, 2022.
