

LOK SABHA

SYNOPSIS OF DEBATES (Proceedings other than Questions & Answers)

Thursday, December 5, 2019 / Agrahayana 14, 1941 (Saka)

*MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

1. **SHRI GOPAL SHETTY** laid a statement regarding need to strengthen safety measures for women in trains and give preferential treatment to women passengers in railway counters in Mumbai.
2. **DR. RAJDEEP ROY** laid a statement regarding need to operationalise CGHS dispensary at Silchar, Assam.
3. **SHRI REBATI TRIPURA** laid a statement regarding need to bestow more powers to Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council.
4. **SHRI ARUN KUMAR SAGAR** laid a statement regarding need to install bronze statues of freedom fighters in Shahjahanpur Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh.
5. **SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL** laid a statement regarding need to repair Jaya Prabha Setu road in Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency, Bihar.

* Laid on the Table as directed by Speaker/Chair.

6. **SHRI DHARAMBIR SINGH** laid a statement regarding need to provide life insurance cover to farmers under Kisan Credit Card Scheme.
7. **SHRIMATI REKHA ARUN VERMA** laid a statement regarding promotion of Sanskrit language in the country.
8. **SHRIMATI RANJEETA KOLI** laid a statement regarding need to provide water to Bharatpur Parliamentary constituency, Rajasthan for drinking and irrigation purposes as per Yamuna pact.
9. **SHRI SANGAM LAL GUPTA** laid a statement regarding need to review the location of proposed bye-pass connecting NH 96 to NH 231 in Pratapgarh Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh.
10. **SHRI MOHANBHAI KUNDARIYA** laid a statement regarding need to establish a Kendriya Vidyalaya in Morbi in Rajkot Parliamentary Constituency, Gujarat.
11. **SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI** laid a statement regarding problems of contract workers.
12. **DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR** laid a statement regarding need to run link express train from Khajuraho to Delhi.
13. **SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL** laid a statement regarding need to ban sale of junk food in school premises.
14. **KUMARI RAMYA HARIDAS** laid a statement regarding setting up of National Investment and Manufacturing Zone in Palakkad district of Kerala.

15. **SHRI DEEPAK BAIJ** laid a statement regarding need to establish Eklvya Adarsh Awasiya Vidyalaya in each block of Bastar Parliamentary Constituency, Chhattisgarh.
 16. **SHRI GAUTHAM SIGAMANI PON** laid a statement regarding need to resolve the long pending issue of Patta land of farmers in Kallakurichi Parliamentary Constituency, Tamil Nadu.
 17. **SHRI POCHA BRAHMANANDA REDDY** laid a statement regarding manufacturing and marketing of fertilizers and allied products by KRIBHCO.
 18. **SHRI BALLI DURGA PRASAD RAO** laid a statement regarding construction of bridges in Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh.
 19. **SHRIMATI PRATIMA MONDAL** laid a statement regarding need to make Chandkhali Halt Station on Sealdah-Canning railway line in West Bengal functional.
 20. **DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE** laid a statement regarding need to expedite proposed inland water transport project between Thane, Kalyan and Vasai.
 21. **SHRI M. SELVARAJ** laid a statement regarding downgrading of Tiruvarur Sorting office.
 22. **SHRI NABA KUMAR SARANIA** laid a statement regarding talks of ULFA and other outfits with Government of India.
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DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Re: Crop loss due to various reasons and its impact on farmers.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH *initiating said:* The Ministry of Agriculture assumed a great importance under the various Congress Governments as the Congress party viewed agriculture as the most important aspect for the livelihood of its people. But the NDA Government systematically diluted the powers of the Ministry of Agriculture. Since independence, the successive Congress Governments have done a lot for the farmers' welfare. Some of the game changing projects like Bhakra-Beas and Damodar Valley addressed energy shortage and irrigation infrastructure helping the farmers. Fertiliser plants were set up. Then came the Green Revolution under which the productivity of our farmers doubled. This Government talks of doubling of farmers' income but most of the Kharif crops, except cotton, are going to witness a drop in production. As per National Crime Records Bureau's Report 11,379 farmers died by suicide in India in 2016. The benefits of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana have not reached the farmers in most of the regions of the country. As per Economic Survey, growth of agriculture sector has decreased from 6.3 per cent in 2016-17 to 2.9 per cent in 2018-19. Still the Government talks of doubling the farmer's income by 2022. How is it possible? The UPA policies had led to a historical high agricultural output. Growth in gross bank credit for rural and semi-urban areas had been steadily increasing under the UPA Government. The UPA Government

announced higher support prices to make farming lucrative again. The UPA Government had announced the Vidarbha package and had also waived off debt to provide relief to the farmers. But today, the farmers are in distress. There is no compensation to the farmers. Banks are refusing to give loans to farmers. There is no declaration of any special package to help the farmers in this continuing crisis. The floods and landslides in Kerala caused extensive damage to house, roads, railways, bridges, power supply, communication networks and other infrastructure in the years 2018-2019. All three sub-sectors namely crops, livestock and fisheries have suffered losses and damage in the flooding and landslide of 2018.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: We witness discussion on farmers in every session of the Parliament. The Parliament is always unanimous to solve the problems of farmers. The problems of farmers did not arise over night nor can they be solved over night. The farmers of the country are getting direct cash benefit for the first time. This is very sad that the farmers are committing suicide. Although, farmers committed suicide earlier also but it was never a news. This problem cannot be solved only with financial measures. It needs to be tackled socially and politically. This Government is formed with the support of farmers and it is working for their welfare. The Opposition feels that it will earn some political mileage if it raises the issue of onion prices. It is sad that farmers cannot fix the price of their produce whereas other producers fix the price of their produce. We should develop machines according to the need of our farmers. There is a hue and

cry about economic slowdown. However, huge money is deposited in the banks in rural areas because people in our country tend to save money. There was no decrease in shopping during festive season. People say that sale of automobiles has gone down. I do not agree to this. I urge the Government to link MNREGS with agriculture. It should be ensured that claims of farmers under Fasal Bima Yojana are passed. I would like to request the hon. Minister of Agriculture to formulate a scheme for pension to the farmers when they attain the age of 60 years.

***SHRI S. S. PALANIMANICKAM:**

SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE: There are a number of reasons for loss of crops in our country. Farmers are using high external synthetic chemicals during farming. The Government must take a policy decision in regard to utilisation of harmful synthetic chemicals in the agricultural field which result in the loss of crops in various parts of our country. A link between expensive genetically modified crops and farmer suicides has been proposed. The higher costs forced many farmers into taking larger loans from private moneylenders, who charge exorbitant interest rates. There is a misdirection of Government subsidies and funds. As per reports by the Central Government and NCRB, the Government farming subsidies from 1993 to 2018 went to the dealers, into the hands of a few entities in Delhi, Mumbai and Chandigarh and to middlemen, not to the farmers. A recent cyclone Bulbul, affected a total 4,89,924 hectares of agricultural land and

* Please see supplement.

five lakhs houses damaged in the coastal districts of West Bengal and has caused a loss of Rs. 23,811 crore in the State. The Prime Minister also assured the Chief Minister that the compensation will be given. But still, no money has been given to West Bengal. But in case of Gujarat, we have seen, overnight compensation had been given. Why is this discrimination in case of farmers of different States? The crops get damaged by elephants also. We need to reduce this human-elephant conflict to save the crops. Air pollution is not only affecting the human beings, but affecting the crops also. So far as the suicides are concerned, these are increasing day by day. I will tell you a few solutions for ameliorate the condition of farmers like small and marginal farmers should be encouraged to pool their fund and to leverage their land, better water management system, rain water harvesting, farm loans at soft interest rates and resolution of inter-State river water sharing dispute etc. Farmers must be educated about modern farming techniques and practices. It should be ensured that the subsidies should go to the farmers, not to the entities of the cities. I will request to the Agriculture Minister to make payment of compensation to West Bengal expeditiously.

SHRI POCHA BRAHMANANDA REDDY: A large number of farmers undertake subsistence agriculture for survival. Farming is also undertaken on loans, which leads to debt trap most of the times. There have been many instances of farmers committing suicide due to loss of crops. Under YSR Rythu Bharosa-PM Kisan scheme, 51 lakh farmers will receive Rs.13,500 per annum as farm

investment support. A conscious effort has been made to include tenant and landless farmers, as they stand excluded from the vision of PM-KISAN Scheme. The foremost reason for crop losses is found to be infestation by pests, weeds and climatic conditions like cyclones and untimely rains and draughts. Our dedicated effort should go into crop-diversification, to grow less water intensive crops and Drought Mitigation Programme. The Government should actively procure the crop from the farmers at the MSP rate. India should focus on R&D to tackle agriculture specific challenges of climate change. This should include research in quality of seeds, pesticides, enhancing shelf-life of crops and ensuring these technologies travel from lab to land without burdening farmers. We have to map the cropping pattern and incentivise the shift wherever necessary. The policy of farm loan waivers does not seem to tackle core problems of agriculture and crop losses. Rather, more investment is needed in efficient infrastructure for agricultural supply chain, including storage, transport, etc.

***SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT:**

SHRI KAUSHLENDRA KUMAR: India is predominantly an agricultural dominated country. Mahatma Gandhi ji said that the soul of our country resides in our villages. However, the farming community continues to be in a pitiable condition even today. Hon. Prime Minister had promised to provide Rs. 6000 through 2000 quarterly instalments under the Kisan Saman Nidhi and he has

* Please see supplement.

fulfilled it. I express my sincere gratitude to him. The Government of Bihar has also made efforts as to how the farmers could be made to progress and prosper. The then Governor had inaugurated the agriculture roadmap to take the state ahead in the field of agriculture. Since then, the hon. Chief Minister of Bihar has made all out efforts to ensure that farming is undertaken on the basis of that agriculture roadmap. Today, Bihar has got the largest 11 per cent GDP growth in the country. Bihar has left behind even China in terms of production of paddy and wheat. The Union Government should take some lessons from it. The Government needs to pay more attention towards the farmers. The income of the farmers should be doubled. Therefore, they should be provided fertilizers and seeds in time so as to ensure that their income is doubled.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: I would start with my State Odisha which has repeatedly been affected by natural calamities. Farmers face the brunt of these natural calamities. The Government of India provides income support to all farmer families who own cultivable land, but the number of land holdings do not necessarily equate with the number of farming households. Should we limit ourselves only to those farmers, who are land owners? I am reminded of this year's Noble Laureate, Michael Kremer. Mr. Kremer and the company he founded, have impacted the lives of more than six lakh agriculturists in India. A low cost mobile phone based agriculture consulting service, developed by Dr. Kremer's company, led to an annual income growth of about Rs. 7,000 per farmer. I would urge upon

the Government to make conscious efforts to empower the farmers through this modern technology so that the income of farmers will grow. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, is the fourth avatar of crop insurance. Did the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana improve the situation? A reply to an RTI question revealed that 11 insurance firms paid claims worth Rs. 31,602.72 crore against gross premiums of Rs. 47,407.98 crore they had received in two years in 2016 and 2017-18. This is the profit which the insurance sector has received within a period of two years. Whichever insurance company the Government engages, at least, engage it for three consecutive years. What we need is a scheme which makes the public expenditure efficacious and which increases the farmer's incomes. A mechanism to compensate farmers in the event of loss due to crop failure and more so from adverse market conditions is imperative. Odisha is giving some support to farmers through KALIA scheme which has now been subsumed with the PM Kisan Nidhi. Farmers are paying about Rs. 15,000 crore as GST annually on which they are unable to claim the input tax credit. Government needs to support the farmers. They are the food suppliers, the *annadata*.

KUNWAR DANISH ALI: In fact, India lives in its villages, agriculture fields and barns. Until and unless the Government formulates its financial policies keeping the farmer at the centre, the condition of the farmer cannot improve. How many farmers have been benefited by the Crop Insurance Scheme? This scheme has proved to be beneficial only for the corporate houses and insurance

companies. Only in the case of farmer, he cannot decide the price of his produce. Today, after working hard for one year, the farmer in Uttar Pradesh is still wondering as to what will be the price of sugarcane. The Government has not fixed the price of sugarcane so far. The Government makes announcement for the procurement of paddy and wheat but we all know as to how much Government procurement is done actually. We all know how the input cost is determined. Only if a formulae for determining the input cost is prepared honestly and the Government brings transparency in procurement process, no farmer will remain in suffering. Today, 31 farmers are committing suicide in the country everyday and the farmers do not have money even to buy diesel for their tractors. In critical times, a farmer tries to sell his livestock to arrange money to meet the expenses of farming or the marriage of his daughter. But, this Government is trying to disrupt even the livestock market. Where are they taking our country to?

ADV. A. M. ARIFF: Our country is passing through a huge farm distress. Prices are soaring up, but the farmer is still living in poverty. It is shocking that over 12,000 farmers in Maharashtra committed suicide in three years. Crop failure is recurring every year. Insurance companies, under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, have missed the deadline to pay claims worth over Rs.5,000 crore made by the farmers. The failure to tackle the middleman is another major issue. As a result, 90 per cent of the profit is looted by these middlemen. The Kerala farm sector is facing different challenges due to climatic variations and unfair

import policies of the Central Government. In 2016, it faced the worst drought in 115 years and in 2018 and 2019, it had to face two floods, which was unheard of in Kerala's history. Thousands of hectares of land has become unuseable due to wide spread landslides. Kerala State had requested for Rs.2,101 crore, but the Centre refused to provide even a single rupee of the Emergency Relief Fund. The permanent solution to the farm sector can be achieved only through the policy measures that would make agriculture a sustainable business.

SHRI NAMA NAGESWARA RAO: Within six years of the formation of Telangana state, the farmers there are being provided free electricity 24x7. This facility is not being provided in any state of the country. Farmers are provided Rs.10,000 per acre of land. If someone has six acres of land then he receives Rs.60,000. Only after this scheme, the hon. Prime Minister has started providing Rs.6,000 to the farmers in the country. I demand that each farmer in the country should be provided Rs.10,000 instead of Rs.6,000 per acre. Telangana is high above sea level and the farmers could not get the water. Now, we are providing water to the farmers by lifting the water of Godavari river through Kaleshvaram project. A water grid should also be created by interlinking of rivers on the lines of electricity grid and national highway grid. Palm oil worth Rs.50,000 crore is being imported in the country. Farmers of Andhra Pradesh are also engaged in Palm oil plantation, but they do not get the proper rates. The Government should support these farmers. It should also provide better prices for sugarcane. We want to

thank the Government for giving remunerative prices for ethanol. The Government should also pay attention to food processing. It should formulate an Indian Farmers Policy. I would like to request the hon. Minister that the problems of the farmers must be addressed after this discussion.

***SHRI SUNIL DATTATRAY TATKARE:**

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH: My Constituency is totally dependent on agriculture. Being a farmer, I understand the suffering of farmers very well. No Government, no system can prevent the damage caused by nature. But, the Government can compensate the loss of crops adequately so that the farmers are not affected very badly. My Parliamentary Constituency is facing the menace of *Nilgai*. A large number of herds of *Nilgai* forage in agriculture fields and destroy the standing crops there. The Government needs to make any arrangement to end the menace of *Nilgai* and stray animals. If the Government does not want to kill them, it should catch and keep them in protected area. Moreover, they can be castrated in order to put a check on the rapid increase of their population. I would like to suggest that the farmers should be given concessions on the purchase of agricultural implements. At the same time, they should be given loans at cheaper rate of interest from the banks enabling them to purchase those agricultural implements. The Uttar Koyal Irrigation Project which has been lying pending for 45 years in my Parliamentary Constituency should be completed at the earliest as

* Please see Supplement

its completion will lead to the irrigation of 1.25 lakh acres of land. Moreover, efforts should be made to interlink the rivers. Our hon. Prime Minister has exhorted to adopt 'one drop, more crop' technology for agriculture. Israel has already adopted it but farmers of our country are not able to adopt it as this is a costly technology. Hence, all the equipments required in this technology need to be made cheaper so that it may be accessible to the farmers in view of doubling their income.

SHRI FRANCISCO SARDINHA: Our country is an agrarian country as around 61 per cent of our population depends on agriculture. Though our land holdings are small in proportion to our population, we produce just about to feed our huge population and if in this scenario we suffer massive crop loss due to variety of factors, our agriculture sector, our people and the economy will be adversely affected. So, I urge the Government to tackle it forthwith. It is estimated by several credible agencies that the annual loss of crops is in the tune of 17 per cent, amounting to 17.28 billion US dollars. Overall loss due to climate change is 15-18 per cent in irrigated land and 20-25 per cent in unirrigated areas. Due to vagaries of nature and conditions leading to sudden climate change, an estimated 1,53,000 hectares of crops were destroyed. I would like to propose some solutions. National Disaster Mitigation Authority should advise the farmers with early warning system to mitigate the impact of climate change. I would request the hon. Minister that whenever the farmers suffer, the Government should come to

their rescue so that the farmers' suicides stop, their income increase and the farming community of our country prospers.

SHRI JAYADEV GALLA: The imminent consequence is nothing less than committing suicide by the farmers as they have no other option if there is crop loss, due to rains or floods or droughts and they are unable to pay back their loans. It has become a ritual to take up the discussion on the issues relating to farmers. But I do not find any improvement over this last six years in the condition of farmers and farmers' suicides are going on unabated. In this scenario, I wish to make some suggestions to better the condition of farmers and the farming community. My first suggestion is the implementation of all the recommendations of Dr. Swaminathan Commission, which have been only partially implemented so far. My second suggestion is that the consumption of foodgrains has to go up through effective implementation of the Food Security Act, Mid-Day Meal Scheme and other such schemes. India has set the target as 2020 to double the farm productivity. Hence, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what blueprint the Ministry was prepared and what roadmap it has to reach these targets, as we are only days away from entering 2020. I suggest for granting at least one national project to every State and also request the Government of India to complete the Polavaram Project, which is the lifeline of Andhra Pradesh by approving its revised DPRs within a time-bound manner. The Government of Andhra Pradesh deliberately mismanaged the flow of flood water to prove that the Capital City of

Amaravati is prone to floods without considering that there will be thousands of acres of crop loss and thousands of farmers would suffer as a result of their actions.

***SHRI M. SELVARAJ:**

***DR. PRITAM GOPINATHRAO MUNDE:**

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SNEHLATA SHRIVASTAVA
Secretary General

**Supplement covering rest of the proceedings is being issued separately.

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NOTE: It is the verbatim Debate of the Lok Sabha and not the Synopsis that should be considered authoritative.

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* Please see supplement.