

Sixteenth Loksabha

an>

Title: Regarding relief package to farmers of Punjab.

*DR.DHARAM VIRA GANDHI (PATIALA) : Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir. Today, I want to draw the attention of the Government towards the mess that Punjab finds itself in.

Sir, Punjab used to be the jewel in the crown of India. It was the phume in India's Turban. Militarily and economically, it was the number one state of India. There was a time when the per capita income of Punjab was highest in the country. During the freedom movement, freedom fighters from Punjab were at the forefront in sacrificing their lives for the sake of the motherland. The hard-working farmers of Punjab were the harbinger of Green Revolution. Punjab contributed the maximum foodgrains in the central pool and was once called the granary of India.

However, Sir, Punjab was bifurcated many times. Air and water pollution has plagued the state. The ground-water is contaminated at many places. Presently, Punjab is in the throes of a grave financial crisis. The menace of drugs has overpowered the youths of Punjab. All sorts of diseases have spread their tentacles in Punjab. Farmers find themselves in a mess. Suicide by farmers are rampant in Punjab. Farmers are finding it difficult to make both ends meet. Health of people has become a casualty. Education system is in shambles in Punjab. Punjab is reeling under the yoke of a gargantuan loan amount of 2 lakh 25 thousand crores. It has to pay a huge amount of 28,000 crores as interest every year.

Sir, for the last seventy years, the flawed policies of successive Central Governments has doomed Punjab. Conspiracies were hatched against an advanced state like Punjab. Step-motherly treatment was meted out to Punjab time and again. Water of our rivers has been granted to neighbouring states in an unjust move. The loot and plunder of resources of Punjab has resulted in the economic downfall of Punjab.

So, I urge upon the Government and the Hon. Members of this august House to provide justice to Punjab. Punjab needs regional antonomy. Only then can Punjab flourish again and reclaim its top position among the states of India.

Thank you.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Dharam Vira Gandhi.