

## **Regarding need to provide relief package to farmers of Karnataka affected by drought-Laid**

**DR. K. SUDHAKAR (CHIKKBALLAPUR):** Our culture teaches us to treat farmers like Gods, yet in Karnataka farmers are tragically driven to end their lives. The heart-wrenching reality of 1,182 reported cases of farmer suicides in the past 15 months in Karnataka is a painful reminder of the challenges they face. The reasons behind these tragedies include economic exploitation, severe drought, crop failures, and insurmountable debts. In my constituency of Chikkaballapur alone, there have been over 89 farmer suicides. The statistics reveal that 22.59 lakh farmers have borrowed a total of Rs 17,534 crore from cooperative institutions by January 31, 2024, while 8.5 lakh farmers have taken loans amounting to Rs 17,424 crore from nationalized banks by December 31, 2023. Shockingly, only 238 farmers have managed to repay their loans to cooperative institutions. The farmers have not been supported in repayment of their loans or in finding the required market for their produce. It is imperative that the Government of India promptly investigates financial irregularities in the apex cooperative banks and misappropriation ensuring that farmers receive their rightful dues, and provides much-needed drought relief packages to support farmers.