

Need to address the grievances of farmers in the country-Laid

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, a non-political body of farmers of over 150 farmer organizations, and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, which is backed by another 100 farmers' unions, are continuing their protest with various demands including legal framework for guaranteeing MSP for all agricultural produce. Currently, the Government announces MSP for only a selected few crops, leaving others vulnerable to market fluctuations and potentially lower prices. A legal guarantee would provide farmers with a more stable and predictable income. The protestors seek the implementation of the recommendations made by the M.S. Swaminathan Committee; a high-level committee formed in 2006 to address agricultural issues in India. The Committee's report proposes various measures to improve farmers' income and welfare, including improved infrastructure, investment in research and development, and market reforms. They also demand waiver of agriculture loans and to amend the electricity bill passed by the Government. The farmers also want the Government to honour a promise to double their incomes, complaining that costs of cultivation have jumped over the past few years while incomes have stagnated, making farming a loss-making enterprise. I urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to end the farmers protest at the earliest by redress their grievances.