

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:4
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2006
REHABILITATION PACKAGE FOR FARMERS
Manoj Dr. K.S.;Mediyam Dr. Babu Rao

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Minister recently visited Vidarbha region alongwith the Prime Minister to explore the causes behind the cases of suicide by farmers;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has announced a special rehabilitation package for the families of farmers;
- (c) if so, the details thereof indicating the benefits likely to accrue to the families of such farmers;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to announce a similar package for some other suicide prone States also;
- (e) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (f) the time by which it is likely to be announced?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 4 DUE FOR REPLY ON 24TH JULY, 2006.

(a) to (c): The Prime Minister alongwith Agriculture Minister visited the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra on 30th June and 1st July, 2006 to see at first hand the distress of farmers in the region. A special package for mitigating the stress of farmers for the six districts of Vidarbha region, namely, Wardha, Yevatmal, Amravati, Akola, Buldana, and Washim, was announced by the Prime Minister during the visit.

The package aims at establishing a sustainable and viable farming and livelihood support system through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, crop centric approach to agriculture, assured irrigation facilities, watershed management, better extension and farming support services, improved marketing facilities and subsidiary income opportunities through horticulture, livestock, dairying, fisheries, etc. The package will be implemented over a period of three years. The salient features of the package are:

To alleviate the sufferings of debt stressed families of farmers, an ex-gratia assistance from Prime Ministers National Relief Fund (PMNRF) @ Rs.50 lakhs would be placed at the disposal of the District Collectors of the six Districts in the Vidarbha region.

Debt relief to farmers: Around Rs.1296 crore of overdue loan amount as on 30th June, 2006 in the six districts of Vidarbha will be restructured/rescheduled.

Interest waiver: The overdue interest on agricultural loans for the six districts, amounting to around Rs.712 crore as on 30th June, 2006 will be waived.

Credit Flow: An additional credit flow of Rs.1275 crore for 2006-07 will be ensured in these six districts through the banking sector.

Assured Irrigation Facilities: In these six districts 1.59 lakh ha. will be brought under assured irrigation facilities at a cost of Rs.2177 crore over a period of three years through completion of all major, medium, minor irrigation projects.

Seed Replacement: A massive seed replacement programme will be launched with 50% subsidy in these six districts.

Watershed Development covering following components:

- Construction of 500 check dams per district every year in the six districts over the next three years.
- Treatment of 15000 ha. per district for which grant support of Rs.60 lakh per watershed of 1000 hectare area each, entailing an outlay of Rs.54 crore will be provided.
- Rain water harvesting structures covering 1000 farmers in each district for accelerated growth of irrigation potential to benefit SC/ST beneficiaries including small and marginal farmers.

Horticulture Development: The remaining one district in the Vidarbha region, i.e. Buldana will also be covered under the National Horticulture Mission during the current year.

Micro Irrigation: The implementation of the scheme of micro irrigation will be intensified to cover 17800 ha. under drip and sprinkler irrigation involving an investment of Rs.26 crore per year.

Extension Services: Effective and efficient extension service mechanism will be put in place in the six districts for empowering the farmers.

Subsidiary Income: The component relating to livestock and fisheries will involve:

- Induction of 1000 High Yielding Milch Animals per district with 50% subsidy (balance bank credit).
- Induction of 500 female calves per district for providing 50% of rearing cost.
- Supply of fodder blocks for feeding inducted animals with 25% subsidy.
- Establishment of four-fodder block making units with 50% subsidy (balance bank credit).
- Provision of adequate health care to all animals.
- Taking up massive AI program and estrus synchronization of 70% breedable animals.
- Establishment of 10 milk chilling plants.
- Taking of fisheries in 100 hectares per district providing 40% of capital and input cost, rest to be sourced through bank credit.
- The package for livestock/fisheries/fodder bank will involve support of Rs.135 crore.

Implementation Mechanism: The implementation would be through district level committee, Panchayati Raj Institutions. Appropriate Institutional Structures and Special Purpose Cooperatives/Community based Organizations will be created at local level for delivery of the package and optimum utilization of resources in a time bound manner. For coordination and supervision, there would be State Level Committee including representatives of the Government of India and the State Government. In addition, the Prime Minister's Office will monitor implementation of the package.

(d) to (f): The Government is working out the rehabilitation package for the identified Districts in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala, on the lines of the package that has been announced for the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.