

Title: Regarding the problems being faced by the farmers in the country.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA (KANAKPURA): Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my sincere thanks to you for having considered this as one of the serious issues. Your goodself tried your best in the Business Advisory Committee and some other hon. Members supported you; but unfortunately, due to the paucity of time, you were unable to take up this issue under the Adjournment Motion. When I gave the notice of Adjournment Motion on this issue, the matter was discussed in the Business Advisory Committee and it was unable to list it out for this week. I can understand the time constraint.

Today you have taken up three important issues during the 'Zero Hour'. I can understand that all the three issues are very major and important issues. I cannot minimise any issue as being less important. The farmers' issue is so serious that the sugarcane growers are suffering in every State. Even other farmers who are cultivating *kharif* and *rabi* crops are put to a lot of harassment. The 'Zero Hour' discussion is not going to serve the purpose. The hon. Minister of Agriculture is here.

MR. SPEAKER: He is here only to listen to you.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : Yes, I know that he is here after your *aadesh*. He is also equally interested. I am not going to minimise his seriousness for this issue. Outside the House even he ventilated his feelings just like an Opposition Member, although he is the Cabinet Minister himself! I can understand his feelings.

Several farmers have committed suicide after the hon. Prime Minister gave an assurance in this House. I have got the list pertaining to my own State. I have not collected the list for the whole of the country. I have brought here the list pertaining to Karnataka. A number of farmers have committed suicide there after the hon. Prime Minister intervened in the discussions on the sugarcane issue and on the issue of drought, both of which had been moved by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. On both the issues he intervened and gave some categorical assurances. Unfortunately, after his assurance the situation has become even more serious and a larger number of farmers are committing suicide. I do not want to read out the entire list of farmers who have committed suicide in Karnataka, whether they are coffee growers or sugarcane growers or the traditional *kharif* and *rabi* crop growers.

The Prime Minister's statement is in my hands. I will read out only one sentence for the benefit of the House. The hon. Prime Minister stated that:

"I had earlier announced that the current year's interest on both *kharif* crop loan and agricultural term loan will be deferred and the loans proper will be rescheduled into term loans to be recovered over the next five years in the case of small and marginal farmers and three years in the case of other farmers. In addition, interest for one year on both these types of loans amounting to Rs.640 crore has been deferred."

It was to be spread out over several years as a liability. This is the first part of his assurance on the floor of the House.

Sir, the Reserve Bank of India issued guidelines. There is no mention of term loans in them. NABARD also issued guidelines and even in those guidelines, there is no mention of term loans. I do not want to go into the details. The interest component has been arranged for five years in such a way that, out of it, 20 per cent is going to be reimbursed by the Union Government. What for is this thing? Are you really interested in it? I do not want to go into the details, particularly the merits of the guidelines issued by the RBI, NABARD and the assurance given by the Prime Minister.

I am not going to politicise the issue. The entire House is concerned on this issue. When you had allowed a discussion under Rule 193, we discussed the issue for two days and the whole House had supported it. Even today, we should all collectively find out a remedy for the suffering farmers. Please fix some other date exclusively to discuss this issue and I hope this matter will be taken up seriously by all the Members of the House to find out a solution to the farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, I have no objection if the Business Advisory Committee agrees for a discussion on this issue but, in the meantime, would you like to react to whatever he has said? It is because I have to adjourn the House at 1.30 p.m. and we have five to ten minutes more. So, you may just react to his points.

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (SIVAGANGA): Sir, I would like to associate myself with Shri Deve Gowda on this issue—...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Along with you, Shri Muniyappa and Shri Kodikunnil Suresh may also associate themselves with Shri Deve Gowda. Mr. Minister, you may react and if the BAC agrees, we will take up a discussion. In the meantime, since he has waited for a long time patiently and raised the issue, I think you must react to the issue.

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE (RAMTEK): Sir, I have something to say.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: When I called your name, you were not present.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): Sir, the hon. Member, Shri Deve Gowda has raised an issue about which all Members are concerned. He wants to discuss it in detail. As you said, the Business Advisory Committee will look into it. So, it would be proper to respond only after I hear all the concerned Members. Let me hear them. There is no point in responding now, discuss it and again responding to it. But as far as the Government is concerned, if this issue has to be discussed in detail, we have no objection to it and we welcome it.
