

Title: Need to bring forward a new agriculture policy with thrust on agricultural growth.

SHRI S.P.Y. REDDY (NANDYAL): Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government to the continuous negligence of agriculture since the early nineties. Today, it forms a declining proportion of the GDP, of which services account for 50 per cent, industry accounts for 25 per cent and agriculture the balance. This is deplorable as 70 per cent of the country's population depends on agriculture sector for sustenance.

The Common Minimum Programme has laid stress to usher in a series of reforms in agricultural sector. The Finance Minister has recently unveiled a package that promises to raise agricultural credit by 30 per cent in a year. But this is not enough. What is needed is a more fundamental reform to make agricultural growth the corner stone of the new agriculture policy which the Government should bring forward immediately. It should take care of productivity, farm labour, irrigation, agricultural cooperatives and agricultural credit in an integrated manner in order to maximise the welfare of the agriculturists.