

an>

Title: Need to raise the procurement price of paddy and to ensure payment to farmers by Government agencies on time in Kerala.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): I invite the kind attention of the Government to the vulnerabilities of the paddy cultivators of Kerala, especially Kuttanadu. In order to help the farmers and to promote paddy cultivation, Government has introduced a scheme for the procurement of paddy from the cultivators by announcing support price. But unfortunately the farmers are not getting the price of their produce on time due to the delayed release of money. Sometimes the money is being paid to the farmers as late as six to nine months. At times, the procurement agency is not collecting the paddy immediately after the harvest. The paddy is collected in the field without proper storage facility. It gets drained in water and is damaged, thereby the farmers are driven into a debt trap. The poor farmers depend on money-lenders and finally end up in debt after cultivation. The core issue is that the procurement agency is not having money to procure the paddy, therefore, they are hesitant to collect the produce of the farmers. This issue needs to be resolved. In order to support the farmers, the Central Government may release the central share of procurement price in advance during each season. Moreover, State Government may be directed to set up a revolving fund for paddy procurement so that the price of paddy can be given to the farmers during the time of procurement itself. The procurement price of paddy may also be raised.