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Title: Need to address the issues of agricultural sector.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM) : Today Indian Agriculture presents a gloomy picture, with spectrum of drought looming large on the Indian agriculture, falling prices of agricultural products and farmers committing suicides in various states. The era of higher growth in agriculture, higher prices for farm products and higher wages for agricultural, higher prices for farm products and higher wages for agricultural workers has come to an end. The farmers growing foodgrains and cash crops are in a bad shape. Today, the agricultural sector where almost half of the India's workforce is engaged continues to be in doldrums. Farmers are losing patience with each passing day, they are frustrated and as a result trapped by land mafias and builders are selling their land at cheaper rates. Agricultural lands near urban cities and towns is fast turning into non-agricultural land for building multi-storey houses, not for the poor, but for the rich who want to invest the money and do business. There is an urgent need to increase both public and private investment in agricultural sector. Farmers producing natural rubber especially in Kerala are in total distress due to the prevailing market price trend and are being forced to shift to other crops. The Central Government should come out with a white paper on Indian agriculture and status of the farming community in order to address the urgent issues faced by them.

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