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Title : Regarding impact of WTO agreement in Nairobi on cotton farmers in India.

SHRI KONDA VISHWESHWAR REDDY (CHEVELLA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, cotton is a rain-fed crop and it used to be a low investment one. But now with bio-technology and other technologies and companies like Monsanto coming in, it has become a very high investment crop. Most of the farmers who commit suicides are cotton farmers. In Telangana, one crore acres of cultivation is there, of which 42 per cent is cotton cultivation.

My specific point is this. The WTO agreement is impacting the cotton farmers. The WTO agreement signed in Nairobi in December 2015 was intended to remove trade distorting subsidies to ensure wider market access to developing countries. However, India got a raw deal. The WTO Ministerial Decision on Cotton mandates developed countries to eliminate export subsidies on cotton from the adoption date of the decision; and developing countries, including India, by January, 2017. Just six months away we have to remove it.

We have not listed out all the direct and indirect subsidies in other countries like the United States, the Europe and Australia.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: What is your demand? You place your demand before the Government.

SHRI KONDA VISHWESHWAR REDDY: I think we need to re-look at what we have negotiated in the World Trade Agreement. We request the Government to look into the matter of the subsidies that the other countries are offering. In fact, we have to look at the subsidies that the other countries are offering to cotton, soaybean, wheat and corn farmers. If they do not grow anything on their land, they get subsidy. ...(*Interruptions*)

In Telangana, in Rangareddy District, in Chevella, Vikrabad, Pargi, Tandur, huge cotton farming is taking place. They are taking the burden of this commitment that we have made in the WTO.

I would urge the Government to put in place protective measures for our cotton farmers. Further, in the next WTO Ministerial Conference India should stand the ground and enter into agreement only if it protects the interests of our cotton farmers. Thank you.