

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**QUESTION NO 27.04.2007**  
**ANSWERED ON**  
**DEBT BURDEN AND SUICIDE IN PUNJAB .**

362

Dr. Gyan Prakash Pilonia

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DEVELOPMENTAGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a)whether a suicide census, conducted by NGO namely `Movement Against State Repression`, found that 1360 farmers had committed suicide in just one district of Punjab in a span of 17 years due to debt-burden;
- (b)if so, what is the average debt-burden on a farmer-household in the State and how it compares with other States and country as a whole;
- (c)the total number of such suicides in the State during the last five years; and
- (d)the steps taken to stop such suicides?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

(SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (d):A statement is laid on the Table of the House

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (d) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 362 FOR 27/04/2007 REGARDING DEBT-BURDEN AND SUICIDE IN PUNJAB.

(a):The NGO, named Movement Against State Repression (MASR) has claimed that it had conducted a census in Munak subdivision of Sangrur District, covering all the 93 villages with a time frame of 19 years (1988 to 2006). It claims that 1276 persons committed suicide in rural areas of the subdivision, during the period. However, causes of suicides have not been analysed in the report. In this regard, the Government of Punjab was requested on 20.4.2007 to send their report on the matter which is awaited.

(b):As per NSSO Report No. 498, 59th Round (January – December, 2003), the amount of outstanding loan per farmer household for all classes for Punjab was Rs.41,576.00, against the all India average of Rs.12,585.00. Similarly the number of farmer households having outstanding loan were 12.07 lakh against the all India number of 434.24 lakh. In terms of percentage, 65.4% farmer households were indebted in Punjab against the all India average of 48.6%.

(c):As per information furnished by the State Government during the last five years (2001- 2005), 55 farmers committed suicide.

(d):Agriculture being a state subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned to provide various services to farmers. The Government of India supports and supplements the State's efforts through various policy measures and schemes/programmes. These, inter-alia, include the announcement of a credit policy in the year 2004 to double the flow of credit to the agriculture sector in three years. From Kharif 2006-07, farmers are being provided crops loans up to Rs.3 lakh at 7% rate of interest. The Government has also announced a package for revival of cooperative credit structure. A major effort has been initiated for diversification of agriculture. National Horticulture Mission has been launched since the year 2005 for ensuring end-to-end approach with backward and forward linkages covering research, post harvest management, processing and marketing, which is expected to improve the income level of farmers. Besides Government announces each season Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for major agricultural commodities and organizes purchase operations through public and cooperative agencies so that the market prices do not fall below MSPs and farmers interests are protected.