

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 23.12.2005
ANSWERED ON
SUICIDES IN MAHARASHTRA .

3378

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) the number of farmers in Vidarbha in Maharashtra who have committed suicide since 2001, till date;
- (b) the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps being taken by Government to alleviate their sufferings?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a):As per information received from the Government of Maharashtra, the number of suicide committed by farmers in Vidarbha region since 2001 and upto 30th August, 2005 is as under:-

Year	Number of cases of suicide
2001	52
2002	112
2003	150
2004	403
2005	66

(upto 30th
August, 2005)

(b): Repeated crop failure, rising cost of cultivation and indebtedness etc. are identified as the causes for the farmers committing suicide.

(c): The State Government is providing a financial assistance of Rs.1 lakh to the legal heirs of the deceased farmers from the Chief Minister`s Relief Fund.

Considering the fact that indebtedness has been a major cause of distress to farmers, in order to enhance credit flow to agriculture, the Government of India announced a credit package on 18th June, 2004, which envisaged doubling of agriculture credit over the next three years. It has, inter-alia, also envisaged debt restructuring/rescheduling in respect of farmers in distress and farmers in arrears, Special One Time Settlement Scheme for settling the old and chronic loan accounts of small and marginal farmers; and financing from the institutional sources for redeeming the loans taken by farmers from private moneylenders.

The Government of India is also addressing the varied credit needs of farmers through Kisan Credit Cards. In mitigating risks of farmers, the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme is under implementation. The various measures for augmenting agricultural production and marketing are also expected to reduce the distress of farmers.

Additionally, the following are some of the specific measures taken to help the farmers in the Maharashtra State:-

- (i) Credit flow from institutional sources for agriculture and allied activities during 2004-05 aggregated to Rs.8,383 crore.
- (ii) Scheme to finance water-harvesting structures on large scale in Vidarbha region introduced. 500 farm ponds have since come up with the financial support from banks.
- (iii) 32,600 Self Help Groups (SHGs) were credit linked during 2004-05 and out of which 44% belonged to Vidarbha region.