

PRESS RELEASE

Indian Farmers' Unions present an eighteen point demand to all political parties, demand a clear deadline for implementation

14 March, New Delhi:

All India Coordination Committee of Farmers' Movement comprising all the major farmers unions in India such as the Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU), Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS), Tamilaga Vivasaiyagl Sangham (TVS), Adivasi Gothra Mahasabha (AGM) and a host of organisations from South India held a press conference in New Delhi to place their eighteen point demand to all the political parties to include in their manifestoes (with clear mandate of timeline when they would implement) for the forthcoming general election.

The demands are as follows;

- 1) For all the farmers produce (fruit, vegetables and milk), fair and remunerative price must be decided on the basis of the C2 formula recommended by Dr. Swaminathan Committee Report giving 50% profit to be added to the cost of production and that should be declared as minimum support price. It should be ensured that the crops should not be purchased below MSP under any condition. There should be a provision of penalty if this is not followed by the agriculture mandi. There should also be a guarantee from the government for 100% procurement of all crops.
- 2) Unconditional Waiver of all types of loans of all farmers including tenant farmers. Nearly 80 percent of loans to the farmers is from the nationalized banks. All types of loans to the farmers (nationalized banks / cooperative banks) to be waived, within 6 months of coming into power
- 3) The benefit of Prime Minister's crop insurance scheme goes to the insurance companies rather than to the farmers. The scheme should be changed considering each farmer as a unit. The scheme should be changed to also include losses caused by wild animals, fires etc. Entire premium should be paid by the government. The insured sum should at least be equal to the cost of production and in case of crop damage; the possible yield should be used as the basis rather than previous yield.
- 4) To ensure a minimum income for farmers. An additional income support of Rs. 10,000 per acre per year per farmer to all farmers across the country. Small and marginal farmers should also be given a pension of at least Rs 5,000 per month after the age of 60.
- 5) Wild and stray animals like wild boar, cattle etc. completely destroy the crops of farmers. This threatens both the food security and farming. Detailed action plan should be made on regional basis for protection from wild and stray animals.
- 6) All outstanding payments with interest should be made to the sugarcane farmers without delay. The cost of sugar should be fixed at least 40 rupees per kilogram.
- 7) Farmers should be given free electricity for irrigation via tube wells.
- 8) According to the official records, in the past 10 years, more than three hundred thousand farmers have committed suicide. This is very shameful for the whole country. These incidents still continue. The family members of farmers who committed suicide should be rehabilitated and at least one family member should be given a government job.

- 9) For farmers who lose their lives through snake bites, occupational hazards, government should devise a specific social security scheme for farmers in this context
- 10) MGNREGA should be linked to agriculture.
- 11) All indigenous people and forest dwellers who are the original owners and depend on the forests and hilly areas for their life culture and livelihood should be protected and no eviction should take place under any guise, including the rejection of claims under the Forest Rights ACT
- 12) All equipments used in agriculture should be made GST free.
- 13) Agriculture must be kept out of WTO. No negotiations should be made on agriculture in any Free Trade Agreements, including the ongoing RCEP negotiations. The interests of farmers must not be compromised in any trade negotiations. Central government must devise a law that makes it mandatory to discuss every free trade agreement in both houses of the Parliament as well as state legislatures before they are formally signed by the Central Government
- 14) A white paper on all the Free Trade Agreements signed by India and how it has performed
- 15) The import of agriculture produce that get dumped in the country must be stopped. Under the garb of Asian Free trade agreement, some nations are exporting such items which they do not produce (violating Centre of Origin provision in FTAs). This practice should be banned.
- 16) The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 should be implemented in all states. The Land acquisition should become a central subject rather state subject.
- 17) Special Session in Parliament on agricultural issues: Agrarian crisis is intensifying every day because of which small and medium farmers are forced to leave farming and becoming laborers or migrate to cities. A special session of Parliament should be called to address the agrarian crisis. There should be discussions on the agrarian issues for a month and the problems should be addressed on urgent basis.
- 18) National Green Tribunal has imposed a ban on the use of diesel vehicles older than 10 years in the NCR region. Tractors, pumping sets, the diesel engines used in agriculture should be freed from such ban (just like antique cars).

SPOKESPERSON

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