

Andhra farmers seek special House Session on agriculture

CIFA slaps Nov 1 deadline on UPA Govt

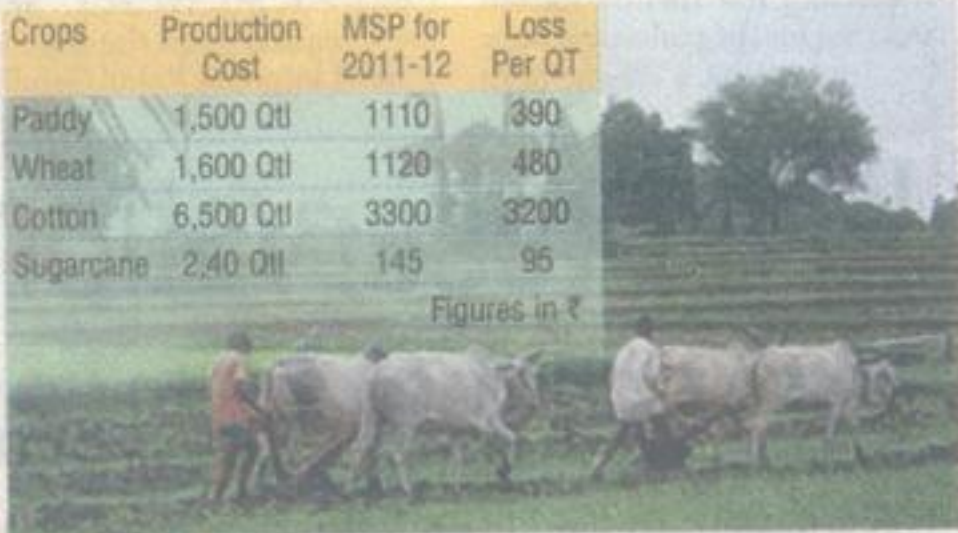
SEEMA SINDHU ■ NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh farmers' resentment against the UPA Government on its farming policies is not restricted to Andhra and is set to spread to other States as well. The token protest of Andhra farmers of eight districts in East Godavari in coastal Andhra by going on a crop holiday is taking a political turn now. Farmers led by Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA) are now approaching regional political parties to garner support against the Government's farming policies and have given the Government deadline till November 1 to convene a special Session of Parliament on agriculture.

P Chengal Reddy, Secretary General of CIFA told The Pioneer, "Since regional parties understand farmers' issues closely, we will approach all regional parties across India in the next two months to garner support on convening a special Session in Parliament on agriculture. We have already got assurance from Ajit Singh (Rashtriya Lok Dal), Deve Gowda (JD(S)) and N Chandrababu Naidu (Telugu

Crops	Production Cost	MSP for 2011-12	Loss Per QT
Paddy	1,500 Qtl	1110	390
Wheat	1,600 Qtl	1120	480
Cotton	6,500 Qtl	3300	3200
Sugarcane	2,40 Qtl	145	95

Figures in ₹



Desam Party) and will also meet other political parties."

In the Monsoon Session, BJP leader Rajnath Singh had raised the issue in zero hour and demanded a special Session to discuss the farmers' problems in the country.

Unrest is brewing amongst farmers due to an abnormal increase in the production cost, non-availability of profitable price and distress sale. Farmers and local parties in Maharashtra have already started protesting against the Government over onion export ban.

Reddy said that his organisation has joined hands with farmers' organisations in three other States — Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Maharashtra. Farmers in Andhra are protesting against the Government's trade-related policies such as export of grain and non-trade policies like Minimum Support Prices (MSP), MGNREGA among others. Farmers in Andhra have refused to

accept the Government MSP for 2011-12 and are seeking MSP based on the MS Swaminathan formula.

CIFA met the Agriculture Minister, Sharad Pawar, on September 5 and submitted a resolution which says that the cost of production has increased abnormally over the years and it is not possible to carry on farming by incurring such huge loss.

The resolution says indiscriminate implementation of MGNREGA, with other input cost increased (pesticides 150%, seed 75%, fertiliser 50%, diesel 75%) is not reflected in the Government MSP and thereby, they reject the MSP declared by GoI for the year 2011-12 as it is not beneficial to farmers and not in conformity as per National Farmers Commission.

They also submitted a copy of this to the chairman of Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council C Rangarajan on September 8.