

Proceedings of interaction by Parliament Members Farmers Forum with CIFA held at New Delhi on 13th March 2008.

The details of Chief Guest, Special Guests, Hon'ble Parliament Members and Farmers Leaders attended the meeting are as follows:

1. Shri. **Sharad Pawar**, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, GOI.
2. Shri. **B.D. Devegowda**, Former Prime Minister of India.
3. Shri. **Geroge Fernandes**, Former Minister GOI.
4. Shri. **M.V.Rajasekharan**, Hon'ble Minister for Planning, GOI.
5. 21 Hon'ble Parliament Members.
6. About 100 Farmers Leaders of various states.

Shri.P.Chengal Reddy, Secretary General, CIFA, while welcoming the Chief Guest, Special Guests, Hon'ble Parliament Members and Farmers Leaders of various States, thanked the U.P.A Government for announcing Rs. 60,000 crores Agricultural Loans Waiver Package to benefit 4 crores farmers. He has presented over view status of Agriculture Sector and expressed concern over inadequate investments in the sector and unstable policies adopted by successive Governments. While highlighting various action points, requested the Chief Guest, Special Guests, Hon'ble Parliament Members to use their good offices in the Parliament as well as with Ministries for allocating additional funds to ensure accelerated development and achieve 4% growth rate during XI th Plan. Among others, critical action points dealt with by him are as follows:

1. Suggestions for modifying norms viz, 2 hectres, cut off dates and other norms
2. under Agriculture Loan Waiver Scheme.
3. 2% Subvention to be extended to medium and long term loans.
4. The problems of Private Money Lenders.
5. Alternative flow of credit to farmers.
6. Issues of Oil Seeds Sector.
7. Market Reforms.
8. Decentralizing Agricultural Planning & Implementation.

9. Statutory Farmers organizations involvement in Private Sector AGRO Processing Industries (Sugar, Milk etc.,)
10. Long Term Agriculture Policies.
11. Subsidies to Farmers.
12. Involvement of Private Sector in Agriculture & Rural Development.
13. Legal Reforms.

The dignitaries and Farmer Leaders complemented Shri. P.Chengal Reddy, for the analysis of Farmers problems and organizing interaction meeting between dignitaries, Hon'ble Parliament Members and Farmers Leaders of various states. The Chief Guest, Special Guests, Hon'ble Parliament Members and Farmers Leaders actively participated in the interaction meeting. The address made by different dignitaries are as follows:

Shri. Suresh Kurup, M.P, Kerala, desired that the problems of farmers who borrowed Loans from Private Lenders should also be solved along with implementation of Agricultural Loans Waiver Scheme. He has advocated that higher MSP be fixed for Paddy than Wheat, since cost of cultivation of Paddy is higher than Wheat.

Shri.V.P. Singh, Rajasthan, desired that the farmers who repaid their agricultural loans in time be paid incentives and covered under Agricultural Loans Waiver Scheme. He has expressed that the middle men are enjoying with the subsidies intended to farmers and it should be ensured to reach them.

Shri. Sharad Pawar, Hon'ble Minister, informed that several representations are being received for modifying the norms under Agricultural Loans Waiver Scheme. He has advised the Hon'ble Parliament Members to present their views in a couple of days to enable the Government to take a decision for considering modifications in the package.

He has narrated the steps taken by U.P.A Government for welfare of the farmers which include, increase in credit flow, rescheduling of agricultural loans, reduction of rate of interest etc.,. He has assured that problems of farmers who availed Private Loans will be looked into. While dealing with MSP fixed for various commodities, he has assured that the cost of cultivation will be taken into consideration and remunerative prices paid to farmers. He has assured that Poultry and Fish Farmers will also be covered under

the wavier package.

Shri H.D. Devagowda, Former Prime Minister, had highlighted the steps taken by him for farmers development. He has referred Loan Wavier Scheme implemented in Karantaka and Tamilnadu states and reduction of interest on agricultural loans.

Sri. M.V.Rajasekharan, Hon'ble Minister made thought provoking speech. He has advocated that, first farmers should be empowered, all recommendations of Prof. M.S.Swaminathan implemented, mind set of Bankers, Officials & Politicians be changed on Agriculture sector issues and awareness programmes through News Channels and Electronic Media taken up on large scale.

Prof. M.Ramadass, Pondicherry, made thrilling speech. He has informed that his party has 7 M.P's and they will work for the farmers welfare and development. While dealing with the demands presented by Shri. P.Chengal Reddy, he has assured full support on all the issues. He has demanded higher Budget allocations for agriculture, inclusion of agriculture subject in the concurrent list and advocated that standing committee on agriculture regularly interact with CIF A on farmers development programmes besides involving more farmers in CACP to protect their interests and obtain remunerative prices.

Dr. Raman Senthil, Tamilnadu, also reiterated the suggestions made by various speakers and assured full support and suggested that functioning of Parliament Members Farmers Forum be strengthened and regular meetings conducted. The meeting was ended with vote of thanks.