

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2117
ANSWERED ON 09/08/2024

SPECIAL INTEREST-FREE LOANS FOR TOBACCO FARMERS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

2117. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether tobacco farmers affected by Cyclone Mandous in Andhra Pradesh were beneficiaries of special interest-free loan of Rs 10,000 each as a part of damage mitigation measures;
- (b) whether special interest free loan were received by those affected by the cyclone;
- (c) whether there are safeguards in place for the tobacco farmers in cases of natural calamity that damages their crop; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

- (a) Yes, Sir. Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) Tobacco farmers affected by Cyclone Mandous in Andhra Pradesh are the beneficiaries of special interest-free loans of Rs.10,000 each as a part of damage mitigation measures from Tobacco Board's Growers Welfare Scheme.
- (b) Tobacco Board with the approval Department of Commerce had extended an amount of Rs. 10.882 crores as interest free crop damage loans @ Rs.10000/- per individual from 'Tobacco Board Grower Welfare Fund' to 10882 no. of grower members whose crop was damaged due to 'Mandous' cyclonic rains occurred during 2022-23 crop season, towards financial help to hand hold the farmers to overcome the damage inflicted due to the natural calamity.
- (c) & (d) Tobacco Board, under administrative control of Department of Commerce, is mandated to regulate the production of FCV Tobacco only. Tobacco Board performs the functions such that the growers get a fair and remunerative price, propagating information useful to the growers and purchasing Virginia tobacco from growers when the same is considered necessary or expedient for protecting the interests of the growers. Tobacco Board also initiated steps to introduce the crop insurance scheme for FCV tobacco but the scheme was not finalized as the premium rates for crop insurance scheme were not acceptable to the farmers. Furthermore, Tobacco Board has requested the Ministry of Agriculture & farmers Welfare to consider Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana Scheme for FCV Tobacco Growers.
