



Ten years and waiting, Govt urged to implement Farmers' Commission recommendations

Chennai, March 19, 2016: Nearly ten years after submission of the recommendations of the historic National Commission on Farmers (NCF), its Chairperson Prof M S Swaminathan presented an analysis and an encyclopaedic overview of recommendations made in five reports submitted by the NCF between 2004 and 2006 and their relevance even today. He was speaking at an event organized by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies at Chennai on Saturday, on the subject "The Recommendations of the National Farmers Commission: A Ten-Year Balance Sheet". Calling for strong and comprehensive policy support to revitalize agriculture, he shared the vision of the NCF. "I had said at the very first meeting of this Commission that it would represent the voice of the farmer. There have been many commissions for agriculture the world over, but this was really unique in its effort to represent the voices of the farming community."

Hannan Mollah, General Secretary of the All-India Kisan Sabha, explained how and why the farming community and the mass organizations of farmers and agricultural workers supported the NCF's recommendations and urged the Government to implement them in the context of increasing agrarian distress. "We tell farmers to say 'No' to suicide, to identify the problem, unite and fight. If agriculture dies, the nation will die. We want all sections of the people, intellectuals, writers and journalists to come forward and support the farmer" was his impassioned plea to the audience.

Chairing the session, N Ram, Chairman, Kasturi and Sons, publishers of The Hindu group of newspapers, said "The NCF's recommendations are the most important recommendations in several decades." He lamented the decline in coverage of agriculture in a systematic manner by newspapers and other news media, in terms of focusing on the agrarian crisis and what is important in science and technology towards facilitating solutions and policy changes.

The website of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies www.fas.org.in - a unique effort designed and maintained pro bono by TNQ Books and Journals, to provide an agriculture-related repository of studies, research material and publications - was launched on the occasion. V K Ramachandran,

honorary Managing Trustee of the Foundation for Agrarian Studies (FAS) and Editor of the Review of Agrarian Studies, gave an overview of the studies conducted by FAS in 10 States, providing deep insights into agricultural and developmental issues in rural India. The day-long seminar featured a series of presentations on results from rural surveys conducted by FAS for discussions with the audience of researchers, representatives from farmers' organizations, and academics.

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