

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Kurukshetra, July 22, 2017**

### **BJP GOVERNMENT DETRAYS SMALL FARMERS, SAID SURJEWALA**

### **CONGRESS ENSURES REMUNERATIVE PRICES + NON-WAIVER FOR LOAN AND MARGINAL FARMERS**

Senior Congress leader & AICC Media Incharge, Randeep Singh Surjewala charged the BJP governments, at the Centre and in Haryana, for having betrayed and duped the farmers. As 35 farmers commit suicide everyday, both the BJP's governments remain in denial qua its own promise of giving 'Cost +50% profit' as MSP, Mr. Surjewala said. Reality is that Modi government has filed an affidavit in Supreme Court rejecting the formula of 'Cost + 50% profit' as MSP, as Union Agriculture Minister, Shri Ram Mohan Singh shamelessly denied in Parliament yesterday that Shri Narendra Modi had never made such a promise.

Mr. Surjewala was addressing a well-attended farmers' protest meeting at 'New Grain Market' in Kurukshetra on Saturday. The massive protest got converted into a huge rally by the enthusiastic response of thousands of farmers and farm labourers. Nearly a dozen former Ministers, ex.MLAs, Pradesh Congress office bearers and other leaders, farmer activists were among thousands of people attending the protest rally under aegis of 'Haq Maango Abhiyan'.

BJP governments should forthwith waive off loans of small and marginal farmers and landless labourers. Arrogance of PM Modi and CM Khattar can be gauged from the fact that despite acute agrarian crisis, both of them have refused to provide succor to the needy farmers. Congress will ensure adequate loan waiver for the small farmers and landless labourers when voted to power, Mr. Surjewala said.

Questioning the Modi government for waiving off Rs.1,43,000 crore of loan of a dozen industries and preparing to waive loans worth Rs.2,54,000 crore of a handful more, Mr. Surjewala demanded that why can't the similar loan waiver be given to India's farmers, which is merely Rs.2 lakh crore. Criticizing the BJP for its duplicity, Mr. Surjewala said that the anti-farmer faces of PM Modi and CM Khattar stand exposed. He reminded the people that UPA government had waived off Rs.72,000 crore farm loans in year 2009.

Referring to anti-farmer steps of BJP, Mr. Surjewala said that the farmers have not been passed on the benefit of the reduction in the international prices of fertilizers. He said that compared to year 2014, the international prices of DAP, Potash and Urea have come down by almost 50 percent now. So, the market price of Urea, DAP and Potash should have been reduced to half but that has not happened in Modi Government, he added. He alleged that the companies were making profits at the cost of farmers. Not only this, for the first time, 5% GST has been imposed on fertilizers; 18% on pesticides, 12% on tractors and farming equipment and 28% on tractor tyres and engine. On one hand, Chief Minister, Mr. Khattar was talking about placing farmer's vegetables and fruits in cold storages, while on the other hand, 18% GST has been imposed on cold storage by BJP Government, he further added.

Mr. Surjewala further said, “BJP only talks about the farmers but, in fact, they are least bothered about their welfare. BJP is only bothered its super-rich friends, as it has reduced the import duty on wheat import from 25% to 0% and imported 70 lakh tons of wheat in 2016-17 at the same time when the farmers’ crop was coming in the market”. Despite the bumper crops in last three years, the country’s food imports have increased 66-folds during the same period, he added. He said that the import of wheat, barley and rice amounted to Rs.134 crore in 2014-15 but the same has increased to whopping Rs.9009 crore in 2016-17.

While advocating the farm loan waiver, Mr Surjewala said that there is a need for debt relief for providing interim relief to farm economy based Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Small shopkeepers. If the Punjab State could provide loan relief to its 22 lakh farmers despite its financial problems, there is no reason that the Khattar government of Haryana should not give the same relief to farmers, he reiterated.

Referring to the shortcomings of the ‘Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna’, Mr Surjewala said that the crop insurance scheme was only an attempt to benefit some very few selective and private insurance companies and it was not beneficial for the farmers. He said that the insurance companies have been paid Rs.15,891 crore as the insurance premium amount but the farmers have been paid compensation of Rs.6000 crore only. Thus, the private companies have ill-gotten a profit of about Rs.10,000 crore in one crop only, which will mean a profit of Rs.20,000 crore in one year, he further added.

This protest rally was addressed by former Minister, Shri Bachan Singh Arya; former MLAs, Shri Ramesh Gupta, Shri Anil Dhantori, Shri Phool Singh Balmiki, Shri Radhey Shyam Sharma and Shri Pawan Diwan. PCC General Secretaries, Shri Virender Rathore, Shri Sanjay Chhokar, Shri Suresh Yunushpur, Shri Nahar Singh Sandhu, Shri Ramesh Chaudhary, Shri Ranbir mann, Shri Satish Sangwan and Shri Satbir Bhana also addressed the gathering. President of State Mahila Congress, Smt. Sumitra Chauhan; President of Haryana Kisan-Khet Mazdoor Congress, Shri Bhupender Singh Phogat; President of Haryana Krishak Samaj, Shri Ishwar Singh Nain also addressed the rally, besides a number of State and local leaders.