

Supreme Court appointed Committee Report on Farm Laws

Why in news?

After the Prime Minister's announcement of repeal of the three farm laws, the report of the Supreme Court-appointed committee on farm laws has been released in the public domain.

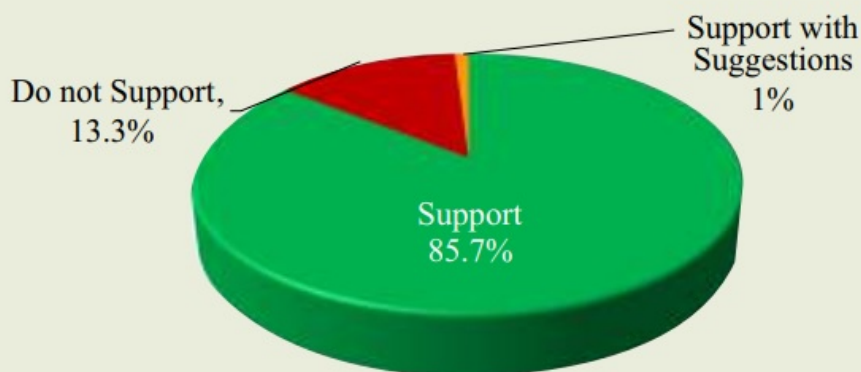
To know more about the repealed farm laws, click [here](#)

What does the committee report say?

- The Supreme Court had appointed the committee in January 2021 for the purpose of listening to the grievances of the farmers relating to the farm laws and the views of the government and to make recommendations.
- The report stated that the three Acts were intended to align the agricultural policies with the structural requirements of the sector for enhanced access to agricultural markets and incentivize crop diversification.
- It saw the participation of FPOs, industry bodies, state governments, academicians, private markets, state agriculture marketing boards, government officials and procurement agencies.
- The report claims that out of the 73 farmers' organisations, 61 organisations (85.7%) representing over 3.3 crore farmers fully supported the laws.
- Four farmers' organisations, representing 51 lakh farmers (13.3%), did not support the Act.
- Seven farmer organisations, representing 3.6 lakh farmers (1%) supported the Acts with some suggestions for modifications.
- The committee also received feedback through its dedicated portal and online questionnaire in which two-thirds of the respondents supported the three farm laws.
- It points out that a state-wise analysis of the three Acts shows that respondents in Punjab (64%), Andhra Pradesh (51%), Kerala (49%) and West Bengal (47%) feel that the Acts would not give a choice to farmers to sell beyond the APMC markets.
- Only 27.5% of the farmers sold their produce at the government declared MSP and they were mainly from Chattisgarh, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.
- The Committee was informed that the organizations were not willing to present before the Committee and preferred bilateral discussions with the Government.

Box I: Feedback received by the Committee through Direct Interactions

Do You Support the Acts?



What are the recommendations of the committee?

- **Flexibility to states**- The committee had suggested many changes in the laws, including giving freedom to states to make the MSP system legal.
- **Cap on procurement**- The committee's recommendations included capping the procurement of wheat and paddy by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).
- **MSP reforms**- The MSP and procurement support policy designed for cereals during the Green Revolution time needs to be revisited.
- **Procurement model**- It also noted that instead of large scale purchases, the model adopted by the National Cooperative Agricultural Marketing Federation (NAFED) to procure oilseeds and pulses can be adopted.
- **Dispute settlement**- An important recommendation was an alternative mechanism for dispute settlement, through civil courts or arbitration mechanism, may be provided to the stakeholders.
- **Government measures**- The government should take urgent steps towards
 - strengthening agricultural infrastructure
 - enabling aggregation, assaying and quality sorting of agri produce through cooperatives and FPOs
 - closer interaction between farmers and warehouses /processors /exporters /retailers /bulk buyers
- **Agriculture Marketing Council**- An Agriculture Marketing Council, under the chair of the Union Minister of Agriculture, with all states and UTs as members may be formed on lines of the GST Council to reinforce cooperative efforts in the implementation of these Acts.

References

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