

## Modi's statement on loan waivers 'insensitive': AIKS



**IANIS**

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The All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) on Wednesday condemned as "insensitive" a statement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi equating farm loan waivers to lollipops.

"In times of acute agrarian crisis, falling farm incomes and growing indebtedness, loan waiver has a palliative effect provided it reaches the real cultivators. To the crisis-stricken peasantry it could provide much-needed temporary relief," the AIKS said in a statement. "Notably, talk of loan waivers are also happening in a context wherein the BJP government has totally failed to curb rising costs of production and has not been able to ensure remunerative prices for crops."

The AIKS accused Modi of "selective amnesia" saying his latest statement on farm loan waivers smacked

of dishonesty. "All through the 2014 election campaign his speeches were laced with not merely the promise of loan waiver to farmers but also the promise of Rs 15 lakh into every account.

"Faced with intense struggles by the AIKS and other organisations of the peasantry, the Prime Minister again assured farm loan waivers in February 2017 before the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh. "BJP governments in Maharashtra and Rajasthan were also forced to announce farm loan waivers after consistent struggles of the peasantry."

But AIKS also said that unless the states that have announced farm loan waivers pursue alternative agricultural policies, ensure reduction in production costs and assure remunerative prices as well as assist farmers in processing, value addition and marketing, the cycle of indebtedness "is only bound to recur".