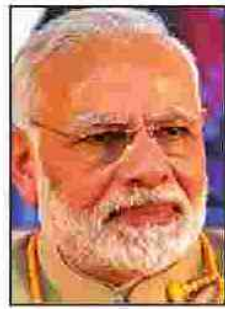


Karnataka's loan waiver 'cruel joke on farmers': PM

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: At a time when Congress president Rahul



Gandhi is highlighting the loan waivers in three states where the party won assembly polls, PM Narendra Modi tore into the Congress-JD(S) alliance government in Karnataka and dubbed the loan waiver in the state as the "most cruel joke on farmers".

"What they have done in the name of loan waivers will go down in history as one of the most cruel jokes on farmers. After six months in power, news reports say that the government could only benefit a handful of farmers with their loan waiver scheme," the PM said on Friday while interacting with BJP workers from Karnataka through video link.

"These people go around the country claiming credit for what they have done for farmers. Will they also take credit for farmers committing suicide in Karnataka?" Modi asked.

The PM said those in power thought that just because they had formed a government by hook or crook, they could get away with anything. "But the people of Karnataka and people of India are watching them and

Zero interest on timely crop loan repayment likely

To address farmers' distress ahead of 2019 general elections, the Centre is considering waiving interest on crop loans for farmers who pay on time, costing an additional Rs 15,000 crore to the exchequer, according to sources. Currently, farmers have to pay 4 per cent interest rate if they repay their loans within due date. There is also a proposal to completely waive premium for taking insurance policy for food crops. The premium on horticultural crops could also be reduced, they said. PTI

their actions. The people will soon teach them a lesson for their mis-governance," he added.

Targeting the ruling coalition in the state over its contradictions and power struggle, Modi said it seemed as if they were in power "only to play musical chairs". "People want corruption-free government, but Karnataka government wants development-free corruption," he said.

Talking about agrarian distress and farmer suicides, he accused the HD Kumaraswamy government of being "steeped in arrogance".