



**स्वतंत्र भारत**  
**Swatantra Bharat Party**

**ANIL GHANWAT, President**  
email: ghanwatanil77@gmail.com  
<http://swatantra.org.in>

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Release of the Report of the Supreme Court Committee on Farm Laws**

Mr Anil Ghanwat, President of Swatantra Bharat Party and member of the Supreme Court Committee on Farm Laws today released the **Report of the Supreme Court Committee on Farm Laws**. He also released the copy of a **letter** he has written today to the **Chief Justice of India** about his decision to release the Report.

He said that 19 March 2022 marked one year from the date of submission of the Report to the Hon'ble Supreme Court. In the meanwhile, he wrote thrice to the Supreme Court requesting the release of the Report – on 1 September 2021, on 23 November 2021 and on 17 January 2022.

Mr Ghanwat said that had the Supreme Court published the Committee's Report upon its receipt, it could have educated protesting farmers about the benefits of the farm laws and potentially prevented the repeal of these laws. The Committee had advised against repealing the farm laws – its Report notes that "A repeal or a long suspension of these Farm Laws would be unfair to the 'silent' majority who support the Farm Laws".

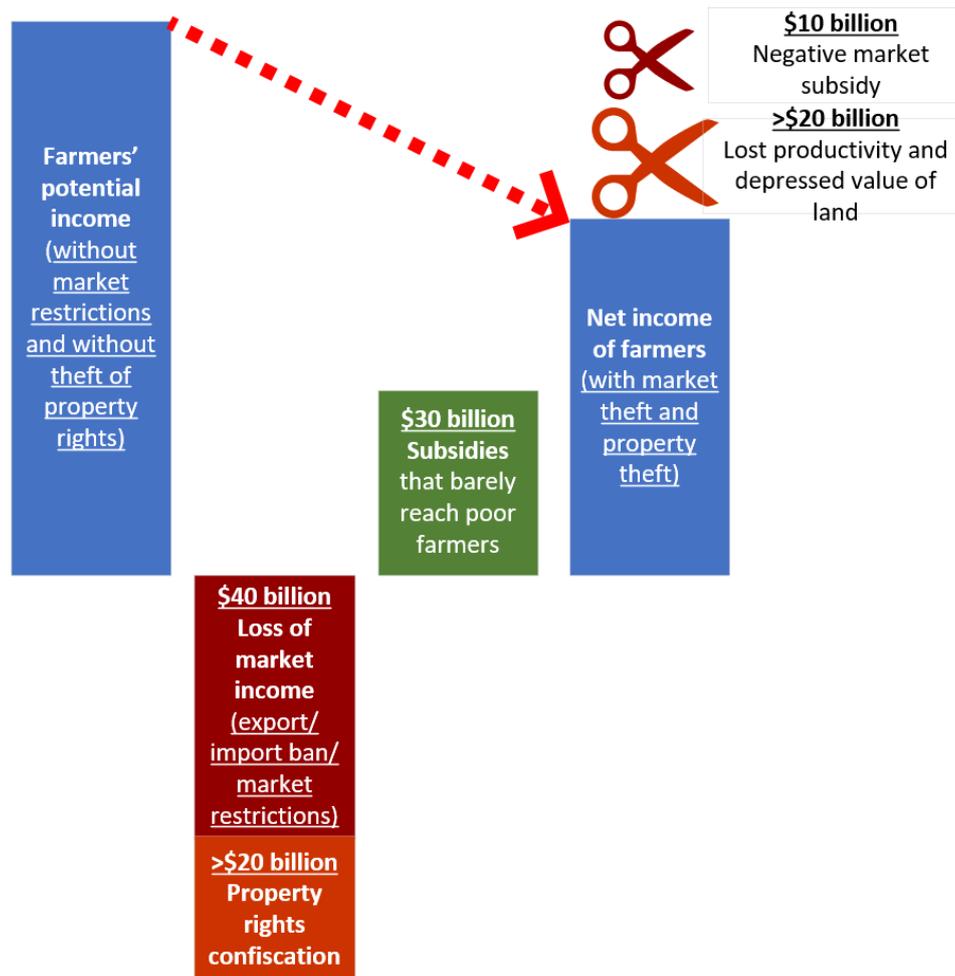
He said that of the 73 farmer organizations that made submissions to the Committee, 61 of them, representing 3.3 crore farmers, had fully supported the farm laws. Most agitating farmers came from Punjab and north India where MSP plays a significant role. These farmers were misled by socialist and communist leaders who lied about MSP being under threat. The laws said nothing about MSP.

The non-agitating farmers who engaged with the Committee didn't have such concerns, also because MSP plays very little role in their life. As illustration, Mr Ghanwat said that he has been a farmer in Maharashtra all his life and has never sold anything at MSP. Nevertheless, even though MSP was not within the scope of the Committee's consideration, it has examined this issue.

Mr Ghanwat said that farmers have received a negative marketing subsidy for over seven decades. Estimates by the government and by independent economists have confirmed that farmers' incomes can increase between 5% to 25% per year if marketing restrictions are removed. As *The Economist* magazine wrote in 2018, India's governments provide farmers with subsidies (such as MSP) worth \$30 billion per year and take away \$40 billion by denying farmers the market price of their produce. These marketing restrictions operate via the Essential Commodities Act and foreign trade barriers. But this is not all.

Farmers face an additional loss of at least \$20 billion per year through productivity reduction and depressed farm land prices from the abolition of the Fundamental Right to property and gross mismanagement of land records. Their land is often seized without due compensation, and restrictions on the size of the land they can own and difficulties in tenancy, contracting and sale

mean that land is not put to its most productive use. The laws that confiscate farmers' income and property are sheltered in the Ninth Schedule the Constitution, away from judicial scrutiny.



Mr Ghanwat said that the farm laws of 2020 did not address even a fraction of these unjust appropriations from farmers. Most market and property restrictions would have remained in place with the farm laws. Nevertheless, the laws would have reduced farmers' losses by giving them greater market choice. He added that since the Modi government had not consulted with farmers, shortcomings had remained in the laws. The Committee's Report provided options to address these shortcomings.

With regard to the Supreme Court Committee's Report, he said that although it has been overtaken by events, it has educational value for farmers and for policy makers, so he is releasing it today. Farmers mainly from North India who protested against these laws and got them repealed will now realise that they have harmed themselves and lost an opportunity to increase their income. In Mr Ghanwat's view, it was also a great political mistake for the Modi government to repeal these laws - the poor performance of BJP in Punjab shows that the repeal did not make any political difference.

He said that agriculture remains in the tight grip of socialist controls, unlike industry which was partially liberated in 1991. Mr Modi should muster courage and revive agriculture reforms. This time, however, he should ensure that farmers benefit from the **full-suite of reforms**. In that context Mr Ghanwat said that he is releasing today a 200-page preliminary draft **Discussion Paper on agriculture policy** to lay out the full-suite of reforms needed for agriculture.

Mr Ghanwat said that India's farmers must get involved in such policy discussions. He invited farmers and the people of India more generally to send their suggestions for improvement of the Discussion Paper at [discussion@swatantra.org.in](mailto:discussion@swatantra.org.in). He said that he would release the final Paper later in 2022 at a large gathering of farmers from across the country.

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### Notes for Editors

Swatantra Bharat Party was founded in 1994 in the tradition of Rajaji's Swatantra Party by Sharad Joshi (who became a member of the Rajya Sabha in 2004). In 2013, Sanjeev Sabhlok helped establish Swarna Bharat Party (<http://swarnabharat.in>). On 12 March 2022, Swatantra Bharat Paksha has resolved to merge into Swarna Bharat Party. The merger is now being progressed.

An electronic copy of this press release, letter to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Report of the Supreme Court Committee's on Farm Laws, and a Preliminary Draft Discussion Paper is available at: <https://www.swatantra.org.in/public-release-report-of-the-supreme-court-committee-on-farm-laws/>

### Contacts:

Anil Ghanwat, senior leader of Shetkari Sanghatana and President, Swatantra Bharat Party, Ph: 9923707646, email: [ghanwatanil77@gmail.com](mailto:ghanwatanil77@gmail.com)

Sanjeev Sabhlok, Adviser, [sabhlok@gmail.com](mailto:sabhlok@gmail.com)