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More than half of farmers oppose farm laws: survey

Almost 40% fear new laws will end state-run markets

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

More than half of Indian farmers oppose the three farm reform laws passed by Parliament last month, while only 35% support them, according to a new survey in 16 States conducted by Gaon Connection Insights. Almost 40% expressed fear that the new laws will end state-run markets and government procurement at minimum support prices, and almost 60% are in favour of a legal guarantee for MSPs.

Despite the widespread opposition to these laws, almost 44% of respondents said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government was "pro-farmer", while 28% said it was "anti-farmer." Asked about whom the Modi government supports, however, about 35% of those surveyed thought that it supports farmers, while 30% felt that it supports private companies and multinationals, and 15% said the govern-

What farmers said

A look at some highlights from the latest rural survey conducted by Gaon Connection

Yes No Can't say

Do you support the three recent agri laws?

35

52

13

Do you think MSP system should be made into a mandatory law?

59

16

25

Do you think because of the three new agri laws, the mandi/APMC system will end?

39

27

34

ment supports middlemen and traders.

Gaon Connection did a face-to-face survey of a sample of more than 5,000 farmers, three-fourths of whom own less than five acres of land, in 53 districts across 16 States between October 3 and 9. It found that state-run *mandis* are the most popular medium of produce sale across the country (36%), followed by private traders (26%). Cur-

rently, only 2% sell to corporates.

The northwestern States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh which have the highest proportion of sales in state-run markets (78%), also have the highest rates of opposition to the new reform laws (77%).

The west was, however, the only region where supporters of the new laws (52%) narrowly overtook the opposition (48%).