

## JD(S) urges CM to provide support price for tobacco crop

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JD(S) leader S. R. Mahesh (third from left) addressing a press conference in Mysuru on Saturday. | Photo Credit: M. A. Sriram

Senior JD(S) leader and former Minister S. R. Mahesh has urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to announce a support price of ₹30 to ₹50 per kg for tobacco cultivated in the State.

Addressing a press conference in Mysuru on Saturday, Mr. Mahesh pointed out that tobacco was cultivated mostly in five taluks of the state including Periyapatna, Hunsur, H. D. Kote and K. R. Nagar in Mysuru district, besides Arakalgud in Hassan district.

Mr. Siddaramaiah, who himself hailed from Mysuru district, should announce a support price for the tobacco, which is the main crop for the farmers in these five taluks.

In view of the sudden crash in prices of tobacco, Mr. Mahesh said the JD(S) leaders were also making sincere efforts to help the farmers through the Centre and referred to their meeting with Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal in New Delhi on Friday.

He said Mr. Goyal had assured a JD(S) delegation including former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda and Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H. D. Kumaraswamy that the situation will improve from Monday.

Mr. Goyal had instructed the Secretaries of Commerce Department to write to the Ambassadors of 190 countries to extend an invitation for the companies in their respective countries to purchase the tobacco they required directly from the market.

Earlier, Hunsur MLA G. D. Harish Gowda said the collapse in prices of tobacco from ₹320 per kg when the auction season began in October to ₹230 per kg recently had badly hit the farmers.

After the Union Commerce Ministry's direction to various tobacco companies including ITC, which purchases about 45 per cent of the produce in Karnataka, the situation had improved slightly.

He said the farmers were hopeful that the situation would improve further by Monday. Though the authorities have assured them an average price of tobacco ₹300 to ₹ 320, Mr. Gowda said they had sought an average price higher than last year.

Meanwhile, responding to complaints of scarcity of LPG and petrol in the wake of the war US-Israel was waging on Iran, Mr. Mahesh said the Centre has made it clear that there is no shortage of fuel in the country.

“If an artificial scarcity is being created, it is the responsibility of the State Government to act against hoarders and black marketeers of fuel,” Mr Mahesh said.

Mysuru district JD(S) President and former T. Narsipura MLA Ashwin Kumar was also present at the press conference.

**Source:** <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/jds-urges-cm-to-provide-support-price-for-tobacco-crop/article70742945.ece>