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Farmers during their ongoing protest in New Delhi, PTI

Farmers reject Centre's offer to suspend agri laws

SAGAR KULKARNI NEW DELHI, DHŅS-

Agitating farmers on Thursdayrejected the Modigovernment's offer to suspend the three farm laws for 18 months, insisting on a complete rollback of the agricultural reforms and dashing hopes for an end to the 58-day protests.

The outright rejection of offer came after marathon meetings of the farmers' unions on the eve of the lIth round of talks with the ministerial panel on Friday.

Indication of the tough line taken by the farmers was available on Thursday afternoon when the Sanyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) rejected suggestions by the Delhi Police to change the route of the Kisan Parade planned for Republic Day. "They wanted us to hold the tractor rally outside Delhi, but we will go ahead as planned," SKM leader Darshan Pal told reporters.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court-appointed committee began consultations with 10 farmers' organisations from eight states. The apex court had on January 11 suspended the implementation of the three laws and asked the committee to submit its report within two months.