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Title: Request to set up an Agricultural Research Centre in Namakkal district to ensure good production of Tapioca cultivation and announce compensation to farmers whose crops are damaged due to Mealy bug.

**\*SHRI A. K. P. CHINRAJ (NAMAKKAL):** Hon. Speaker Sir, Vanakkam. Tapioca cultivation is carried out in large scale by several thousands of farmers in Namakkal district and surrounding districts of Salem, Kallakurichi and Erode of Tamil Nadu. Several thousands of farmers faced huge losses amounting to Crores of Rupees due to the Mealy bug or white insect infestation in the Tapioca plants. Parasites which can kill these mealy bugs are not at present available in India. The principal Secretary of Tamil Nadu Government has announced that such parasites are available in Thailand. Such parasites should be imported to India and research should be carried out in the Research Centre located in Bangalore on these parasites which can kill mealy bugs. This can help in controlling the mealy bugs as well as increasing the Tapioca production in Tamil Nadu. Turmeric, banana, betel leaves and pepper are cultivated in large scale in Namakkal district. I therefore request you to set up a world class agricultural research centre in Namakkal district so as to ensure record production of Tapioca cultivation without the negative impact of mealy bugs. Moreover, I urge upon the Union Government to announce Minimum Support Price, MSP for Tapioca or Cassava crops. Thank you.