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Title: Issue regarding problems faced by Chilli growers and demand to establish a Chilli Board in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh.

**SHRI LAVU SRI KRISHNA DEVARAYALU (NARASARAOPET):**

Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. I also thank you for running this august House for these many hours. Today, I was reading in the newspapers that this House has worked the longest ever in the last 20 years. So, I thank you for making us work very hard.

The issue that I would like to mention here is about Andhra Pradesh and my District Guntur. In Andhra Pradesh, red chilli is grown in around 1.2 lakh hectares every year. In my District, there are almost 42 *Mandals* out of 57 *Mandals* where chilli is grown, but the productivity per acre is pretty low when compared to countries like China.

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**21.26 hrs**

(Dr. Kirit P. Solanki *in the Chair*)

We get less than 5,000 kg. per hectare. The low productivity is due to use of obsolete and outdated technology, and use of poor seeds by chilli farmers coupled with little help that they are getting either from the Spice Board or the Ministry of Agriculture. On an average, the farmers are getting around Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 7,000 as the market price for 100 kg. This price hardly gets them the input cost.

Secondly, chilli is a highly labour-intensive crop providing employment opportunities for a period of about eight months, and nearly, 410 people are required per acre for weeding, harvesting,

grading, packaging, processing, etc. There is an urgent need to improve productivity and quality in order to maintain leadership in chilli production. This can only be done by having a separate Chilli Board, which can focus mainly on chilli related areas like improvisation of seeds, use of better technology and marketing, guiding farmers on techniques, etc.

This has been a long-standing demand, namely, to have a Chilli Board in Guntur. I hope that the Ministry will look into this issue, and establish a Chilli Board in Guntur. Thank you very much, Sir.