

Regarding plight of Arecanut farmers affected by spread of yellow disease in Dakshina Kannada Parliamentary Constituency-laid

CAPTAIN BRIJESH CHOWTA (DAKSHINA KANNADA): I would like to bring to the attention of the Government towards the distress that Arecanut farmers in my constituency are facing owing to the spread of Yellow Disease and seek remedial measures to address the same. India is the largest producer and consumer of arecanut in the world and the crop also has a cultural significance. Dakshina Kannada, has a gross cropped area of 1.74 lakh ha wherein the major crop is arecanut which covers 84,157a ha - almost 50 % of the cropped area. But the Yellow Leaf Disease, caused by phytoplasma and spread through plant hoppers, poses a serious challenge as high incidence and intensity of the spread of the disease has caused massive crop loss to our farmers. Campco reported that over 16,000 ha of areca plantations had been destroyed owing to the yellow disease and 6000 of their farmers had reported to have been affected. This can be addressed with a one-time compensation and funding the setting up of a research center for developing disease-resistant variety of areca as well as controlling the spread by carriers of the disease. Collective action and commitment can address the concerns that loom over the future of arecanut cultivation in Dakshina Kannada.