

**Title: Need to ban cultivation of Red Algae at Munaikadu near National Marine Park, Tamil Nadu, with a view to protect bio-diversity of the region.**

**SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI):** Palk Strait near Rameshwaram coast in Tamil Nadu has abundant coral reef and has rich bio-diversity and forms part of National Marine Park. Unfortunately, a variety of Red Algae which can destroy coral reef is being cultivated and harvested at Munaikadu near National Marine Park. In the name of providing employment to fisher women, Pepsi, a multinational company, started this lucrative Algae farm with the support of the State Government. Eminent agricultural scientists like Dr. M.S. Swaminathan have expressed serious concern about this very dangerous species of Red Algae. While creating imbalance in the bio-diversity, this Red Algae can only richly benefit the multinational company causing destruction to our flora and fauna in that region. The dried *Euchema Cottonii*, (i.e. this alien variety of Red Algae) costs about Rs.1 lakh per tonne in the international market and is normally collected from seabed. But unfortunately Pepsi India Ltd., had exploitatively converted this as farm produce and has started harvesting it in a farm stretching over 400 hectares of land endangering our ecosystem. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to ban this cultivation of Red Algae by Pepsi India Ltd., which uses Carrageenan, the extract from this rare Algae for boosting the taste and density of cool drinks and cocktails.