

Title: Urged upon the Government to reconsider the decision regarding reduction of import duty on Palm Oil.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (MAVELIKARA): I thank you for allowing me to raise this very important matter in this august House. In the last Session of Parliament, with the help of the Speaker and the Deputy-Speaker, all the MPs of Kerala approached the Ministers of Agriculture and the Finance and as a result the import duty on Palm oil was raised from 14 per cent to 16 per cent. Today, we are shocked to hear that the Government of India has cut 10 per cent duty on Palm oil. The Chair is aware of the plight of the coconut growers in the country. With great effort we could pressurise the Government to enhance the duty to 16 per cent. It has been reported in almost all the newspapers that the issue of hike in import duty of Palm oil has dominated the visit of Shri Vajpayee to Kuala Lumpur in May this year. The Malaysian officials, during a bilateral meeting, responding to the decision said that this would be the first step towards further reduction. That means, the Government of India has given an assurance to the Malaysian officials that this is the first step to reduce the import duty on Palm oil. So, in coming days there would be more cut on import duty which is detrimental to the coconut growers of the Southern India.

Through you, I would urge upon the Government to reconsider the decision regarding reduction of import duty on Coconut otherwise, it is going to create problem in the southern India. Hon. Speaker may please take note of it and direct the Government to take up this very important issue....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Both, Shri Radhakrishnan and Shri George Francis, can associate with Shri Ramesh Chennithala.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : The hon. Speaker should give some direction to the Government....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You can associate yourself with Shri Ramesh Chennithala.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, the Government should respond to this.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (BADAGARA): Thank you very much for this opportunity....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Both of you can associate with Shri Ramesh Chennithala.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should go on record except what Prof. Premajam says.

(*Interruptions*)*