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Title: Need to provide adequate relief to Arecanut growers in Udupi district and adjoining areas of Dakshin Kannada in Karnataka- Laid.

SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (UDUPI): Arecanut (Supari) is the main plantation crop grown in my district Udupi and adjoining areas in Dakshina Kannada and the plantersâ€™ mainly small and marginal farmers depend on this crop for survival. The harvesting season for Arecanut is from mid-December to end of April, when large quantities of produce arrive in markets.

For the last few years, the market for Arecanut remains depressed for want of serious buyers willing to pay a remunerative price to the producer. The Central Govt.'s market intervention scheme has only partially given relief to the farmers, since procurement operations do not last for the whole duration of the season probably because funds with the procurement agencies like NAFED etc exhaust after initial round of procurement. There is also a demand from the local Agricultural Produce Market Societies for increase in the minimum support price for Areca Rs. 60,000/- to Rs. 75,000/- per quintal.

The harvest season for Areca has already commenced. I would request the Central to activate the market intervention process in the right earnest in my district and adjoining trading centres and continue the same till end April 2003 by equipping the procurement agencies with adequate fund allocations.