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Title: Need to write-off loans taken by coffee growers from Coffee Board in Wayanad district, Kerala.

SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN (CALICUT): I would like to raise a matter regarding the deteriorating plight of the coffee growers in Wayanad district of Kerala owing to the loans they had availed from the Coffee Board during the drought of 1983-84 period. The principal amount is Rs.3,89,81,686.85. It has swelled to Rs.19,19,71,556.41 as on 5-2-2003, about five times more than the principal amount of loan. This is the case after 20 years of debt trap. The fact is that the loan from the Central Government by Coffee Board is being adjusted from the annual Budget release of the Central Government. The Coffee Board, which has not adhered to coffee-pooling, is now spending its surplus funds on Coffee-Melas (one at Bangalore and another at Shillong), Coffee-film, etc., for attracting the foreign market. Many of these endeavours have turned out to be a mere waste of money. As the Central Government has already received the loan amount through the annual Budget release, it is unjust to squeeze the poor cultivators for the same thing. Why should the Board amass money? I, therefore, request the Government to take appropriate steps to write-off the entire loan or the full interest portion of the loan and protect the coffee growers.