

Title: Need to take effective steps to control the prices of arecanut and milling quality copra - Laid.

SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (UDUPI) : The prices of arecanut and milling copra crops have hit a low which are far below the production cost (inputs) and the middlemen are out to exploit the misery of the hapless farmers. The centre seems to have abdicated its responsibility to intervene in the market through its procurement agencies like NAFED providing the farmers an outlet for their produce at a remunerative price. NAFED's procurement has been sporadic with no sign of clearing the stocks. For some months now the procurement operations have been suspended by NAFED because of lack of funds at its disposal.

Compounding this problem of low prices is the rampant import of edible oils like Palm Oil and Soyabean Oil which has hit the local oil milling industry resulting in stoppage of Copra purchase by the oil milling industry.

I urge the Government to initiate a two-pronged action. First, to resume procurement operations by NAFED by providing more funds for its procurement. Secondly, to curb dumping of edible oil into India under OGL, by imposing Counter-vailing duties to provide the domestic oil industry a level playing field.