

Title : Need to provide welfare measures for the toddy workers in the country.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the problems faced by the workers of the toddy industry in my State.

Sir, toddy is an alcoholic beverage which is tapped from coconut and palm trees. Even though it is considered as an alcoholic drink, its alcohol content is only six per cent and it is very nutrient also.

In my State, nearly two lakh workers are involved in the toddy industry but due to the pitfalls in the *Abkari* Policy formulated by the State Government from time to time, this sector is neglected and more importance is given to the other liquors. Apart from this, due to the disease of the coconut tree, toddy production is also reduced. With the result, the workers in this industry are losing their jobs and the industry is on the decline.

Here, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister for Food Processing. By neutralising the alcohol content in it and by using advanced technology, we can preserve it. It can be used as soft drink or a soft beverage. For this purpose, the State Government needs the assistance of the Centre. Some proposals and projects are already there in this regard. Therefore, I would like to submit that some assistance must be given to this industry so that it can be sustained and the jobs of two lakh workers who are working in this industry can be saved.