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Title: Need to generate special scheme for financing grain milling activity - laid.

DR. R. SENTHIL (DHARMAPURI): The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is having special schemes for financing activities like Fruit and vegetable processing, Food grain milling and Processing & refrigeration of dairy products and eight other activities.

While the government is concentrating on other activities it has selectively left grain milling. Grain milling is a large employer in many states including Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. But leaving this activity has resulted in great difficulty for the people involved in this activity. The Annual Report 2005-2006 shows that the Government has allocation of less than 5% of its allocation for this purpose. The justification given by the Ministry is that it was felt that priority should be given to processing and enhancing shelf life of perishable items so as to reduce wastage and encourage value addition in that sector. Considering that rice/pulses/flour are consumed in the processed form only the primary processing in these sectors adds little to shelf life, wastage control and value addition, it has been decided to not to accept fresh proposal for these sectors viz, rice, flour & pulse milling from the 2004-2005'.

This is totally not acceptable. No body can consume unprocessed rice or flour. Only milling adds value to rice. No body can eat paddy. This decision appears to be taken without consulting all the stake holders. It appears that it had no approval from either the planning Commission or finance approval. I request the Honorable Minister to look into the matter and do the necessary for developing this industry.