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Title: Need to increase the minimum support price for cotton and ensure that the common purchases of Cotton Corporation of India are made at the support price fixed.

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO (GUNTUR): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, in the State of Andhra Pradesh, there has been an increase of area in cotton sales/production during the year 2003-04 and 2004-05. The production in Andhra Pradesh State has been increased from 26.62 lakh bales to 30.50 lakh bales, and in Guntur District alone, there is an increase from 11.72 lakh bales to 15 lakh bales.

The minimum support price as fixed by the Price Fixation Committee for the popular varieties like Bunny Brahma @ Rs. 2,010 and MCU-5 @ Rs. 2,035 per quintal whereas the local market price prevailing in the market is Rs. 1,200 to Rs. 1,600 depending on the variety and quality.

The Cotton Corporation of India has entered the market, but it has entered in some districts like Adilabad and are only paying a rate of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 1,900 per quintal on the pretext that the count, strength, staple length, moisture and micronaire are not as per the standards.

Therefore, I request the Government of India to take the following steps to mitigate hardships being faced by cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh:

1. To increase the minimum support price for cotton to Rs. 2,500 per quintal;
2. The Government of India should ensure that the Cotton Corporation of India purchases the cotton at minimum support price without resorting to cuts on the pretext of standards; and
3. To explore possibility of increasing the exports to various countries.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to kindly consider these steps at an early date to avoid hardships that may be faced by the cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh.