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Title: Need to set up a Directorate for Cashew development with the Headquarter at Kollam, Kerala to boost the Cashew industry and value addition of Cashew products.

SHRI P. RAJENDRAN (QUILON): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government, through you, to a matter of urgent public importance. Kollam District in Kerala is known as the Capital of the cashew industry of the nation as the cashew processing industry of the nation is concentrated in the district and surrounding areas of Allappuzha, Pathanamthitta and Thiruvananthapuram districts. The cashew processing labourers of Kollam are very much celebrated from the very beginning of the industry in India for their skills and hence the cashew nuts produced in Kollam are esteemed in the world market.

The quantum of exporting of cashew nuts from Kollam is more than 50,000 metric tonnes and thus the district collects more than Rs. 1,500 of foreign exchange per annum. The cashew industry of Kollam consists of direct exporters, large scale manufacturers, small scale processors and more than two lakhs of labourers engaged in about 500 factories in Kollam. The potential for growth of the cashew processing sector is very high if adequate common facility centres are created, raw material is made available and market facilities are provided. The Government of India implements several projects through various agencies for the uplift of the cashew industry. Recently, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Government of India has given the status of 'Town of Export Excellence for Cashew' to Kollam. The Directorate of Cashew Nut and Cocoa Development under the Ministry of Agriculture administers the schemes for the cashew development of the Government.

So, it will be more appreciable if the Government takes immediate steps to constitute a separate directorate or agency for cashew development with its headquarters at Kollam so that it will give a boost to the cashew industry and allied activities like cashew plantations and value addition of cashew products.