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Title: Need to amend Rubber Act to protect rubber growers from destruction of rubber plants.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMATHITTA): Hon. Chairman, I take this opportunity to draw the attention of this august House to a serious matter. Attacks on agricultural land are becoming common incidents in Kerala. In my Constituency alone there have been three such incidents. In many places in Kerala paddy cultivators are not being allowed to reap their yield. Besides, coconut trees, areca nut, banana, palms, cocoa, rubber plants etc., are being cut down.

The Government of Kerala is not able to realize the gravity of the issue as a consequence of which the culprits are able to go on indulging in such activities without any fear. I would request the House to express its concern to the Government of Kerala over this issue. In addition to that, I would request the Central Government to take strong measures to create a sense of security among the farmers and start effective schemes to protect their interests. Recent atrocities over cultivators in Kerala have created a sense of distress and a feeling of insecurity among the farming community.

Even though India is considered an agrarian country, agricultural sector has been facing many challenges for a long time. These challenges vary from low productivity to natural calamities, increasing cost of agriculture and meager returns for producers, etc. As a result, farmers are forced to commit suicide. Today farmers are the most impoverished community in the country. These developments created a notion that agricultural sector is insecure in India. It should be noted that the new generation in our country is not interested in agriculture.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your demand?

SHRI ANTO ANTONY: If there is no step taken to raise the morale of farming community, food security in our country would be collapsed. Besides the above challenges, farmers are facing threat from antisocial elements. The Government should take this matter seriously. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

**18.52 hrs**

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock*

*on Friday, March 12, 2010/Phalguna 21, 1931 (Saka).*

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\* Not recorded.

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\* Laid on the Table and also Placed in Library, See No. LT-1885/15/10

\* Treated as laid on the Table.

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\* English translation of the Speech originally delivered in Tamil.

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