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Title: Fall in the prices of Silk Cocoon and Raw Silk in the country.

SHRI R. DHRUVANARAYANA (CHAMRAJANAGAR): I would like to draw the attention of the House to the plight of sericulture farmers, who are facing severe problems in Karnataka as well as in other parts of the country. Our Minister of Textiles is also present here in the House. Earlier, the silk cocoon price was Rs.300 per kilogram. Now, the prices have suddenly come down to Rs.120 per kilogram. A lot of agitation is going on in the State of Karnataka because in the last Budget Session, the Finance Minister had reduced the raw silk import duty from 30 per cent to 5 per cent. The China silk is heavily dumped here and due to that reason our sericulture farmers are facing severe problems.

I would like to urge upon the Union Government to take necessary steps to give minimum support price for silk cocoon, that is, Rs.300 per kilogram and enhance the raw silk import duty from 5 per cent to 30 per cent. It is because a lot of agitation is going on in our State.

So, I would kindly request our hon. Minister who is sitting here to take necessary steps to safeguard our farmers' interest and enhance the raw silk import duty from 5 per cent to 30 per cent and give minimum support price to farmers as early as possible.