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Title: Need to take steps for relief and rehabilitation of victims of Endosulfan pesticides in Karnataka and Kerala.

KUMARI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE (UDUPI CHIKMAGALUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am raising an urgent matter of public importance.

Endosulfan, which is a dangerous agrichemical pesticide, has poisoned thousands of Indian people over the last five decades. In Karnataka and Kerala, aerial spray of Endosulfan began in 1980s as a measure to control 'T' mosquito bug in cashew nut plantation. But the use of Endosulfan has caused physical and mental ailments amongst thousands of children and adults.

Long-term exposure of this pesticide has caused high incidence of central nervous system disorders like cerebral palsy, cancers, body deformations, reproductive disorders, miscarriages, skin problems, infertility, mental retardation and depression. The killer pesticide has been found in food, soil, air and body tissues in almost all parts of our country. High level of pesticide has been found in human blood and breast milk in Karnataka and Kerala.

Recently, in Kasargod, Kerala, parents committed suicide after killing their 15 year old son, an Endosulfan victim. More than 7,000 people have been affected with Endosulfan in Karnataka alone and around 10,000 people have been affected with Endosulfan in Kasargod.

So, on humanitarian grounds, more than 17,000 victims are in need of support, help and financial assistance from the Union Government.

Hence I would request the Union Government especially the Minister of Health to set up a corpus amount for the relief and rehabilitation of these victims, to provide medical facilities for the affected people, and to issue Antyodaya Ration Cards to the affected families. There is also a need of medical examination of genetic defects.