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Title: Regarding drought affected coconut plantations in Karnataka.

SHRI D.K. SURESH (BANGALORE RURAL): Madam Speaker, coconut is an important plantation crop of Karnataka State. It is grown in 4.91 lakh hectare accounting for 26 per cent of the total area under horticulture crops. The State produces about 528 crore of coconuts a year and ranks second in the country.

However in the last three to five years, 70 to 80 per cent of the total coconut growing area has been affected severely due to recurring droughts. It has resulted in a financial loss of over Rs. 1,000 crore due to drying up of coconut palms. Now, the farmers are in deep distress. Almost 1.65 lakh hectare of coconut gardens have become unproductive; and many of them have dried up completely.

Sir, Kerala, the number one producer of coconut, underwent the same problem, but they have been given a rejuvenation package by the Coconut Development Board in the Union Budget.

In order to support the farmers of Karnataka, the Government of Karnataka has sent a rejuvenation proposal to the Central Government for Rs. 893 crore. But so far, no action has been taken on this proposal. Unlike other horticulture crops, coconut rejuvenation and replanting take years for its rejuvenation and revival.

I would, therefore, want to know from the Union Government if there are any steps being taken to rejuvenate and provide alternative cropping in the drought affected coconut gardens of Karnataka and process the rejuvenation proposal made by the Government of Karnataka. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER:

Kumari Shobha Karandlaje,

Shri R. Dhruvanaryana,

Shri S.P. Muddahanume Gowda,

Shri B.N. Chandrappa,

Adv. Joice George,

Shri M.B. Rajesh and

Shri Mullappally Ramchandran are allowed to associate themselves on the issue raised by Shri D.K. Suresh.

...(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Yes, you can associate. You give the slips.