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Title: Regarding drop in price of cotton in the country.

SHRI SHIVKUMAR UDASI (HAVERI): Thank you, Madam, Speaker for giving me this opportunity to raise an important issue of price drop of cotton in this country.

We have 14 crore farmers out of which 11 crore are small and marginal farmers. Specifically to talk about cotton, Madam, we grow around 4 crore bales of cotton every year. In the last one week or 15 days the price of cotton has come down seriously and they have been affected by this. The price per bale of cotton is around Rs.15,000. So, the entire cotton market will be around Rs.60,000 crore. Earlier, the price was more than Rs.20,000 to Rs.25,000 per bale. Hence, the market of total cotton grown in our country was around Rs.80,000 to Rs.1,00,000 crore. Farmers are losing that much of money for which the Government has to intervene through CCI and purchase cotton so as to protect the farmers' interest.

I want to make one general point here. Agriculture should be brought into an industry status. We call it subsidy for farmers. We call it incentives for the corporate. They call it sops for the middle class. So, agriculture should be given an industry status.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Devji M. Patel is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Shivkumar Udasi.