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Title: Need to provide a special package for the cashew farmers in Tamil Nadu and also set up a cashew Fruit Processing Unit in Chidambaram in the State .

SHRI M. CHANDRAKASI (CHIDAMBARAM) : Tamil Nadu ranks 6th among the largest cashew-nut producing states in India. In Cuddalore and Ariyalur districts of Tamil Nadu, cashew growing is the main cultivation activity of the farmers. The cashew farmers of Tamil Nadu suffered a huge crop loss due to Thane cyclone. They are the most under-nourished agriculturists. In order to rehabilitate the cashew farmers and to go for re-plantation adopting high density crop pattern, the Government of Tamil Nadu sent a proposal to the Union Government asking for a subsidy of Rs.10,000 per acre covering 340 hectares of cashew plantation area. Such funding pattern from 75:25 is sought to be changed by the present Union Government to 50:50. On behalf of the cashew farmers and on behalf of our State Government, I would like to request the Union Government to maintain the status quo as 75% from Centre and 25% from the States. The cashew farmers in Tamil Nadu have to overcome the problem of inadequate supply of fertilizers, pest-attacks, non-availability of marketing infrastrucutre and above all the vagaries of weather. Since the Centre has not provided minimum support price or procurement centres, the cashew farmers are left at the mercy of private businessmen and they do not get remunerative price.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to give a special packages to the cashew farmers of Cuddalore and Ariyalur under National Horticulture Mission. While other States are fully utilizing both the cashew fruits and nuts gainfully, farmers in Tamil Nadu are not able to process the cashew fruits to produce cashew juice. So, it is also requested to set up a Cashew Fruit Processing Unit in Chidambaram under the National Agricultural Development Programme.