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Title:Need to extend financial assistance to create village clusters to produce medicinal plants in Dindigul Parliamentary Constituency.

SHRI M. UDHAYAKUMAR (DINDIGUL): Thank you, Deputy Speaker, Sir.

India is a veritable emporium of medicinal and aromatic plants. It has been estimated that out of 15,000 higher plants occurring in India, 9,000 are commonly useful, of which 7,500 are medicinal, 3,900 are edible, 700 are culturally important, 525 are used for fibre, 400 are fodder, 300 for pesticide and insecticide, 300 for gum, resin, and dye, and 100 for incense and perfume.

In Tamil Nadu, the Forest Department of the Government of hon. Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has established a Medicinal Plants Conseration Area in Alagarmalai Reserve Forest of Alagarkovil Range in Dindigul district.

I urge the Central Government to extend financial assistance to create village clusters to produce medicinal plants in large scale in certain pockets of the district this year. This will help to produce the cash crop *superbily*, whose botanical name is *gloriosa superba* and is popularly known as *karvali kizhangu* in 65 hectares in Oddanchatram taluk and Pottikampatti, Kallimandhayam, Chikkamanaickenpatti and sixteen other villages in Oddanchatram taluk of my Dindigul constituency. This would bring all these areas under one village cluster to produce this crop.

I urge the Central Government to further develop horticulture farms under the National Horticulture Mission at Ambilikkai near Oddanchatram. I also request that more clusters be formed for mass production of medicinal plants in one area as such efforts would help buyers purchase large quantities from a single place.

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Dr. Kirit Solanki is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri M. Udhayakumar.