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Title: Regarding the issue relating to coconut copra.

SHRI C. MAHENDRAN (POLLACHI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, coconut farming is an important occupation of people of my Pollachi constituency. Coconut oil is the healthiest of edible oils. It is much healthier than palm oil. There is a growing demand for supply of coconut and coconut oil through the Public Distribution System.

Our hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, *Puratchi Thalaivi Amma*, has been taking various effective steps to encourage coconut farmers in Tamil Nadu.

Instead of importing palm oil, indigenous production of coconut has to be encouraged. By providing a good Minimum Support Price for coconut and increasing import duty on palm oil, indigenous production and supply of coconuts and coconut oil will increase.

The purchasing price of milling copra has to be increased to Rs. 140 per kilogram. I have raised this issue on the floor of the House many times. I wish to bring to the kind attention of this august House that the Union Government has to take immediate steps to increase the import duty on import of palm oil as also to increase the export of coconut and coconut oil. This will be the ultimate solution to uplift the economic status of coconut growers of our country.

Therefore, I would urge upon the Union Government to increase the MSP of milling copra to Rs. 140 per kilogram and to encourage export of coconut and coconut oil to uplift the economic status of coconut growers of our country.

Thank you.

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri P.K. Biju, Shri N.K. Premachandran, Shri Mullappally Ramachandran and Shri M.K. Raghavan are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri C. Mahendran.