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**Title:** Requests the government to intervene in an unprecedented economic crisis occurring in Kerala due to steep fall in the prices of rubber to save the interests of the rubber cultivators.

12.00 hrs.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (KOTTAYAM): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is an unprecedented economic crisis occurring in Kerala due to steep fall in the prices of rubber. Some 8,38,000 cultivators cultivate this crop in our State and this is one of the main pillars of our economy. This crop was developed in Kerala with ample assistance of the Central Government through the Rubber Board. Earlier, whenever this sort of a situation occurred, whenever the prices of rubber fell, the Central Government used to intervene. But those are all stories of the past.

Now, this steep fall has occurred due to variety of factors, and the main factor being the liberalisation of import, the import of natural and synthetic rubber, especially, polyurethane and rubber tyres. All these have collectively helped in this process.

So, Sir, my humble request to the Central Government is that they should urgently intervene in this matter to save the interests of the rubber cultivators because the Kerala economy is crumbling. This is a very serious situation there. Some urgent steps should be taken in this regard by the Central Government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri C. Gopal.

... (Interruptions)

">SHRI E. AHAMED (MANJERI): Sir, one minute, please.

This is affecting the entire State of Kerala. Kerala is in the doldrums because its economy is shattering. And, it is all because of the rubber. And, the Government of India is becoming a mute spectator in this matter. The cultivators, especially those, who have got only two or three acres of rubber cultivation, have been put to great difficulties and hardships.

So, I urge upon the Government of India, especially, the hon. Prime Minister to intervene in this matter because it is affecting the State economy, the poor people and the cultivators in Kerala.

Therefore, the rubber cultivators, the rubber agriculturists should be saved and appropriate steps should be taken. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Order in the House, please.