

**Sixteenth Loksabha**

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Title: Regarding alleged duty evasion in import of black pepper - Laid.

**ADV. JOICE GEORGE (IDUKKI):** The general import duty of black pepper is 70% to protect the interest of the farmers, however under ASEAN Free Trade Agreement(FTA), the import duty of pepper from Vietnam have been reduced to 51%. The FTA with Sri Lanka under South Asian area and India Sri Lanka FTA, the import duty has been reduced to 8% and duty free for 2500 tonnes respectively. Large quantity of Vietnam pepper is being imported through Sri Lanka by bogusly creating documents of Sri Lankan origin for availing the benefits of the bipartite agreement between Sri Lanka and India. To restrict indiscriminate import of Vietnam pepper through Sri Lanka, our Government have fixed the MIP of black pepper at Rs.500/kg. The Government is losing huge sums by way of duty evasion. The large scale foreign exchange is being passed out through this channel of pepper import at the Minimum Import Price of Rs.500/KG by creating bogus documents of Sri Lankan origin. Urgent intervention is requested.