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Title: Regarding problems faced by fire cracker industry in Tamil Nadu - Laid

SHRI T. RADHAKRISHNAN (VIRUDHUNAGAR): Indian Fireworks Industry ranks second in the world, in terms of volume of production next to China. Tamil Nadu produces a major share of the total all India cracker production. In Tamil Nadu, Virudhunagar district is the leading fire cracker producing centre and employs more than lakh workers. Virudhunagar district being a drought prone area, this industry is the only source of livelihood for lakhs of people working in fire cracker industry. Former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had expressed her full support for the development and prosperity of fire cracker industry.

In the last five years, the domestic fire cracker industry has been badly affected by illegal import of Chinese crackers. However, the latest order of Supreme Court has further affected domestic fire cracker industry. In its order the Supreme Court has banned the use of barium salts in fireworks to reduce pollution and noise and also allowed small window of two hours for bursting crackers on Diwali and that too for green crackers only. However, the Supreme Court has not taken into account the Rule No.3(3B) of Environment Protection Rule 1986 which exempts cracker industry because of short term emission. Secondly countries like UK and US have ordered usage of fireworks on Diwali day as an exceptional event. As most of the fire crackers are burst during Diwali day, in India it should have been allowed as Barium salts are not carcinogenic to humans as per International Standards. Now with the orders of Supreme Court, *green* crackers are only to be used during Diwali festival. However, in the absence of no clear definition or norm on green crackers, 1070 fire cracker units situated in and around Sivakasi are on verge of closure. Moreover this order has impacted sale by 50 percent and impacted the employment of workers. So it is necessary to arrange a meeting by the Union Government with Petroleum and Explosives

Safety organization (PESO), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) and Stake holders of industry to derive norms for green crackers.

Considering the grave problem being faced by fire cracker industry in my constituency, I call upon the government to formulate clear definition or norm on green crackers and also taken into account Rule 3(38) of Environment Protection Rule 1986 which exempts cracker industry because of short term emission.