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Title: Need to review Free Trade Agreements-laid.

SHRI G. S. BASAVARAJ (TUMKUR): To much relief of the farming and dairy sectors our Government has opted out of signing the RCEP in deference to the protests from activists and organisations, like Swadeshi Jagran Manch. Indian plantation lobby is already under severe threat from cheap and harmful arecanut imports through Sri Lanka under the guise of the extant Free Trade Agreements ultimately working for the ruin of Indian domestic plantation sector.

Smuggling of cheap and sub-standard arecanut, not fit for human consumption across the porous borders of Nepal and Bangladesh is rampant. Added to this is the dumping of similar commodities like arecanut, dessicated coconut etc. from Sri Lanka, under the guise of the existing Free Trade Agreement has virtually destabilised our domestic areca and coconut plantation sector. Many desiccated coconut processing units in my region have closed down with workers rendered jobless. I urge the Centre to review the FTAs in the national interest.