

Regarding need for establishment of National Chilli Research Centre in Palnadu district, Andhra Pradesh-Laid

SHRI LAVU SRIKRISHNA DEVARAYALU (NARASARAOPET): Urgent need to establish a National Chilli Research Centre in Palnadu district, Andhra Pradesh. The PalnaduGuntur region is Indias largest and most globally recognised chilli-producing cluster, contributing significantly to national production and export supply chains. Indias chilli exports continue to rise sharply in FY 2023-24, chilli exports reached US \$1,508.94 million (approximately ₹12,600 crore), with export volumes crossing 6 lakh tonnes. This underscores Indias global dominance and the critical importance of strengthening scientific research to support this high-value crop. Yet, chilli farmers in Palnadu face multiple challenges: absence of structured research support, lack of high-yield and disease-resistant varieties, and reliance on unhygienic, labour-intensive post-harvest drying methods that reduce quality and export competitiveness. Earlier interventions in Parliament have highlighted these gaps, and the need for a specialised national centre under ICAR has already been acknowledged. The Government of India has demonstrated strong commitment to spices research through initiatives like the Indo-Israel Centre of Excellence for Vegetables & Spices, showing clear precedent for further central investment in this belt. I therefore urge the Honble Union Agriculture Ministry to sanction a National Chilli Research Centre in Palnadu, ensuring internationally benchmarked R&D support for lakhs of chilli farmers and strengthening Indias growing export footprint.