

Title: Urged to look into the poor conditions of betel (pan) leaves growers of Contai constituency, in particular and all Eastern India in General.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONTAI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of this House and of the Central Government to the distressed condition being faced by the growers of betel leaves of my constituency, Contai, in particular and all over Eastern India in general where pan is grown, as a result of the steep competition given to them by the *pan masala* and *pan parag*. *Pan masala* is an injurious item and it is also a health hazard. A lot of chemicals go into it. But thanks to the electronic media which has been giving a lot of publicity to these products. People are switching their habits from proper

pan to *pan masala*. Something should be done. First of all it should be banned. Otherwise, the excise duty should be increased so that revenue can be increased and consumption of these items can also be progressively discouraged.