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Title : Reported decision to import fish from ASEAN countries.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Sir, India is the third largest producer of fish and the second largest producer of inland fish in the world. Last year, we have exported 4.75 lakh tonnes of fish earning Rs.6,200 crores to the Exchequer and domestic production worth is about Rs.22,000 crores. Around 11 million people are fully or partly engaged in the activities related to the fishing sector. Post-Tsunami changes in the marine eco-system has created difficulties in this sector. As per the recent Indo-ASEAN Independent Trade Agreement, the Government has initiated steps to import various kinds of fish from the ASEAN countries. Only prawns and shrimps varieties are exempted. Fish varieties in these countries are similar to India and our country is competing with these countries even in the international trade. Previously, the move of importing fish from Thailand had invited great furore among the traditional fishing sector. This move to import fish from the ASEAN countries will be a further shock to the fishing sector which has only started regaining from the impact of Tsunami.

Hence, I urge upon the Government to abandon the move to import fish from the ASEAN countries.