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Title : Need to speed up the processing of applications of farmers for financial assistance provided by National Horticulture Board (NHB) and set up at least four Regional Centres of NHB in Karnataka.

SHRI R. DHARUVANARAYANA (CHAMRAJANAGAR): National Horticulture Board (NHB) has been set up by the Government of India to encourage development of horticulture in the country. Regional offices of National Horticulture Board have been functioning in different States including Karnataka. The awareness regarding horticulture development and schemes of N.H.B. is increasing among the farmers. The number of applicants applying for availing the benefits of the scheme is also on the rise. But it is unfortunate that unnecessary delay in sorting of applications of farmers for financial assistance is causing concern.

In the last two years thousands of farmers suffered huge losses as their requests for financial assistance have not been processed and disposed of in time. I would like to give an example. Banana is a short term crop, within 10-12 months farmers harvest the crop. If banana farmers/growers wish to avail the financial benefits of NHB, their requisition should be processed as per the norms set by NHB. But NHB is taking more than 1-1/2 to 2 years to dispose of the request made by the farmers. It has been causing huge loss to the banana growers and other short term crop growers.

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\* Treated as laid on the Table.

Therefore, I urge upon the government to take immediate necessary action to expedite the disposal of applications so that farmers would avail all the assistance provided by NHB. I would also suggest to set up at least 4 Regional Centres of NHB in Karnataka.