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Title:Need to include cashew industry in the labour-intensive sector and in the list of industries eligible for interest subvention.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Cashew is one of the most labour intensive industries in India. More than 90% of the workers are from rural areas particularly from socially and economically backward sector. Cashew sector is providing employment to more than 10 lakh workers. Now these industries are facing crisis due to the competition from outside. Cashew processing is not included in the highly labour intensive sector. Hence the workers are not entitled for the benefits and welfare schemes for the highly labour-intensive sector.

Recently declared foreign trade policy of the government, duty scrip eligibility for all other nuts except cashew has been retained at 5% for all country ground codes. But for cashew kernels it has been drastically slashed down to 2% for country Group codes A & B and Nil for country group C. Considering the competition from Vietnam and South Africa, the present decision adversely affects cashew exporting, cashew processing and thereby cashew industry and more than 10 lakh of workers in the Industry. Therefore, I urge upon the government to include cashew industry in the labour intensive sector and in the list of industries eligible for interest subvention and also retain the duty scrip eligibility at 5% for cashew.