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Title: Need to reinstate the quota of rice to the state of Kerala.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Sir, thank you very much for allowing me to raise a matter of urgent public importance.

The prices of essential commodities are rising every day, and the Central Government is not taking effective steps to curtail the prices. The increase in the freight charges of Railways and increase of oil prices has resulted in exorbitant rise in prices of essential commodities. Earlier, the Government has reduced ration quota of rice to Kerala. Further, without any prior information, adding fuel to fire, the Government of India has again reduced the quota of rice to Kerala to be distributed through the public distribution system. This has resulted in the reduction of availability of rice in the market thereby increasing the prices.

Kerala is about to start Ramzan and Onam celebrations, and at this juncture the Central Government has curtailed the quota of rice drastically. Earlier, the APL card holders were allotted 9 kg rice and 2 kg wheat, which has been reduced to 6 kg and 1 kg respectively per card holder. The quota of rice to BPL card holders is 25 kg per family, which has been reduced to 22 kg now. The allotment of rice to PDS has been reduced from 1,36,000 tonnes to 1,22,000 tonnes per month. The reduction in the share of ration will result in reduction of rice to the beneficiaries of Annapurna and Antyodaya programmes also.

I would like to submit that the quota of rice to Kerala may be reinstated immediately, and extra quota of 1 lakh tonne may be allotted to Kerala for being distributed through PDS for the festive season.