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Title: Need to develop horticulture in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI M. UDHAYAKUMAR (DINDIGUL): Madam Speaker Vanakkam. I would also like to thank Amma.

Tamil Nadu has a rich diversity of horticultural crops namely tropical, subtropical and temperate crops due to the presence of seven agro ecological regions, each having a unique microclimate suitable for selected crops.

The National Horticultural Mission covers only 22 Districts, including our Dindigul district. Mango, banana, guava, grapes and aonia are the leading fruit crops in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu. The following food parks are proposed with a pilot plant for food processing, four cold storage units and a quality control lab. First one is the Nilakottai Food Park (Dindigul District) where the proposed facilities are like pack house, fruits and vegetables dehydration unit and fruits and vegetables processing unit. Nilakottai flower market is the popular market of Tamil Nadu for Storage of flowers like jasmine, rose, etc. Agro Economic Zone is also there for mango in Theni, Dindigul Madurai, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari.

Dindigul is a key District for horticulture produce in Tamil Nadu which produces mango, banana, aonia besides loose and bulbous flowers. The Oddanchatram market in Dindigul district handles 90 per cent of the produce from neighbouring districts and acts as a sourcing hub for domestic and export markets at Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram.

Tamil Nadu has 30 districts (including Chennai) and 385 blocks, governed by our leader Manbimigu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, well provided with administrative structure to implement the programmes stipulated under NHM of the State.

The performance of Tamil Nadu Government, under the able leadership of Manbimigu Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, in implementing the National Horticulture Mission is exemplary and was appreciated at the national level. Tamil Nadu was given the Best Performing State Award under the National Horticulture Mission. We request that the remaining nine districts may also be declared as NHM Districts, so that the farmers of these Districts will also get benefit of the NHM. And also I urge upon the Central Government to allocate sufficient fund under NHM to the proposed food park and AEZ.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri M. Udhayakumar.