

Proposal to import milk products opposed

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Members cutting across party lines in the Assembly have opposed the Centre's proposal of importing dairy products from countries like New Zealand and Australia.

Raising the issue during the debate on the State Budget in the Legislative Assembly on Saturday, G. Somashekara Reddy (BJP), former KMF chairman, opposed the import of byproducts of milk which would adversely affect the Indian dairy industry. Karnataka ranked second after Gujarat in milk production and therefore, any decision to import milk products would adversely hit domestic farmers, he said. Milk produc-

tion in the State has presently reached 80 lakh litres a day. Former Animal Husbandry Minister Venkatrao Nadagouda (JD-S) said import would reduce the demand for domestic dairy products.

The Confederation of All India Traders has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi against the possible nod by the Centre to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership that would eventually allow the import of dairy products. Until now, dairy imports were not allowed by India.

Earlier, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah demanded that the government should not reduce the incentive of ₹6 a litre of milk given to dairy farmers.