

Shri Sham Lal Saraf: May I know if it is indicated in this report that co-operative movement in its entirety should be tagged on to the panchayats, and also sister co-operatives like consumer co-operatives, industrial co-operatives and land co-operatives?

Shri Shyam Dhar Misra: It is not the intention of the Government to tag on co-operative movement to the Panchayati Raj movement. The only intention is to have a co-ordination between the two institutions to avoid duplication and conflict.

Disease Destroying Coconut Palms in Kerala

*1178. { **Shri A. K. Gopalan:**
Shri P. Kunhan:
Shri Umanath:
Shri Pottekatt:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether a disease called root and stem disease has been destroying coconut palms in Kerala for the last five years;

(b) whether any research has been conducted into the organism which causes this disease;

(c) what is the estimated number of trees affected by this disease;

(d) what is the number already destroyed; and

(e) what steps have been taken by Government to fight this disease?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): (a) There are two separate diseases called "Root(Wilt)" and "Stem Bleeding" affecting coconut palms in the State.

(b) Yes.

(c) the exact number of trees affected has not been estimated. The disease is estimated to have spread to 6

lakhs acres out of 11 lakhs acres under coconut in Kerala.

(d) No assessment of trees destroyed has been made.

(e) A scheme for spraying to control the root and leaf diseases of coconut trees is being implemented from the Second Five Year Plan onwards.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know whether the scheme that is proposed by the Government is the same scheme that has been there for the last five years, or is it a new scheme?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Yes. The two Governments—the Government of Kerala and the Government of India—are working in close co-operation.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: In the reply given now it is said that the Government does not know the number of coconut trees destroyed. But the Central Coconut Committee has said that the number of trees destroyed in 1959-60 was about one lakh trees. In view of the large destruction of trees and in view of the fact that the research, investigation and the remedy has not proved effective, may I know whether any new steps will be taken by the Government?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: No, it is not true that we do not know the number. We do know the approximate number but we do not know the exact number. As I said, the disease has spread in six lakh acres out of 11 lakh acres. One acre of coconut plantation contains about 70 to 80 coconut trees and in that way we do know the number of trees destroyed also. With regard to the second part of the question, namely, whether it has proved effective or not, it has proved effective in regard to leaf diseases but not so effective in regard to root diseases. Regarding that research is being carried on.

Shri Vasudevan Nair: In view of the fact that all the research conducted till now as far as the root

disease is concerned has been ineffective and also in view of the fact that there is large-scale destruction of coconut trees may I know whether Government has any proposal to conduct research on a higher scale in some of the national laboratories of our country?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Actually, the Government is also consulting the FAO. This disease is not peculiar to the State of Kerala alone. This disease has spread in other parts of the world also, particularly, the Philippines and the West Indies. So, this programme of carrying on research in regard to finding out some remedy is being carried on. If necessary, proper steps will be taken to carry on this research on national level also.

Shri M. K. Kumaran: May I know whether it is a fact that the disease is more acute and widespread in the model gardens run by the research station and, if so, whether there is any particular reason for it?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: It has spread in six districts and it may be that in those model districts it might be more intense; but everywhere there has been some destruction.

Shri P. Kunhan: May I know whether the Government has taken any steps to study the causes of the disease and the strains of microbes by using radio-active isotopes?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: At our research station at Kayamkulam it has been found out that this disease is becoming more widespread due to the fact that there has been unusually intense rain in Kerala and the manure etc. which is being applied for controlling this disease is washed out due to heavy rains. So, they are also trying to find out that this particular cause is somehow controlled.

Shri Warrior: May I know whether these insecticides are sprayed from the sky by helicopters or whether

they are only pumped from the ground?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Actually, it is not possible to spray them by plane though two planes are being used privately by the Kerala people. This disease is such that it can be controlled by applying manure by hand and mechanical methods also because you will have to dig the root etc. and to cut the leaf also. So, by plane it will not be so easy. You can spray that but due to rains the entire thing is washed away. The leaf requires proper cutting and only then the disease can be controlled.

Shri Tyagi: Is the disease an indigenous one or has it been imported from any foreign country? Has it come from foreign countries? Is it a fact that the worm which is known as the red worm goes underground as soon as some medicine is sprinkled?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: The disease which has spread in the Philippines, the West Indies and Kerala is virtually alike but it is indigenous also in the sense that it is there for the last 80 years.

Shri Tyagi: Does the worm go underground?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: The roots get diseased.

Shri Tyagi: Does it go underground?

Mr. Speaker: Shri Samanta.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that some 12 years back this research station at Kayamkulam referred this matter to the FAO? If so, was any direction received from the FAO?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: The Technical Working Party of the FAO which met at Trivandrum found that the research which was being conducted at Kayamkulam was on right lines. They suggested that FAO also should undertake some measures to help that station.

Shri D. C. Sharma: It appears that this disease is a very old one. If so, why has not Government taken any precautions against this disease all these years?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Actually, precaution is being regularly taken. There are so many diseases and trees also get destroyed. To say that no precautionary measure is being taken all these years is not correct. Measures are being taken.

Dr. M. S. Aney: The hon. Minister said that some committee of the FAO said that the research institute is proceeding on right lines. Was this statement of theirs based upon the results shown by the research conducted by it or merely because they conform to their own concepts of research processes?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: When the Technical Working Party of the FAO said that research was being conducted on right lines, it is not based on any comparative study of other research stations, because nowhere any comparative study of other been made. So, it is their idea of the situation which they found in Kerala.

Rice Zones

*1179. **Shri Maheswar Naik:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have now arrived at any final decision in regard to the total abolition of the rice zones;

(b) if so, when this decision is going to be put into effect; and

(c) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative whether the Eastern Zone is proposed to be expanded to include Bihar in it?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Shinde): (a) and (b). There is no proposal at present to abolish the rice zones altogether. While the Government's policy is to widen the scope of the rice zones, wherever

possible, by linking contiguous surplus and deficit areas, with the ultimate object of abolishing the zonal system, the zonal arrangements in one form or other will have to continue till the country becomes self-sufficient in rice.

(c) No, Sir, there is no proposal at present to expand the Eastern Rice Zone to include Bihar.

Shri Maheswar Naik: May I know, Sir, whether Government are aware that because of the wide disparity in prices prevailing in the border areas of Orissa and Bihar, large scale smuggling takes place and if so what action Government is taking so that smuggling does not take place?

Shri Shinde: What the hon. Member says is not correct according to Government's information.

Shri Maheswar Naik: May I submit that I come from that area—the border area—and it is my personal experience that because of high prices prevailing on the other side of Orissa....

Mr. Speaker: He can pass on that information to the Minister sometime privately, if he has got experience of it.

Shri Heda: Andhra Pradesh which is the most surplus State so far as rice is concerned is included in the Southern Zone and still the Southern Zone is a surplus one. Is there any proposal to include Maharashtra and Gujerat in the Southern Zone, so that the surplus of Andhra Pradesh may go to these areas?

Shri Shinde: Government does not think that the Southern Zone is a surplus one, because Kerala which is one of the deficit States is in the Southern Zone. As the present arrangement goes Government thinks that the Southern Zone scheme is a proper one, and as it is there is no surplus.