

they are allowed to raise their prices, to the price of North Indian sugar plus railway freight.

**ORANGE PLANTATIONS IN WYNAD, COORG AND NILGIRIS**

\*510. **Shri N. M. Lingam:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large orange plantations in Wynad, Coorg and the Nilgiris are affected by an unknown disease and becoming extinct;

(b) whether the crops in other parts of India are affected by this disease; and

(c) what are the steps taken by Government to arrest the menace?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) Yes. 'Decline' or 'Die-Back' of mandarin oranges is a serious problem in Wynad, Coorg and the Nilgiris where deaths of trees have been occurring in large numbers.

(b) This disease also occurs in the Malnad areas of the Mysore State and a similar disease occurs in parts of Bombay and Hyderabad States.

(c) Investigations on the nature of the diseases and its control in Wynad were carried out (as a joint scheme of the Madras Government and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research during 1948-51) and it was found that the disease was due to a lack of proper attention to the cultural and manurial aspects and to faulty location of orchards. Proper attention to the cultural and manurial aspects as well as adoption of control measures against other diseases and pests have been recommended as an overall measure to improve the mandarin orange industry in Wynad.

2. The I.C.A.R. has recently sanctioned a co-ordinated scheme for citrus die-back disease at a cost of Rs. 5,46,800/- for a period of 5 years with effect from 1-4-53 in view of the seriousness of this disease. Under this scheme a Central Station will be established at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute to deal with the fundamental aspects of micro-element nutrition of plants, with two regional stations, one for Coorg and Wynad area and the other for Hyderabad, Bombay and Madhya Pradesh. The regional stations will investigate the nature of citrus die-back disease under local conditions and the methods of controlling the disease.

**AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS INDUSTRY**

\*511. **Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state what are the steps taken and proposed to be taken for improving the agricultural implements industry?

(b) What are the recommendations of the three day conference of agricultural engineers in various States, and representatives of various firms manufacturing agricultural implements in the country which was held in the second week of January, 1953 at Delhi?

(c) Have any of the recommendations been found acceptable to Government?

(d) If so, what are the recommendations and what steps are being taken to implement them?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) So far as popularisation of improved agricultural implements are concerned, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has recently sanctioned a scheme at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute at a cost of Rs. 1,11,000/- for the manufacture of approved agricultural implements for distribution and demonstration in the States and the introduction of improved agricultural implements, from one part of the country to another.

The State Governments have also been informed that high priority to schemes for research in agricultural implements will be given by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. As regards steps proposed, attention is invited to replies to parts (b), (c) and of the question.

(b) to (d). A statement giving briefly the recommendations of the Conference and action taken thereon is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 16.] The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has accepted all the recommendations which will be implemented to the extent funds become available.

**Short Notice Questions and Answers**

**INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC**

**Shri S. N. Das:** (a) Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the influenza epidemic that swept England, France and other European countries is spreading towards East, has reached upto Egypt and is likely to come to India also?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, what precautionary measures have been adopted by Government to prevent the spread of this epidemic in India?

**The Minister of Health (Rajkumari Amrit Kaur):** (a) According to the latest epidemiological reports received from the W.H.O., the influenza epidemic is not prevalent in North Africa but a mild outbreak of influenza has been reported from the western towns of Turkey.

(b) All State Governments and Central Port and Airport Health Organisations have been warned of the likelihood of the spread of influenza to India and have been advised to take such measures as they can if and when circumstances require action.

**Shri S. N. Das:** May I know in what respect this influenza epidemic which is advancing towards the East differs from the influenza epidemic from which some people in India generally suffer?

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur:** It is difficult for me to say what form the epidemic in Europe has taken. Probably, some of the forms are already prevalent in India.

**Shri S. N. Das:** May I know whether the intensity of this advancing epidemic is increasing or decreasing as it moves towards the East?

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur:** I have already said that it is not really moving to the East in any alarming measure. As far as I can tell from the most recent information, it is even subsiding in Europe.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Why not allow the epidemic to cease? There is no danger of its coming here, unless it be that some hon. Members are terrified by the possibility.

Next Short Notice Question.

#### FOOD SCARCITY IN RAJASTHAN

**Shri G. D. Somani:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that acute food scarcity prevails in several parts of Bikaner, Jodhpur and Jaisalmer Divisions of the State of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, what steps have been or are being taken to meet the situation;

(c) what special aid has been sanctioned by the Central Government to supplement the efforts of the Government of Rajasthan to afford relief to the scarcity areas; and

505 PSD

(d) what other measures Government propose to take to meet the short-term and long-term requirements of these regions suffering from chronic scarcity conditions?

**The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh):** (a) Scarcity conditions are prevailing in parts of the Divisions of Bikaner, Jodhpur and Udaipur in Rajasthan.

(b) The State Government are taking the following measures for the relief of distress:

(i) Relief works through revenue agency which consist of construction of Pucca wells and Kutcha tanks for storage of water for drinking purposes.

(ii) Arrangements to provide drinking water.

(iii) Conservation of Cattle.

(iv) Gratuitous relief to the disabled and infirm people.

(v) Metal breaking.

(vi) Construction of roads by P.W.D.

(vii) Taccavi advances.

(c) A ways and means advance of Rs. 1.5 crores has been sanctioned which contains an element of assistance towards famine relief. In addition the Government of India have agreed to render assistance to Rajasthan in accordance with the following formula:

(i) A grant equal to 50 per cent. of the actual expenditure on gratuitous relief. (Expenditure on transport of water for drinking purposes, non-recoverable expenditure on cattle feeding and cattle preservation would also qualify for such grants).

(ii) A loan to the extent of 50 per cent. of the actual expenditure on unproductive works; expenditure on the digging or deepening of wells and tanks intended purely for drinking water purposes (and not for irrigation) will fall in this capacity. Any works which are capable of yielding revenue will be treated as "productive works".

(d) A proposal to send a team of officers to Rajasthan to study the position on the spot and to recommend suitable measures for providing relief on a permanent or semi-permanent basis is under consideration.

**Shri G. D. Somani:** Is there any truth in certain press reports that there have been starvation deaths in some parts of Rajasthan?