

Shri Joachim Alva: Has Government got any scheme in the matter of the formation and running of these flying clubs in view of the scandalous fights which the Bombay Flying Club wage amongst themselves to the detriment of flying interests?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I regret to say that there have been some differences of opinion and disputes amongst the members of the Bombay Flying Club as a result of which the Bombay Government advised us not to continue giving subsidy, and that had to be stopped since with effect from 1st September, '53. We advised the Bombay Flying Club to so frame their articles of association that they provide sufficient control by the Central and the Bombay Governments over the affairs of the club,

DESTRUCTION OF AGRICULTURAL CROPS BY PESTS

*1279. **Shri S. N. Das:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether any estimate of the quantity of agricultural crops which are being destroyed by insects, plant diseases, rodents and vermins etc., has been made recently;

(b) whether it is a fact that 20 per cent. of the agricultural crops are being destroyed by these enemies of crops;

(c) the steps taken during the last six years by Government to stop this destruction;

(d) whether any estimate has been made of the total quantity of insecticides that will be required to stop this destruction;

(e) what is the quantity of insecticides which are produced in India and is imported from other countries; and

(f) if so, what steps are being taken to meet the total requirements from within the country?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) In the absence of reliable methods of assessment of damage it has not been possible to make an estimate

(b) It is extremely difficult to establish the proportion of crops destroyed by pests and diseases. The proportion will depend on the number of pests and their virulence.

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VI, annexure No. 27.]

(d) Yes. About 12,000 tons.

(e) Information is being collected.

(f) Government of India have set up a factory for the production of DDT. The formulation of various foreign insecticides within the country is being encouraged by permitting the importation of only the technical grade of insecticides. A number of Indian firms have taken up the formulation of a number of insecticides.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether it is a fact that some Central Government expert has made a statement or has read a paper in Bombay stating that 90 lakh tons of foodgrains are destroyed every year in India?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The statement would not be much of an exaggeration. On a rough calculation, it is estimated that we lost about 10 per cent. of our crops as a result of these pests and diseases. The only comforting feature is that in the U.S.A. the percentage is said to be 20 per cent.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know, Sir, whether the results of the various measures taken by the Governments, both Centre and the States, have been assessed, and if so, what is the proportion of the prevention to the diseases spreading?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: On the whole, I believe at least during the last year when the rice bug appeared, we dealt with it very effectively, and also the

locust invasion. On the whole we have not been very successful.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether any charge is made for lending the equipment for control measures to the various States, or are they lent free?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: At the most, we charge only the transport charges. We do not charge any rent. I am, of course, talking from memory. But the equipment with the Centre is not sufficient. We want to enlarge it.

Shri T. N. Singh: With special reference to losses in storages in Government godowns, may I know what steps have been taken by the Government to reduce these losses due to rodents etc., and how far they have succeeded? I want to know the measure of the money spent and the measure of the success gained.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The question really refers to damage of crops by pests and diseases.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Not to storage.

Shri Boovaraghasamy: May I know the area which suffered the greatest destruction of crops by these enemies of crops? What is the total quantity of crops destroyed in that area?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: As I have already stated, it is very difficult to make an estimate. I at least have no information whether any particular area is subject to any particular pest. Of course, about locusts we know that Rajasthan gets infested earlier than any other part.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: May I know, Sir, whether any scheme or apparatus has been submitted by any person from Travancore-Cochin for the destruction of these insects and pests?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Locusts, is it?

Kumari Annie Mascarene: Insects and pests.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Generally.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: At least if the hon. Member means this year, we have not received any.

Shri Muniswamy: In view of the fact that it has come to the notice of the Government that large quantities of agricultural crops are destroyed by the pests, may I know whether any examination was made to find out at what stage such destruction takes place generally?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I do not know what period or what area he means.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is the height of the crop when these pests come in, whether there has been rain already, at what stage?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: For various crops, the pests come in at various stages.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Each pest has got its own time.

Shri S. N. Das: Have arrangements been made to do research with a view to prevent these plant diseases?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Researches are always going on. We have got more than one institute.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This is a general question. He gives a general answer and nobody is enlightened. Next question.

SUPPLY OF WAGONS

*1280. **Shri A. M. Thomas:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in some parts of the country wagons are available but there is no adequate booking compared with the supply.

(b) the position of availability of wagons in the various Railway Zones; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government recently to improve the supply of wagons and to avoid transport bottle-neck?