

Government to control floods in the Imphal valley?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) As a result of minor floods during the last week of July, 1953, about 250 acres of land came under water, which receded in two days. Two houses, an outhouse and a cowshed collapsed. As the damage was negligible no relief was considered necessary.

(b) Yes. An officer of the Central Waterways, Irrigation and Navigation Commission (now Central Water and Power Commission) was deputed by the Government of India in 1947 to explore the possibility of flood protection, reclamation, power generation and irrigation in Manipur. The State was also visited by another officer of the Commission in 1952.

(c) A sum of Rs. 30,000 was sanctioned in 1951-52 and another sum of Rs. 40,000 was sanctioned in 1952-53 for repairing embankments along the three important rivers in Manipur valley, viz. Imphal, Iril and Nambal. A further sum of Rs. 70,000 was spent in repairing breaches caused by floods in 1951-52. Further measures are under investigations.

Shri Rishang Keishing: May I know the loss in the production of rice in Manipur, due to the July floods last year?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The July flood was only a very minor flood, and our information is that only one cowshed, and one house had collapsed, but no damage was done to the crops.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Is it not a fact that floods are coming more often in Manipur, after the Central Government took over the administration of the State, and if so, cannot one of the causes of these floods be attributed to the Central Government administration?

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: May I know whether an expert was appointed by the Government of India to investigate the causes of frequent floods, and whether that expert suggested that

the Jhum system of cultivation carried on in that area was the only possible cause of these frequent floods, and if so whether the Government are taking any steps to remove this system of cultivation?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: In Manipur, floods are a regular annual feature. For the last two years, the floods have increased in Assam, and there have also been some major floods. In Manipur, due to the weakness of the embankment on the river Imphal, the floods occur, and not due to any other reason.

Shri Syed Ahmed: Are the floods very frequent every year in Imphal?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The floods are an annual feature in Imphal. The whole valley there is created by the floods which bring in more soil, as a result of erosion.

Shri Syed Ahmed: Are there any long-term arrangements in the contemplation of the Government, to control these floods?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: I had been to Manipur myself, and there was a heavy flood when I was there. In fact, I was held up for about a week there, on account of the floods, and I visited the flood areas along with our hon. friend Mr. Rishang Keishing; an officer of the P.W.D. also was with us, and he has submitted a report to check the floods as far as possible, and that report is under the active consideration of Government.

Short Notice Questions and Answers

BREEDING OF LOCUSTS IN RAJASTHAN AND AJMER

I. Shri Kasliwal: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the States of Rajasthan and Ajmer have been threatened by a serious and unprecedented locust menace and a

large scale breeding of locusts is taking place in these States; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) A locust invasion from the west started in Rajasthan in the middle of May and heavy breeding is reported to be in progress in that State and the adjoining parts of Ajmer State. It is difficult to say whether the locust menace this year is unprecedented.

(b) Locust control operations are being carried out in infested areas in Rajasthan, Ajmer and elsewhere. In the Bikaner area of Rajasthan aerial operations are also in progress.

The responsibility of locust control operations in the desert areas of these two States rests on the Central Government. In the cultivated areas, the responsibility is of the State Governments. The Central Locust Organisation is well equipped with staff, vehicles, insecticides and dusting and spraying machines for the control operations. The situation is well under control.

Shri Kasliwal: May I know if it is correct to say that this menace is spreading even to certain western districts of U.P. and the Punjab?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: This is not for the first time, Sir. Very often, the swarms do travel over long areas.

Shri Kasliwal: May I know, Sir, if the Minister would be in a position to say what is the total area affected by this invasion and the total population?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Total population of locusts?

Shri Syed Ahmed: May I know, Sir, if any helicopters have been imported in order to meet this locust menace?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: We have not succeeded in getting them so far.

Shri Syed Ahmed: Is it under contemplation to get them?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: There is a proposal.

Shri Heda: May I know whether it is for the first time that breeding is taking place in the area of Rajasthan?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Not at all. It does very often. That is the area which is suitable for breeding and therefore most valuable.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Have we had to send out any equipment outside India to check the assault from those countries into India?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Yes, Sir. The Food and Agriculture Organization has set up an international organisation and we try to pool the resources of the various nations in order to meet the menace from where it originates. Therefore, we had to send out some men and some equipment which have returned to India.

Shri Syed Ahmed: Has any loan been obtained from the United States of America to checkmate this locust menace?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: There is no loan, Sir, but we have been given certain equipment by the Technical Co-operation Administration.

Shri Dabhi: May I know the extent of damage done in Rajasthan?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: So far, no damage has been reported.

Shri Shobha Ram: May I know, Sir, whether the Government have been able to enlist the co-operation of the people in such operations?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Yes, Sir. Last year, it was with the assistance of the people alone that we could meet the menace, and I am sure the Rajasthan Government would do the same this year also.

Dr. Rama Rao: Sir, only one Ministry has been pleased to accept my question. The other Ministries have not accepted it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: They are also admitted.