

Efforts are continuing for a correct diagnosis of the disease. The association of a virus has been suspected for some years. Recently, the association of bacteria and nematode with the roots of the diseased palms has also been demonstrated. Intensive investigations are in progress at the Kayangulam station of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute in Kerala for establishing the correct identity of the pathogen.

(b) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has strengthened the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute's Regional Station at Kayangulam to tackle the problem from every possible angle. The Central Plantation Crops Research Institute has identified certain hybrids between Dwarf and Tall varieties which are relatively much less susceptible to the disease. Pilot projects for rejuvenation of diseased plantations have been launched jointly by the Central and State Governments by planting healthy coconut seedlings of improved varieties.

#### Impact of Land Holding

1887. SHRI D. B. CHANDRA GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken any survey in collaboration with the State Governments to collect basic data on the number, tenure, status, irrigation, land utilisation and cropping pattern of holdings of different sizes;

(b) if not, whether Government propose to present Sample Census to reflect the impact of land ceiling and thus provide more realistic and up-to-date estimate of the holdings in different size groups, their cropping pattern, irrigation etc. at the taluka level; and

(c) if so, the scheme of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA) (a) Yes, Sir. The first Agricultural Census was conducted in the country with the Agricultural year 1970-71 (July 1970—June 1971) as the reference year. The primary unit for data collection was the operational holding. Data were collected on the essential characteristics of agricultural holdings viz. (i) Number and size distribution of operational holdings, (ii) Land Utilisation, (iii) Area under crops, (iv) Area irrigated cropwise and source wise and (v) Tenancy particulars. The current Agricultural Census is being conducted on sample survey basis with Agricultural year 1976-77 (July 1976-77) as the reference year.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

#### Amount spent on A.I.C.C. Delegates by Vice-Chancellor of Punjab University

1888. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:

SHRI BHAGAT RAM:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vice-Chancellor, Punjab University, Chandigarh has spent Rs. 20000/- for the physical well being of AICC delegates out of the University budget money for 1976-77 meant for medical facilities for the University staff and students;

(b) whether the same has been shown on page 71 of the printed budget paper of the said University;

(c) whether Prof. R. C. Paul, Vice-Chancellor of the University got a three years extension on 24th March, 1977 just a day before the Janta Ministry was sworn in; and

(d) if so, what steps the Government propose to take in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): (a) and (b). According to the information furnished by the Punjab University, the Chandigarh Administration

advised the University to ensure proper functioning of its Health Centre during the AICC session in December, 1975. As at that time, the stock of medicines was inadequate, the University Office anticipated an additional requirement of Rs. 20,000 for purchase of medicines. This requirement was shown in the budget document for 1976-77. Eventually, the personnel and medicine for the Centre during the AICC Session were provided by the Punjab Government. The Centre incurred an expenditure of less than Rs. 100 on medicines, which was later reimbursed by the Government of Punjab. In the Budget papers for 1976-77 it was indicated by a footnote that the revised provision included Rs. 20,000 to meet the cost of medicines on AICC session.

(c) and (d). According to Section 10(2) of the Punjab University Act, the term of office of the Vice-Chancellor may be extended by the Chancellor for such further periods, not exceeding three years at a time, as he may deem fit. In exercise of these powers, the term of Prof. R. C. Paul, as Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University, which was due to expire on June 30, 1977, was extended by the Chancellor for a period of three years, *vide* notification dated 24th March, 1977.

#### **Phoorel Pesticide**

1889. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that use of Phoorel (the trade name for leptophos which belongs to a class of poisons called organophosphates), an American made pesticide, is banned in the United States and it is no longer welcome in Egypt;

(b) whether he is also aware that this pesticide that caused paralysis among hundreds of water buffaloes in Egypt is currently being manufactured in Texas, US and offered for sale in India; and

(c) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). It has been reported that manufacturing firm in the USA have voluntarily suspended its production. In any case the Registration Committee under the Insecticide Act has decided not to register this chemical. Government have also initiated action to ban its use in India.

#### **Procurement Price of Agricultural Produce**

1890. SHRI P. THIAGARAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) the present policy of Government in regard to the minimum and maximum price of procurement of agricultural produce especially rice;

(b) whether Government is aware of the hardships of agriculturists caused by the offer of a very low price for procurement;

(c) the ranges of prices offered during the last twelve months; and

(d) whether Government propose to enhance the price so as to ensure economic viability of agricultural operations?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) to (c). The procurement prices are fixed in respect of paddy, rice, jowar, bajra, maize, ragi and wheat. These prices are fixed after taking into account the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission, the views of the Chief Ministers of States and the need to protect the interests of the producers as well as the consumers. A statement giving procurement prices for Kharif cereals for the marketing seasons 1975-76 and 1976-77 and for wheat for the marketing seasons 1976-77 and 1977-78 is attached.