

merit-cum-seniority. However, for purely ad-hoc appointments the criteria of seniority-cum-fitness is adopted. All the 13 officers promoted and appointed as Assistant Director of Horticulture on regular basis vide Office Order No. 565/81 were selected on merit-cum-seniority basis.

(b) and (c). 6 persons mentioned in para 1 of the said office order, were already working in the Department of purely ad-hoc basis, before they were promoted on regular basis of officiate as Assistant Director of Horticulture. As such, the contention that the first six Sectional Officer (Hort) have been promoted on the basis of seniority-cum-fitness and the remaining seven on the basis of merit-cum-seniority is not correct.

#### Promotion of Assistant Engineers in D.G. Works

7440. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress about the ad-hoc promotion of Assistant Engineers (Departmental candidates) in the office of D.G. Works; and

(b) the reasons for delay in promoting them?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-TARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): (a) The question of ad-hoc promotion of Assistant Engineers (Departmental candidates) arises only when the vacancies are available in the grade of Executive Engineers (Civil and Electrical). There is no vacancy in the grade of Executive Engineer (Civil and Electrical), at present.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

#### Disease to Pepper Crops in Kerala

7441. SHRI M. M. LAWRENCE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that a kind of disease is spreading to the pepper crops in high ranges of Kerala;

(b) whether it is a fact that because of the disease the yield of pepper has reduced alarmingly and causing loss to the earning of the agriculturists and foreign exchange to the exchequer; and

(c) steps Government have taken to prevent this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) to (c). The most destructive disease of pepper vines in Kerala is the quick wilt which is incited by the fungus, *Phytophthora palmivora*. The disease attacks the foliage and basal part of the vines. Losses in infected gardens may range between 25—30 per cent.

This disease is being investigated on a priority basis at the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute of the I.C.A.R. and also under the All India Coordinated Research Project on Spices Integrated control strategy has been recommended involving the use of Bordeaux Mixture, good agronomic practices and sanitary measures.

#### Grants to Institute of Agriculture Sciences of Banaras Hindu University

7442. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Institute of Agriculture Sciences of the Banaras Hindu University receives grants from Government and the I.C.A.R. for research activities;

(b) if so, the amount paid by Government and the I.C.A.R. during the last three years;

(c) whether Government have received several complaints against the Institute of Agriculture Sciences in BHU alleging misuse of funds, Auditors adverse Report, unused tractors and large scale death of milch animals;

(d) whether the attention of Government have been drawn to the news item "Iron Piece found in Cow's stomach" appeared in the Times of India of November 10, 1981 reporting death by traumatic gastritis of over 250 cows and calves; and