

(b) whether the Employees Provident Fund dues and Employees State Insurance contributions have not been paid to the Government by this Company ; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government and the action taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : The administration of the Employees' Provident Fund and the Employees' State Insurance Scheme is the concern of the Central Board of Trustees set up under the Employees' Provident Funds and Family Pension Fund Act, 1952, and the Employees' State Insurance Corporation set up under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 respectively and not the direct concern of the Central Government. The Provident Fund and the Employees' State Insurance Corporation authorities have reported as under :-

(a) The Bhavnagar factory (Ramnar Works) of Alcock Ashdown & Co. Ltd. has been closed down from the 17th May, 1971.

Employees' Provident Fund

(b) The factory has not paid the Provident Fund dues amounting to about Rs. 9,708/- from March, 1971 to May, 1971.

Employees' State Insurance Corporation

The Employer is in default towards payment of Employers' Special Contribution for the quarters ending December, 1970 and March, 1971 and employees contribution for the period ending 27.3.1971.

Employees' Provident Fund

(c) Notices for prosecution have been issued for prosecution under the Employees Provident Funds and Family Pension Fund Act, 1952 and also for initiating action under Section 406/409 of the Indian Penal Code. Action has also been taken to recover the amount due as arrears of land revenue.

Employees State Insurance Corporation

Action under Section 73-D of the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 for recovery of Employers' Special Contribution as arrears of Land Revenue for the quarter ending December, 1970, has already been taken on 10.3.1971, on which date a requisition was sent to the Collector. Legal action for rest of the default is being taken.

Measures to check Disease of Coconut Trees

3069. **SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal before Government to undertake measures to fight the spread of disease of coconut trees ; and

(b) how far the work of the Coconut Research Stations in various parts of the country, particularly in Kerala, had helped in fighting the disease of coconut trees ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kasaragod and its Regional Station at kayangulam, under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research have been strengthened during the 4th Plan by providing well qualified scientists to tackle the problem of the root-wilt diseases of coconut and other destructive diseases and pest problems. Besides the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has also launched an All-India Coordinated Research Project on Coconut and Arecanut. One of the main objectives of the Project of the Project is to control diseases and pests of these crops.

(b) Presumably, the question refers to the coconut root-wilt disease prevalent in Kerala which is the most destructive one. There are some other important diseases of coconut also. A statement is given in the Statement attached.

*Statement**A note on coconut diseases*

Amongst the diseases of coconut, the important ones are:

- (i) Root wilt
- (ii) Leaf rot
- (iii) Bud rot
- (iv) Thattipaka disease
- (v) Ganoderma wilt

The salient facts about the five diseases are given below:

(i) *Root wilt*: This is the most destructive disease having spread to about 2.5 lakh hectares of coconut gardens in Central Kerala. The yield reduction is 40-80 percent depending upon the stage and severity of the disease. Loss on this account amount to Rs. 20 crores a year. The affected trees become unproductive but are rarely killed. Despite intensive investigations over two decades, it has not been possible to precisely pin point the causal agent. Association of a virus is suspected and bacteria have also been shown to be associated with roots of diseased plants. In the absence of the knowledge of exact etiology of the disease, a direct control measure has so far not been possible. However, a recent survey of the diseased area has shown that a natural dwarf cross variety had least incidence of the disease in nature. This observation is under confirmation and, when substantiated, may lead not only to increased production of coconut by way of high yielding capacity of this variety, but also a substantial reduction in the incidence of the disease.

(ii) *Leaf rot*: This is caused by a fungus called *Helminthosporium bicolor*. The pathogen is a weak one and is generally associated with trees weakened by the root wilt disease. Spray of oil based copper compound has been found to reduce intensity of the disease, but this operation is somewhat expensive as it has to be repeated every season. It is expected that with the control of the coconut root wilt disease, this problem will have automatically been taken care of.

(iii) *Bud rot*: This disease is sporadic in occurrence over wide areas in Peninsular India during the monsoon season. The causal fungus is *Phytophthora palmivora*. Timely detection of the disease and application of fungicides is known to revive the affected plants.

(iv) *Thattipaka*: This disease is confined to a limited area around Razole in Andhra Pradesh. The cause of this is under investigation. It has certain features common with the coconut root wilt of Kerala.

(v) *Ganoderma wilt*: This is again a fungal disease caused by *Ganoderma lucidum* and occurs in old plants weakened by age and other physiological factors such as high water table. It is confined to a limited area in Tamil Nadu. Proper garden management and drainage are the remedy for this disease.

Effect of water pollution on fishing Industry

3070. SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether water pollution is affecting the fisheries industry in India; and

(b) if so, how and to what extent and the measures taken to arrest this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) Studies which have been carried out on river systems indicate that water pollution is affecting fisheries in India in certain regions. The major pollutions are industrial effluents although untreated domestic sewage and certain pesticides used for agricultural purposes also contribute to the problem. The Bombay side of the Kalu river and the Bay of Bombay, the Ganges in the Kanpur region and the tidal portion of the Hooghly river near Calcutta are among the areas most affected. Fish mortality is also known to occur in tanks, ponds and reservoirs as a result of pollution by pesticides sprayed on crops in neighbouring areas. Instances of marine pollution are rare, although a few cases of fish life being affected as a result of