

the farmers to irrigate their lands and it is very difficult for to get full benefits of their labour although the lands are very fertile and the farmers could get three crops if adequate irrigation facilities are provided there. There could be a green revolution and a major increase in food-grains production by which the farmers, State and Central Government and other people will be benefited. Moreover, the Central Government has also financed the digging of tube-wells in that area for providing irrigation facilities but they too are not providing sufficient water for irrigating the fields in that area. It is, therefore, requested that the Planning Commission be advised to provide more funds for digging wells and also provide for lift irrigation form defence channel.

It is, therefore, requested that Government should take appropriate steps to provide adequate irrigation facilities to those areas.

(ix) **Demand for constituting a Pepper Board on the pattern of the Cardamom Board**

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Idukki) : Pepper is the most important foreign exchange earner among the spices and it accounts for 50% of the total export earnings from spices. But; due to the absence of perspective planning and proper appreciation of the problems, being faced by the growers, pepper growers are suffering.

The severe drought in 1983 had destroyed large areas of Pepper cultivation in Kerala. More than 80% of the growers of Pepper in Kerala are small growers and it is they who suffered most by the drought. The crippling effect of the drought continues and the growers are in distress.

The Pepper growers had taken huge loans and today they are not able to repay these loans. The authorities have not moved in so far to help them. Therefore, I demand that a Moratorium on the repayment of loans be declared immediately.

Similarly, Government should give them subsidy on interest as it is beyond the capacity of the growers to pay the heavy interests.

Pepper plants are affected by a disease called Footrot. According to an estimate, 40% of the crop was destroyed during 1980-81 due to this disease. This necessitates the urgent need for accelerated research work in this field and finding of remedial measures.

These and similar problems can be effectively dealt with only by the creation of an autonomous body. Demand has been raised for the constitution of such a body. It may be recalled that India's Share in the world Pepper Trade has gone down from 80% in 1947 to 21% now. This must create the necessary awareness among the authorities about the need for more attention being paid to Pepper.

I would therefore request the Government to set up a Pepper Board on the pattern of the Cardamom Board and save this most important spice from distress.

(x) **Need to replace the Low Power Television Transmitter at Kurseong with a High Power T.V. Transmitter**

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN (Cooch Behar) : There was a long-standing demand for the setting up of a High Power TV transmitter at Kurseong for expansion of TV coverage in the North Bengal districts of Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling.

A month ago, a Low Power TV Relay Centre was set up at Kurseong, although an assurance was given on the Floor of this august House, that a High Power TV transmitter of 10 K.W. would be set up at Kurseong to enable the people of the border areas near Bangladesh to see the Indian telecasts instead of Bangladesh, keeping the national point of view; and this is a must. But, due to this Low Power TV transmitter and also the relaying of the programmes on the same channels both from Kurseong (India) and Rangpur (Bangladesh) nothing is visible except a ray of light or