

ment would pay his special attention towards this demand.

[English]

(v) Need to fix norms for utilising funds available for maintenance of irrigation dams

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH (Jhalawar): This is a year of severe famine in Rajasthan and it is very essential that every drop of water available in tanks and in irrigation Dams is economically and profitably utilised to grow crops in the State.

It has however been observed that lot of water is going waste in Gopalpura Dam, in Umaid Sagar Dam and in the Sarans in Sita Bari in Tehsil Kishen Ganj. It is also going waste in Sarans in Tehsil Atru in Kota District.

Lot of water is similarly wasted in Bhim Sagar Dam and in Harish Chander Sagar Dam in Jhalawar District. The wastage of water in these places is due to lack of maintenance of the canal system and of dams. The reason given for poor maintenance is that all the funds under "maintenance head" gets used up in the payment of salaries of the work charged staff and nothing is left for actual maintenance.

In view of these factors, I request the Minister of Water Resources to fix up a norm where the salaries and the strength of the staff is kept within limit and the interests of the cultivators and of the State do not suffer on account of overhead charges in future.

(vi) Demand for setting up a 100 MW Thermal Plant near Cochin Refinery to meet the power needs of the area

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS (Mavelikara) There is acute shortage of power in Kerala. There is no likelihood of any heavy rain and getting power from hydel project, in the near future. The Cochin Oil Refinery has got oil, and a one hundred MGW Thermal Plant can

be started near the refinery, which can cater to the needs of the locality.

(vii) Demand for reconsidering the cess of 3.6 per cent on FOB prices of pepper

SHRI K. MOHANDAS (Mukundapuram): India's pepper exports have fallen sharply during this season. The cess imposed by the Government on pepper will further push down the exports.

The Government has imposed a cess of 3.5 per cent on FOB prices of pepper, with effect from November 6. This is certainly going to adversely affect the pepper exports. At the current level, FOB prices are in the region of Rs. 63,000/- per tonne. The new levy, along with the existing levies, works out to 15 per cent of the cost price. The Indian pepper is already out-priced in the international market, and the present levy is going to further weaken our position in the pepper trade.

I, therefore, request the Government to re-consider this levy and take all steps to reduce the cost of production of pepper, so as to make it competitive in the international market.

(viii) Need to absorb the loaders-cum-packers earlier working with Air Freight (P) Ltd. in International Airports Authority of India

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI (Madras South). About 100 loaders-cum-packers were employed by Air Freight (P) Ltd. at Madras Airport Cargo Complex from 1978 to November 1985. But all of a sudden, the IAAI terminated the contract with Air Freight (P) Ltd., and employed these loaders as casual labourers. They were working for eight months in a year as casual labourers, upto June 1986. They were then advised to form a cooperative society and enter into contract with IAAI to perform the job of loaders and packers, which has accordingly been done.

[Shrimati Vyjanthimala Bali]

As they were the affected employees of IAAI, there was a direction from the Hon. Minister of Civil Aviation that the contract work would be given only to the society. As per this direction, the contract work of loading and unloading was given to the society upto January 1987. However, the contract has not yet been renewed.

Now the General Manager, IAAI, Madras Airport Cargo Complex has called for tenders, in contravention of the oral agreement with the society, which would render the affected employees jobless. It is felt that the IAAI should have absorbed all the affected 100 employees.

I, therefore, urge the hon. Minister for Civil Aviation to arrange for absorbing them into IAAI on a permanent basis.

12.19 hrs

REGIONAL RURAL BANKS
(AMENDMENT) BILL - Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri Janardhana Poojary on the 23rd November, 1987, namey:-

"That the Bill further to amend the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Madhav Reddi.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad): The Regional Rural Bank Bill which is before us, as I said earlier, is a very important Bill, and a thorough discussion on this Bill is needed. We have allotted only three hours. I would like that this Bill is discussed for a longer time, because during the last twelve years, during the operation of this Bill, several developments have taken place, several problems have come to the notice of the Government

and the public. Several Committees, including the Dantewala Committee, Kamath Committee, and now the Kelkar Committee have gone into this question; and they had given a number of recommendations.

Before I go into the various aspects of the amendments which have been passed on the Kelkar Committee Report, I would like to mention one thing. With regard to the Annual Reports of the Banks, under the recommendations of the Estimates Committee - I think it was 62nd - it was suggested that every Annual Report of a Bank, consolidated report of a bank should be placed on the Table of the House. Except one report which came in 1983, subsequently no report was placed on the Table of the House so that we may know the actual working, the deficiencies in the working of the regional rural banks. It was started with a great fan-fare in 1975 on the basis of an Ordinance which was subsequently passed into an Act. At that time, when the 20 point programme was launched, this was one of the 20-point programme to remove rural indebtedness that this Bill was brought. The whole concept of this Bill was that there should be a multi-agency credit system to be introduced in this particular field. We had commercial banks which were mostly urban oriented; no commercial bank was prepared to set up a branch in the rural areas; and every time the Reserve Bank had to force these banks to go to rural areas and set up branches there. At one time the ratio was fixed that if a bank wants to open a branch in the urban areas, they have to open five branches in the rural areas; then only the permission will be granted for an urban branch. Every commercial bank wanted to set up branches, a number of branches only in the urban areas; proposals for setting up branches in the urban areas were pending with the Reserve Bank. Urban branches are very popular; they are able to mobilise resources. Rural banks have to suffer; there are no resources to mobilise in the rural areas. The outgoing is more than the deposit; and no bank was in a position to certify the profit which they are getting in urban areas to set up branches in the rural areas. This was the condition.