

[Shri Skariah Thomas]

Board for the development of coconut cultivation in the country. More than 80 per cent of the coconut is produced in Kerala. It is the first State to raise the demand for the constitution of a statutory coconut Board. Kerala's interest in the development of coconut cultivation is due to several reasons. Firstly, coconut is growing in small plots of land and the coconut cultivation has a direct bearing on the life of the common man in Kerala. Kerala's economy depends to a very large extent on the price of coconut and its oil.

Secondly, coconut disease is prevalent in 8 out of 11 districts in Kerala. Large scale replanting with the disease-resistant seedlings is very essential. The Kerala Government has declared 9 districts as disease-affected areas and started an intensive anti-disease spraying campaign. But the spraying is too costly for the State to bear the whole burden. The Government of Kerala has approached the Centre for liberal grants to carry out anti-disease operations. The decision of the Centre in this respect is not known.

Kerala has demanded that the coconut Board be set up somewhere in the State, because of the fact that the Board with its headquarters located in Kerala, will be in a better position to help the majority of coconut growers.

Until recently, Kerala was hopeful of getting the headquarters of the Board set up in the State. But, certain recent developments have created a suspicion that like many other central projects which have been promised but never given, the coconut Board may also be lost to Kerala.

Therefore, I earnestly request the government to help the Kerala Government with liberal assistance and set up the headquarters of the proposed coconut Board in Kerala.

(iii) NEED FOR RELIEF MEASURES TO THE FLOOD AFFECTED PEOPLE OF KARNATAKA STATE.

SHRI R. Y. GHORPADE (Belary): The State of Karnataka is in the grip of massive floods affecting seven districts, namely, South Kanara, North Kanara, Shimoga, Hassan, Mysore, Dharwar and Belgaum. Such largescale floods have never been experienced in Karnataka before. The state government with its limited resources has swung into operation and has taken the assistance of the Army to rescue hundreds of people from marooned villages. The exact damage has not been assessed since the floods have not yet receded completely and the rains have also not abated. Further sea erosion has also affected hundreds of villages along the 3000 km coastline of that state.

Hence, I appeal in the name of the people of Karnataka that the Centre should send immediately a team to assess the extent of damages and help the government of Karnataka with necessary financial assistance and guidance. I should like the government of India to sanction immediately substantial amount, as the central team will take some time to report. The relief measures cannot await the report of the central team. The money advanced can be later adjusted.

13.27 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENE-
RAIL), 1980-81—Contd.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—
Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up further discussion of the demands for grants of the Ministry of External Affairs. Balance of time available for the Ministry of External Affairs is three hours. The hon. Minister may reply around 3.30 p.m.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY (Nizamabad): What about my 377? It has been admitted.