

(VI) NEED FOR RESEARCH TO ERADICATE
BROWN HOPPER INFECTION TO PADDY
CROP IN KERALA

*SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): I would like to make a statement in the House about a serious disease that has affected the paddy crops in the Kuttanad area, which is one of the major rice producing centre in Kerala. Today, almost all the paddy crops in Kuttanad have been destroyed by pest called brown-hopper. It is believed that the present brown-hopper attack is most vicious during the past five years.

The brown-hopper called 'Munja' sucks the stem of paddy dry. As a result of this, the plant dries up. It is in the months of December and January that the attack becomes more intense. Phuradon and Demacron are the main pesticides which are used to protect the paddy plants from the attack of brown-hopper. But, unfortunately the plants could not be saved this time despite spraying operations carried out two to four times.

There are about 1.25 lakh acres of water logged paddy fields spread over Puliukunm, Kavalam, Edatwa, Takazhi, etc. in the Kuttanad area. It is in these areas that there has been widespread damage of paddy crops due to the attack of this pest. The farmers who are mostly medium and small have grown this crop by pledging all the valuables they possessed. One time spraying of pesticide would cost them Rs. 150/. It is estimated that cost of production has gone up to Rs. 2000/- per acre. The per acre yield has come down from 12 quintals in the past to just 3 or 4 quintals. It is in these circumstances that this widespread damage of crops has occurred. This has actually broken the back of the farmers of Kuttanad.

Although research has been conducted many times, no permanent remedy to this disease could be found so far. Therefore, I would earnestly request the Central Government to direct the attention of the research institutes to this matter and urgently find a remedy and also to put into operation some scheme to provide financial assistance to the farmers whose crops have been damaged.

(vii) ALLEGED KIDNAPPING OF A JUDGE
OF RAJASTHAN

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Mr. M. R. Mitruka, the District and Sessions Judge from Rajasthan who was recently kidnapped from Delhi was traced by the Police at Mathura.

Mr. Mitruka has announced that he had informed the Chief Justice of India he was willing to expose corruption in the judiciary with documentary evidence and had further expressed his fear to the Chief Justice that there was a conspiracy to kill him because of his intention to expose the corruption.

Had the Chief Justice of India communicated to the Delhi Police the details of this information? And in case the information was already given, what were the steps taken by the Delhi Police to ensure the safety and security of the Rajasthan Judge? On these questions, the Home Minister should come out with a categorical answer. If the life and liberty of the members of Judiciary are not safe the free functioning of the judiciary will be difficult and hence the Statement from the Home Minister was essential.

*The original speech was delivered in Malayalam.