

to tourists from our countries. What is the policy of the Government regarding tourists from our countries to other countries? Would you give direction to our embassies to be more helpful to them, more sympathetic to them? This is a general complaint—they are not at all helpful to our tourists. I would like to know the policy of the Government. Are you going to encourage tourists from our countries to other countries, Western countries or not?

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: Certainly, I would agree with the hon. Member that tourists from our country, when they go to other countries, should get all possible courtesy and cooperation from our offices abroad.

Research on Rubber Cultivation.

*897. **PROF. P. J. KURIEN:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any research work has been on undertaken by the Rubber Board on various aspects of Rubber cultivation;

(b) if so, the details of the work done in this field;

(c) whether the benefit of the research done has reached the growers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER): (a) to (d). A Statement is given below.

Statement

(a) to (b). Yes Sir, the Rubber Research Institute of the Rubber Board is undertaking research covering all relevant aspects of Rubber cultivation. Of note is the work relating to the evolution of high-yielding varieties of Rubber, evolution of an optimal package of inputs and plant protection practices. Rubber growers have benefited from this research and substantial area under rubber cultivation including that held by small growers is

now covered by high yielding varieties. Adoption of package of inputs and plant protection measures recommended has also been widespread.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Sir, the hon. Minister, has said in his statement that our researchers have produced high yielding variety of rubber and the benefit of research has been substantially passed on to the growers. I would like to know what is the productivity due to this high yielding variety and how does it compare with those in other rubber producing countries.

It is also said that the benefit passed on to the growers is mostly to the large estate owners. What steps would he take to see that the benefit of research is passed on to the small growers also?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER: The first question is with reference to increase in productivity. In 1951-52, the productivity per hectare was 298 kg. In 1984-85, this productivity has increased to 886 kg per hectare because of the various measures that have been taken. This increase in productivity is substantial.

The other part of the question which the hon. Member has asked is about the small growers. Various plans have been conceived for the purpose of increasing the production through the process of research. So far as the small growers are concerned, they are given a capital subsidy of Rs. 5,000/- per hectare plus 3% interest subsidy as compared to the capital subsidy of Rs. 3,000/- to the large growers. So, they get Rs. 200/- per hectare more plus 3% interest subsidy also.

Apart from that, the small growers who have less than six hectares are also given the additional incentives, for example, input subsidy, reimbursement of cost of planting material, soil conservation subsidy and 50% subsidy in fertilisers. These are the benefits that the small growers get.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: The fact is that majority of small growers are still not using the high yielding variety of rubber and actually it is the large estate owners

who are using high-yielding variety; that is about my first supplementary.

My second supplementary is that the results of research show that there can be new variety of rubber plant capable of being used in non-traditional area. It has been said that even desert areas, can be used, for rubber cultivation. But practically no research is made in that direction, in our country.

I would like to know whether any research in this regard is made in our country. If not, will you take it up with the concerned Rubber Board Department so that research is conducted in that direction also ?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Research has been conducted in that direction in our country. As a result of that research, various measures have in fact been taken recently so far as the Eastern region is concerned, in the North-Eastern region in order to develop the rubber Plantation. In 1984, an outlay of Rs. 3 crores was sanctioned for that purpose so that the nurseries, research farms, nucleus rubber estates and trading centres could be established. Various steps have been taken for setting up the offices etc. in the area also. What is happening is, this particular Research Board is trying to expand the area for the purpose of cultivation of rubber in the non-traditional areas and, as my hon. friend has said, one of these areas is the North-Eastern region.

Consortium Finance of Cooperative Banks

*898. **SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state what role National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and the Reserve Bank of India contemplate to play in arranging consortium finance of Cooperative Banks for meeting the credit needs of the National Cooperative Organisations in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : A Statement is given below.

Statement

NABARD has already taken a decision to allow the State Cooperative Banks to join the various consortiums of banks in financing the national level cooperative organisations. State Cooperative Banks would be permitted to join the various consortium arrangements if they satisfy the following conditions.

- (i) They should have fulfilled the requirement of providing 25% of their internal lendable resources for short-term agricultural lending.
- (ii) They should have adequate long term disposable resources with them which could be conveniently spared for participating in the consortium arrangements.
- (iii) They should have resources of long term nature to participate in the consortium arrangement at least for a period of three to five years so as to avoid any possibility of abrupt withdrawal by them from the consortium arrangements.

State/Central Cooperative Banks have been advised to prepare their performance budgeting and credit planning on an on-going basis. This will be monitored by **NABARD**.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is not a fact that the Agriculture Refinance Development Corporation has been charging an interest at the rate of 10 to 11% for agricultural loans given to the farmers in the country whereas the World Bank is charging 0.75% interest for long-term agricultural loans? In this connection, I would like to know what are the reasons for charging so much high rate and whether Government proposes to reduce the interest for the long-term loans given for agricultural purposes in the country.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development is charging 7% to the State Cooperative Banks and then these