

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

*Friday, April 22, 1988/Vaisakha 2,
1910 (Saka)*

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the chair*]

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Honourable members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of Choudhary Raghubir Singh who was a member of the First Lok Sabha during 1952-57 representing Agra—East constituency of Uttar Pradesh.

An agriculturist and a prominent social worker, he worked untiringly among the poor and the down-trodden and fought against the evils of untouchability and illiteracy. He evinced keen interest in the spread of education in the rural areas and was associated with several educational institutions in various capacities.

Choudhary Raghubir Singh passed away at Ahmedabad on 12 March, 1988 at the age of 81 years.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolence to the bereaved family.

Now, the House may stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

*The Members then stood in silence
for a short while*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

EEC Aid for Development of Coconuts in Kerala

*776. SHRI K. KUNJAMBU : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the European Economic Community has agreed to finance a project for the development of coconuts in Kerala by giving an aid of 45 million (ECU) (\$ 53 million); and

(b) if so, whether any phased programme has been chalked out for the utilisation of this aid and how it will reach the coconut planters ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This programme, which is phased over a five year period, is to be implemented by Kerala Kera Karshaka Cooperative Federation (Kerafed) in which the coconut growers, who are the main beneficiaries, are represented.

SHRI K. KUNJAMBU : Sir, I would like to know what are the details of this programme which is to be financed by the EEC. I would also like to know whether this programme will be a part of the programme being undertaken by the Coconut Board to develop Coconut or it is a separate programme.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : Sir, under the 1987-88 programme, the EEC has agreed to finance to the extent of 45 million European Economic Unit which means \$ 53 million. Therefore, they are financing the coconut development project in Kerala with an aid of 45 million ECU. The assistance is available under the follow-

ing terms. (1) Direct financing to the extent of ECU 21.2 million and (2) financing through the supply of vegetable oil to the extent of ECU 23.8 million. The assistance received would be channelised through the National Cooperative Development Corporation to the Kerala Kera Karshaka Cooperative Federation, which is responsible for the implementation of the project. The project has the support of the Government of Kerala. Therefore, the Government of Kerala is involved at every stage in this project and so also the Coconut Board that the hon. member has in mind

SHRI KUNJAMBU : I also want to know the approximate number of coconut growers that are going to be benefited through this programme.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : It is a wide programme and it is for the State as a whole. It is expected to be completed within five years from the date of agreement, i.e. 25 March 1988. It will fulfil the objectives of increasing the production of coconut through increased productivity, adoption of better management practices in cooperative movement and providing the members of Kerafed with Supplies and services and increasing their income through an integrated system of production, procurement, storage, processing, diversification and marketing of coconut products or by-products.

SHRI A. CHARLES : It is seen that a substantial amount has been allowed as aid. If passed on to the real coconut growers, it will help in stepping up the production of coconut which is the backbone of the State's economy. May I know from the hon. Minister, since there is a possibility of the funds being misused, whether there would be proper monitoring by the Government of India? And will the Minister ensure that this aid will really be passed on to the coconut growers so that the aid may really benefit them?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : We have no reason to believe that this money will be misused when in this project, Government of Kerala is involved and different organisations are involved and so also the Government of India is involved.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : As you know, the economy of Kerala is dependent on coconut cultivation and we wholeheartedly welcome this help given by the Central Government. But now, a serious apprehension has arisen in the minds of the farmers and the general public in Kerala due to the new Import Export Policy of the Government of India. It has been a standing demand of the people of Kerala and the Government of Kerala that the Central Government should not allow the import of coconut oil. In the new Import Export Policy, the Government has announced that it intends to import coconut oil on a large scale. I would like the Minister to clarify the position of Government of India with regard to this, because it affects the economy of Kerala.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : As the hon. member is aware, this Ministry does not deal with the export import policy.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Today you have told it.

[English]

Interest Free Loans to Cotton Growers

*777. **SHRI M. RAGHU MAREDDY† :**

SHRI SUBHASH YADAV :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has recently expressed its inability to provide interest free loans to cotton growers in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Union Government propose to instruct all public sector banks to provide maximum relief to the farmers affected by natural calamities like drought and floods on interest free basis; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) to (d). A Statement is given below.