

महोदय, मेरा आपके माध्यम से सरकार से अनुरोध है कि वह प्राचीन नगरों के विकास की योजनाओं के तहत बद्रीनाथ-केदारनाथ-गंगोत्री-यमुनोत्री को भी शामिल करे, धन्यवाद।

श्रीमती जमना देवी वारुपाल (राजस्थान): महोदय, मैं अपने आप को इस विषय से सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्री बालकवि बैरागी (मध्य प्रदेश): सभापति जी, मैं स्वयं को इस विषय से सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री कलराज मिश्र (उत्तर प्रदेश): सभापति महोदय, मैं भी इस विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

Extending National Crops Insurance Scheme to fruit bearing trees in Tamil Nadu

SHRI C. PERUMAL (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Tamil Nadu is one of the leading mango producers in the country. Nearly six lakh metric tonnes of mangoes are produced in the State every year. Delicious varieties such as Neelum, Alphonso, Banganapalli, Imampasand, Sendura, etc. are grown in various parts of Tamil Nadu. Several varieties of these mangoes are exported every year earning the much-needed foreign exchange. In my own district, Dharmapuri, different varieties of mangoes are grown in an area of 36,000 hectares.

But during the last few years, the mango trees in and around Dharmapuri district have been attacked by insects and pests such as hoppers, jassids and fruit flies. Over 30 per cent of the yield has been affected by it resulting in heavy loss to the growers. It has also affected our export. Even coconut trees are affected by europhyte and other pests. Some of the pests attack these trees from inside and for a long time there are no symptoms of pest attack. The growers in this region are seriously concerned about it. The Tamil Nadu Government is providing assistance through the Extension Centres to the farmers and tree growers. But the State has limited resources.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to extend the National Crop Insurance Scheme to, at least, Dharmapuri district and the surrounding regions in Tamil Nadu so as to cover the mango and coconut

growers. Such a step would save the farmers engaged in growing fruit-bearing trees. I would also request the Central Government to provide technical assistance and expertise to the farmers so that the pest and insect attacks could be ascertained and the trees could be saved. Thank you.

Need to link Bagdogra Airport with more international flights for promoting tourism

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, there is a long-pending demand to improve and further augment both the foreign and domestic passenger facilities at the Bagdogra Airport by linking it with more international flights. The Bagdogra Airport is not only the Gateway of North Bengal, it is also the gateway of the North-Eastern Region like the North-East Bihar and Sikkim. The three independent States Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh, are closely connected with this part of our country. This part is very important so far as the international tourist map is concerned.

The rich potential of the area like the rich natural flora, wildlife sanctuaries, tea gardens, rich cultural heritage, great tribal traditions, the most beautiful Kanchanjunga Mount are all located in this region. From the high Sikkim Himalaya to the Bodh Gaya in Bihar, this region is famous for attracting religious pilgrims and tourists.

The Government of West Bengal, the Government of Sikkim and many other organisations are demanding that the Bagdogra Airport should be linked with international flights and to begin with international flights from Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh should be allowed to land at the Bagdogra Airport. If it is done, it would help to boost the economy of our country by augmenting foreign tourist facilities. I would request the Government of India and the Department of Civil Aviation and Tourism to pay immediate attention to this matter. Thank you.

SHRIMATI CHANDRA KAU\ PANDEY (West Bengal): Sir, I would like to associate myself with this issue.