

2. **A Project on** Replanting and rejuvenation of coconut gardens in districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam and Thrissur in Kerala and Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands through Coconut Development Board. The main objective of the programme is to rejuvenate the coconut plantations through massive cutting and removal of old, senile and unproductive and disease advanced palms and replanting with improved cultivars. The scheme will be implemented on cluster basis with the active participation of farmers.

B. Schemes of Ministry of Commerce and Industry

1. Coffee Board is extending assistance for replanting of aged and low productive coffee plantations under its Eleventh Plan scheme of Development Support Scheme of Coffee.
2. The Special Purpose Tea Fund Scheme was notified by the Government of India on 17.01.2007. Objective of the scheme is to encourage tea garden owners to take up large scale uprooting and replanting of old tea bushes of improving production and productivity for competitive sustenance. Under this scheme, it is envisaged to cover 2.12 lakh ha. of uneconomic tea areas in the country over a period of 15 years commencing from 2007.
3. Government of India have approved a scheme for Rubber Plantation Development for operation during the Eleventh plan as per which 27000 ha. of old and uneconomic rubber plantations are proposed to be scientifically planted with high yielding varieties. In the traditional region small growers owning an area upto 2 ha. are eligible for financial assistance Rs. 19,500/- per ha. for replanting their plantations.
4. The Union Government has approved a scheme *viz.*, Special Purpose Fund for Replantation and Rejuvenation of cardamom plantations for implementation through Spices Board during Eleventh Plan period. Under the scheme, replantation of 10000 hectare and rejuvenation of 15000 ha. of cardamom (small) plantations will be covered in Kerala and Tamil Nadu during Eleventh Plan period. The scheme is being implemented from 2007-08 onwards. Under the programme an area of 4200 ha. has been brought under replantation and 4000 ha. under rejuvenation in Kerala during the first three years of the Eleventh Plan period.

Payment to cotton growers under controversial

Monopoly Purchase Scheme

2324. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the cotton growers in and around Nagpur are paid above the market price under the controversial Monopoly Purchase Scheme by the State Government leading to a subsidy of Rs. 4500 crore;

(b) whether it is a fact that lot of malpractice is going on in payment; and

(c) if so, the stand of his Ministry to control and monitor this payments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):

(a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

Import of rice

2325. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India was a major supplier in the global rice trade for two decades and it is now likely to import rice;

(b) whether despite failure of monsoons and occurrence of droughts leading to failure of crops during the last two decades, import of rice was not resorted to;

(c) whether now import of rice does not seem to be ruled out; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):

(a) and (b) India is a supplier in global rice trade for the last two decades. The export of rice from India has ranged between 5 lac to 60 lac tonnes per year in the last 2 decades. Despite failure of monsoon there was no proposal to import rice till date.

(c) and (d) For the current year, Government has assessed the stock position of rice and decided that import of rice for Central Pool is not required at this stage. However, if trend of procurement shows shortfall, the Government may, at an appropriate time, decide to consider import of rice to ensure availability of rice in the domestic market at affordable price. All the options are open regarding import of rice subject to domestic availability, process and consumption.

There has been a record procurement of 226.89 lakh tonnes and 253.82 lakh tonnes of wheat in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2008-09 and 2009-10 respectively. Similarly, record procurement of 287.36 and 336.84 lakh tonnes of rice have been made during Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2007-08 and 2008-09 respectively. With the increase in procurement of wheat and rice in last two Kharif Marketing Season/Rabi Marketing Season (KMS/RMS) and an estimated procurement of 262 lakh tonnes of rice in current KMS 2009-10, the stocks of rice and wheat in the Central Pool are sufficient to meet the requirement of Targeted Public Distribution Systems (TPDS) and other Welfare Schemes at current level of allocation.

Use of Neem based pesticides

†2326. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

SHRI SHRIGOPAL VYAS:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.