

(c) whether it is also a fact that the development of this farm is likely to give a boost to the economic development of the Islands; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Sipi Ghat Farm in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is one of the research centres on the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute at Kasaragod (Kerala State) and has undertaken research work on the local genetic resources in crops like coconut and arecanut.

(b) The main research programme of the Centre involves collection, conservation and evaluation of coconut and arecanut genetic material available in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Observations made so far show that some of the coconut and arecanut collection are among the best available anywhere else in the world.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has, in 1978, established a multi-disciplinary Institute known as the Central Agricultural Research Institute for Andaman and Nicobar Group of Islands at Port Blair. The major objective of this Institute is to develop an integrated technology for improvement of the field, horticulture and plantation crops, as well as the live-stock and inland and marine fisheries. The Sipi Ghat centre will also soon form a part of this Institute. The Institute has already started screening varieties of rice, pulses, oilseeds and fodder crops suitable for the Islands. Potato cultivation has been successfully attempted. A method of controlling the menace of giant-African Snail has been standardised by using 5 per cent metaldehyde. It has been found that filarial dermatitis disease of cattle can be controlled with the application of

indigenously available organo-phosphorus filaricides.

Development of fisheries and agriculture forests in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

1919. SHRIMATI AMARJIT KAUR:
SHRI RAMANAND YADAV:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is enough potential in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for development of fisheries, agriculture and forests; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take for the development in the Islands?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement giving the information is attached.

Statement

The following steps have been taken and are proposed to be taken for development of fisheries, agriculture and forests in the Islands:

FISHERIES—

With the coast line of about 2000 kilometres and a number of ponds, reservoirs and other fresh water resources, Andamans and Nicobar Islands have a large potential for fisheries development. Estimates of fisheries potential vary from 50,000 tonnes to 1,00,000 tonnes.

Several measures including settlement of fishermen's families, establishment of ice and cold storage plants, introduction of mechanised fishing boats, supply of essential fishery requisites, training of fishermen and organising their cooperative societies were taken in the past. Now

the in trust under the fisheries sector is to augment the above programmes and create facilities for proper exploitation of fishery resources available in the Islands. It has been decided that off-shore survey should be taken up under the Exploratory fisheries Project. The programmes of inland and brackish water fisheries will be further developed. Extension of fishery development activities in Car Nicobar will be strengthened. Subsidies on mechanised and non-mechanised boats will be continued. Steps will be taken for development of shell fisheries. An outlay of Rs. 211 lakhs has been approved for development of fisheries in the Five Year Plan 1978—83 as against an expenditure of Rs. 42 lakhs incurred during the period 1974—78.

AGRICULTURE—

The Islands enjoy a very favourable rainfall pattern spread over 9 months in a year and a warm humid tropical climate and are, therefore, suitable for cultivation of a very wide range of crops including plantation crops.

Paddy is the main crop cultivated over an area about 12,000 hectares in the Islands. The emphasis is to increase productivity of this crop by covering as much area as possible with high yielding varieties to meet the needs of local population. The area of cultivation of other crops like, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane, vegetables, green manure and root crops is estimated at 14,000 hectares, expected to be reached by 1982-83.

In improving the economy of the Islands, greater attention is proposed to be given to the development of plantation crops like spices, coconut, arecanut, oilpalm etc. for which the climatic condition of the Islands is well suited.

A number of programmes have also been taken up by the Administration for increasing the area under high

yielding varieties of paddy, multiple cropping, laying out of demonstration on cultivators' fields, production and distribution of seed and planting material.

Schemes for (i) Package Programme on Spices and (ii) Package Programme on Pine-apple have also been sanctioned by the Government of India.

Programmes for developing plantations in homestead gardens and as part of social forestry are also being considered.

FORESTS—

Forests in Andaman and Nicobar Group of Islands cover an area of 7,464 sq. km., which is approximately 90 per cent of the total geographical area of the Islands. The output of major forest produce during 1976-77 is reported to be 11,908 cubic metres of timber and 40,440 cubic metres of fire-wood besides other minor forest produce. Forest Department has been taking action to develop the islands on the basis of forest potential by way of promoting forest based industries in the islands viz., Andaman Timber Industries Jayshree Timber Products Ltd., Alphon Plywood Ltd. and Vimo Ltd. besides a number of private and Government saw mills. The Department has been running a big Saw Mill Complex at Chatham with installed capacity of 25,000 cubic metres in round form and another small Saw mill at Bhatapur. The Forest Department has also been feeding mainland timber depots in Calcutta and Madras with good quality timber. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation has been established from the year 1977. This Corporation is presently carrying out felling and logging operations in areas so far not tapped and has entered into a joint sector venture for the establishment of major wood based complex in Little Andaman Islands besides two match factories in small sector viz., one each in the Little Andamans and