

ves of the Ministry, considerable and very important information about this capsule and its contents was available. I would like to know whether that information was put before this Committee in the first instance and whether the Committee, after considering this information, had come to the conclusion that even then the digging out was necessary, or ignoring all that information, they decided to dig out this capsule.

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUN-DER: The decision to dig up the capsule was taken at Government level. The Committee was entrusted only to supervise the actual retrieval. Therefore, the question of the hon. Member, most respectfully I submit, does not arise.

Potential for Planations and growing of cash crops in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

*32. SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA:
t SHRI LAL BUAIA: SHRI
JAGAN NATH
BHARDWAJ: SHRI
NAGESHWAR PRASAD
SHAHI; SHRI SYED NIZAM-
UD.DIN:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there is much scope for plantations like rubber and growing of cash crops like sugarcane, spices, cashewnuts, etc. in the Andaman and Nicobar Island;

(b) whether the soil of these Islands has been tested for the purpose;

(c) if so, what are the details there, of; and

(d) what steps Government have taken for growing these crops in these Islands and with what results?

tThe question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sanat Kumar Raha.

* THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARN ALA); (a) Yes, Sir. There is good scope for raising various plantation and cash crops in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(b) and (c) Yes. The soils are acidic in reaction, high to medium in nitrogen, low to medium in phosphorous and medium in potassium.

In general the soils are deep to very deep, texturally medium to heavy and suited to climatically adapted crops including sugarcane, rubber and other plantation crops.

(d) Steps taken for growing various crops and results obtained so far are given in the statement placed on the Table of the House.

Statement

Rubber—

The Rubber Board has conducted a survey and found many parts of the island suitable for rubber plantation. A Pilot Project cum Demonstration Farm has been established in an area of 200 hectares in South Andaman. In Katchal Island of Nicobar, the growth and yield of rubber plantations are good. So far 878 hectare have been planted with rubber in these islands. Although the surveys conducted by Rubber Board revealed that nearely 10,000 hectares are suitable for rubber plantations in Andaman and Nicobar islands, large scale rubber plantations are not being considered at present in view of a recently imposed ban for ecological reasons.

Sugarcane—

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Although agro-climatic conditions in the Islands are favourable for raising sugarcane, the present level of production is low. It is grown for chewing as a kitchen garden crop and on a small scale for gur making. Commercial plantation of sugarcane will have to be taken up side by side with the setting up of khandsari/sugar manufacturing units. In 1975-76, a Central Team visited the Islands and

advised the Union Territory Administration to introduce improved varieties of sugarcane, lay-out demonstration plots for showing efficacy of package of practices and supply of bullock-drawn crushers for gur making at subsidised cost to the growers.

One sugarcane nursery and one Demonstration cum Research Centre has already been established in the islands.

Spices—

The Agriculture Department of the Islands have attempted cultivation of pepper, clove, nutmeg and cinnamon on an experimental scale at Government farms. The performance of these plants have been found to be encouraging. However, Car Nicobar and such other Islands where the soils are sandy, may not be ideally suited for tree spices. In June, 1977, the Government of India sanctioned two Centrally Sponsored Schemes on pepper—one for establishing a Central nursery for hybrid pepper and the other for laying out field demonstrations on pepper, clove and nutmeg. The Union Territory Administration has initiated steps for implementing the Schemes.

Cashewnut—

Although the possibilities of planting cashew trees for soil conservation work are good, its commercial exploitation in the islands may need further experimentation.

Coconut—

Coconut is already an established plantation in the islands. However, no systematic cultivation is being followed. Recently a farm of about 20 hectares has been established by the Department of Agriculture in Car Nicobar islands for Demonstrating to the local people the improved method of coconut cultivation.

Fruits—

There is scope for growing fruits like pineapple, papaya and banana on the Islands. In December, 1977, the Government of India sanctioned a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for pineapple in the Island with a view to demonstrating improved practices of its cultivation to local farmers.

Red Oil Palm—

The agro-climatic condition of the Islands were found suitable for the development of Red oil palm which is a high oil-yielding crop. A project to bring 2400 hectares under this crop in little Andaman is presently under consideration of Government of India.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Sir, as regards the development of agriculture in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, it is evident from the statement placed on the Table of the House that no serious attempt has been made since Independence. I want to know from the Minister whether, in regard to rubber* plantation, they have got any future plans *vis-a-vis* the ecological reasons, for which the plantations have been stopped for the present. As regards sugarcane, I would like to know whether any initiative has been taken to grow it on a large scale for the manufacture of gur and khandsari as a measure of immediate planning. Also, there is a good ground for growing spices. These can also be exported and the national income will grow. Has the Government taken steps to see that all the agricultural people there take to production of spices so that a large scale growth of these plantations is achieved within a short time? As regards cashew-nuts and other crops it is said that no systematic cultivation is being followed. May I know the reason for this situation?

My last question is with regard to fruit cultivation and spices. May I

know, Sir, what action has the Government actually taken to develop fruit cultivation in the Andaman and Nicobar islands. There is no figure with us so far to show that fruit cultivation is expanding.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Too large a supplementary?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: It is a very long question but I will try to answer it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can be brief.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: For sugarcane only 156 hectares of land is being used so far because there is no khandsari plant there. And there is no possibility of any khandsari plant for the time being. So more sugarcane has not been planned.

So far as spices are concerned the Central Government has sanctioned a new scheme with an outlay of something more than about Rs. 12 lakhs. So we are establishing 15 hectares of progeny under pepper, 5 hectares under clove and nuts, and one hectare under cinnamon so that these materials can be available for further plantation.

Similarly, regarding fruits also a Centrally-sponsored scheme for pineapple with an outlay of more than Rs. 3 lakhs has been sanctioned for this year.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Sir, I wanted to know whether there is any planning for further development of agriculture in these two islands which will increase our national income as well as exports . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can put four second supplementary also.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: This is my second supplementary.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: I do not know what the hon'ble Member thinks about agriculture, whether

he means only cereal crops. Probably he is thinking of that. All these plantations orchards etc. come under agriculture. So we have a big plan. We are considering it at the Government level now. But this is regarding red palm oil. We are thinking of having 2,400 hectares under red palm oil which will be a big scheme and will be very useful for the economy of the island. The total outlay may be about Rs. 9 crores.

SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN: Sir, the statement laid on the Table of the House

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही: श्रीमान्, मंत्री जी ने जो स्टेटमेंट रखा है उसमें उन्होंने रबर के बारे में लिखा है कि कुछ पारिस्थितिक कारणों से हाल ही में लगाई गई रोक की दृष्टि से इस समय बड़े पैमाने पर रबड़ के बागानों के बारे में विचार नहीं किया जा रहा है हालांकि रबड़ की खेती के लिए कुछ स्थान है क्या परिस्थितियाँ हैं, क्यों इस पर विचार नहीं किया जा रहा है, यह बताने की कृपा करें।

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Due to economical reasons this was not being taken up in a very big way.

रबड़ बाड़ न वहाँ पर सारा एक्जामिन किया और बताया कि 10 हजार हेक्टेयर में रबड़ प्लांटेशन हो सकता है, लेकिन जब प्लांटेशन के लिए जंगल काटने लगे तो उसके लिए ऐतराज हुआ कि जंगल नहीं काटना चाहिए, इससे इकोलाजिकल बैलेंस आइलैंड का खराब होगा इसलिए ज्यादा नहीं करने दिया गया अभी तक 878 हेक्टेयर में रबड़ प्लांटेशन की गई है।

reveals that there is no chance of further rubber production in these islands. In my opinion also there is no chance for increasing sugar production because it will lead to deforestation of the islands. So far the only item is spices. The performance about spices is also encouraging here. But the spices plants bear fruit after a very long time, say,

12 years or 10 years. Therefore, I would like to know from the houble Minister if the Government proposes to set up large-scale nurseries so that the plant is nursed in these nurseries and afterwards distributed to the farmers so that they will be in a position to grow these spices in their lands.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: I have already said that we are having progeny orchards for pepper, cloves, nutmeg, etc., so that thes_e are available. We are also organising demonstration farms etc., fo_r hybrid pepper as well as for cloves nutmeg, etc. so far as sugarcane is concerned, it would not be very proper to cultivate sugracane there and destroy forest wealth because sugarcane is already creating problems her_e in the mainland. We can supply them enough sugar. And we are supplying them enough sugar for their needs.

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM: Would th_e hon. Ministe_r -mak_e it clear whether the proposed plantations will involve clearing of existing forests or whether it is going to be done in places which are already cleared because forest resources also are national wealth and it will have serious consequences on the ecology and result in loss of revenue if the forests are cut down.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Those plantations will come up only in areas which are suitable for the plantatio'ns. I_n som_e areas the forest is not very good; that can be uprooted an<j replanted by other plantations. But in some areas, even under the forest trees some spices can be grown.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Sir, in the statement it is said that cocount is already an established plantation in th_e island. Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that ther_e is one particular business family, the Akuji family, who are distributing only a couple of cigarettes and bidis, lungis and sarees and taking thousands of crores worth coconuts from Car Nicobar and other islands. We found that everywhere

in the island ther_e is the stamp of Akujis. They have purchased two ships already. They are going to purchase a third ship and they have asked for permission from the Government. My question to th_e hon. Minister is; What is the us_e of helping th_e islands in planting all these things until and unless there \s some Government machinery—which must be there—to purchase these things from the local inhabitants? Otherwise Akujis will again make profit at the cost of the farmers and at the cost of the public Exchequer.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: I am not aware of these Akujis, etc. But I will try to find out.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Government must be knowing all these things.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Personally I do not know. I will find out what the matter is. But actually they are finding some difficulty in marketing their produce. That is why thes_e things have not been so popular there. But we are trying to have the coconut plantations, etc., in an organised manner.

SHRIMATI LEELA DAMODARA MENON: Sir, I would like to know whether the Government ha_s a*ny idea of giving some of these plantation programmes over t_o the private sector and whether the Government is aware that even before, some of the private sector people had been exploiting the forests and therefore denuding the forests in those areas.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Sir, in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands the situation is entirely different from the mainland. There has always been a problem of non-availability of labour. Labour is not that easily available and the climatic conditions are such that it is not simply possible to have these plantations, etc., in a very big way. In the rubber plantations also we are having some labour problems. Labour actually is not available.

So it is not possible for me just now to say what type of system we are going to adopt ultimately.

SHRIMATI LEELA DAMODARA MENON: Sir, in continuation of *my* question, since the hon. Minister has said that labour is not available and also that the climatic conditions are not good, may I inform the hon. Minister that the climatic conditions of those areas are just like in Kerala and there are a lot of people who would be willing to go from Kerala to Anda-mans and work there? Would that be considered?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: That will be considered, but the climatic conditions—I may tell the hon. Member—are not the same as in Kerala. In Kerala the climatic conditions are very good. In that area you have rains for almost 9½ months. Only 2½ months are available when the sun shines properly and there is too much of humidity which you do not have in Kerala.

Damage to and pilferage of foodgrains in the F.C.I. Godowns

*33. SHRI GANESH LAL MALI: f SHRI KHURSHED ALAM

KHAN: SHRI JAGDISH JOSHI: SHRI IBRAHIM KALANIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge quantities of foodgrains stored in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India get damaged every year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a large quantity of foodgrains is pilfered annually from the godowns of the Corporation; and

(c) if so, what is the quantum of foodgrains, in terms of money value 60 damaged and pilfered during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND

tThe question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ganesh Lai Mali.

IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): (a) to (c) It is true that there is some damage and pilferage to food-grains stored in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India. However, considering the huge quantities involved, the stocks damaged or pilfered during the last three years were relatively small, as would be clear from the followings:

Damaged		Pilfered	
Value in Rs. lakhs	% age	Value in Rs. lakhs	% age
1974-75 12.7	0.03	4.00	0.01
1975-76 11.3	0.008	2.95	0.002
1976-77 542.2	0.27	2.23	0.001

श्री गणेश लाल माली : सभापति जी, गोदामों में काफी मात्रा में अनाज होने के बावजूद मार्केट में नहीं लाया गया और इसके परिणामस्वरूप अनाज के भाव बढ़े तथा गरीब जनता को बड़ी तकलीफ हुई। दूसरी तरफ यह स्थिति हुई कि गोदामों में अनाज सड़ता रहा। यह बताया गया है कि जो अनाज नष्ट हुआ वह पिछले सालों के मुकाबले कम हुआ, लेकिन मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि कितना अनाज नष्ट हुआ, उसकी मिकदार बताई जाय ? दूसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो अनाज सड़ा वह इसलिए सड़ गया क्योंकि गलत ढंग का अनाज खरीदा गया था और उसकी देखभाल की कमी रही। क्या ये बातें सही हैं या यह अनाज इसलिए सड़ गया कि मार्केट में नहीं लाया गया ?

श्री भानु प्रताप सिंह : माननीय सदस्य ने दो तीन प्रश्न एक साथ पूछ लिये हैं। पहली बात तो यह कही गई है कि अनाजों के भाव बढ़ते रहे, लेकिन अनाज बाजार में नहीं भेजा गया। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह बात सच नहीं है क्योंकि एक बार नहीं अनेक बार इस मंत्रालय