

Parliament during the last session and assented to since a report was last made to the House on the 8th December, 1978:—

1. The Britannia Engineering Company Limited (Mokameh Unit) and the Arthur Butler and Company (Muzaffarpore) Limited (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking Bill, 1978.

2. The Bolani Ores Limited (Acquisition of Shares) and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill, 1978.

3. The Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Bill, 1978

4. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Bill, 1978.

5. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 1978.

6. The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls (Amendment) Bill, 1978.

7. The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 1978.

8. The Payment of Bonus (Amendment Bill, 1978.

9. The Sugar Undertakings (Taking Over of Management) Bill, 1978.

MR. SPEAKER: Can we take up the Calling Attention listed at the end, if they are ready? The Calling Attention concerning the External Affairs Minister has been postponed. There are two Calling Attentions. I am talking about the other one listed at the end. If the Minister is not ready, we will take it up later.

Now Mr. Baranala.

MOTION UNDER RULE 388

SUSPENSION OF PROVISION TO RULE 66

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend the proviso to rule 66 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in its application to the motions for taking into consideration and passing of the Coconut Development Board Bill, 1978 and the Copra Cess Bill, 1978."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the House do suspend the proviso to rule 66 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in its application to the motions for taking into consideration and passing of the Coconut Development Board Bill, 1978 and the Copra Cess Bill, 1978."

The motion was adopted.

14.32 hrs.

COCONUT DEVELOPMENT BOARD BILL AND COPRA CESS BILL

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT S'NGH BARNALA): Sir, I beg to move*:

"That the Bill to provide for the development under the control of the Union of the coconut industry and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

The Coconut Development Board Bill provides for the integrated development of the coconut industry and for the establishment of a Board to be known as the Coconut Development Board, for this purpose.

India is one of the largest coconut producing countries in the world, with coconut cultivation spread over nearly

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

1.1 million hectares and an annual production of about 6000 million nuts. It provides employment to a very large number of people engaged in its cultivation and in the processing industries based on coconut. Therefore, it occupies a unique position in the life and economy of our people, especially in the coastal States where coconut cultivation is concentrated.

Copra, oil, coir and shell products are the major coconut products of commercial importance. But except in oil milling and coir manufacture, no major development has taken place for the diversification of coconut products and by-products utilisation. Even copra making, the traditional rural industry, remains to be developed on modern lines. The manufacture of desiccated coconut, a product of commercial importance with considerable potential demand is still in its infancy. The new processing techniques for the conversion of wet coconut kernel into various edible products like protein, oil, flour etc. remain to be adopted on large scale. Effective processing techniques have to be developed for the profitable utilisation of other by-products such as coconut shell, pit, coconut water etc. Valuable food products such as coconut protein have also good potentiality for commercial utilisation. Thus adequate attention has not been paid in the past to the development of coconut-based industries as also to the development of coconut crop in order to ensure adequate supply of raw material for the processing industry.

Coconut is basically a small farmers' crop as more than 90 per cent of the coconut cultivators are having holdings, the average size of which is less than one hectare. The small farmers are unable to undertake the task of development of the coconut industry due to paucity of resources and are, therefore, deprived of its full benefit. Improvements in the processing industry especially at the primary level will directly benefit the coconut growers who are at present left at the mercy of middlemen processors. The profit-

able utilisation of the valuable by-products of coconut can improve not only the overall coconut based economy of the coconut growing States but can also ensure the economic well being of millions of small and marginal coconut farmers.

The per palm yield of coconuts and the unit output of copra are very low in the country. The wide-spread prevalence of coconut diseases in Kerala and consequent decline in the productivity of coconut is a matter of great concern. For improving the productivity of the coconut holdings it is essential to have scientific management and intensive utilisation of the holdings. Research has shown that if integrate development methods on modern lines are adopted, even a small coconut holding can generate employment and income that would be sufficient for an average family. There is also great scope for expansion in coconut cultivation in non-traditional areas of coconut growing States like Orissa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Adequate resources and concerted efforts are, however, essential for modernising the coconut industry and for utilising the potential of coconut development fully. It is necessary that an effective organisation equipped with adequate powers and financial resources and assigned exclusively for this purpose is introduced. At present there is no integrated organisation for the development of the coconut industry. Hence the need for a statutory Coconut Development Board. The proposed Board will be a unified agency that will be responsible for guiding and co-ordinating all developmental and promotional needs for production, processing and marketing of coconut based products.

The functions of the Coconut Development Board include technical financial and other assistance for the development of coconut industry, supporting suitable development schemes for this purpose and promoting and financing agricultural, technological,

Board Bill and Copra Cess Bill

[Shri Surjit Singh Barnala]

industrial and economic research for coconut and coconut based products. The Board will adopt measure so that farmers, particularly the small farmers become participants in and beneficiaries of the development of coconut industry.

The finances of the Board will be provided through Coconut Development Fund that will include sums provided by the Central Government out of the proceeds of cess on copra as proposed under the Copra Cess Bill as well as grants and loans by the Central Government.

The Board shall have representatives of the coconut growing States and Union Territories the growers of coconut and coconut processing industries, Members of Parliament, concerned Central Ministries and institutions and other connected interests. Adequate representation has been given to non-officials as well as the representatives from the States.

I would crave the indulgence of the House in this connection to support me to move certain amendments to enlarge the size of the Board to 24 members. Let me also inform the House that out of the increased representation three members will be Members of Parliament.

It is hoped that the Coconut Development Board Act, when it comes into force, will go a long way in the development of the coconut industry and the improvement of the economic well being of millions of people engaged in the coconut industry.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the development under the control of the Union of the coconut industry and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR (Trivandrum): Sir, I welcome this Bill. The coconut industry, as has been pointed out by the hon. Minister, as far as the States of Kerala, Tamil

Nadu and Karnataka are concerned.

AN HON. MEMBER: what about Andhra Pradesh?

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: Yes. Andhra Pradesh also.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA (Contai): What about West Bengal?

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: I want the coconut culture to spread to all parts of the country. As far as the present situation is concerned, coconut industry is one of the industries in Kerala, which has a great impact on the entire economy. The demand for the formation of a Board was there for a long time and the hon. Minister has now thought it wise to form the Board.

As far as Kerala is concerned, over 20 lakhs of acres are under coconut cultivation. So, as rightly pointed out by the hon. Minister, from the stage of production to the stage of processing modernisation has become a must. As figures show, compared to Ceylon and other coconut growing countries, our yield is substantially low. Similarly, in the matter of processing, we are not utilising all the potentialities that are available. I understand that a new experiment has been started in Ponnani to try to utilize the coconut so that coconut protein, coconut honey, coconut oil, all these things can be processed scientifically for maximum benefit. But it is still at the experimental stage. To what extent it can be commercially worked has to be gone into. In any case, modernisation of production as well as processing deserve great attention from the Government as well as the farmers.

Coming to the composition of the Board, I was very much disappointed when it was introduced. I think it has been partially made up now. If only Government officers are to constitute the Board, then even without a Board they could have done it. The idea of this Board has been posed by the organised coconut growers. The Coconut Growers' Association, Kerala, which is known as the Kera Karshaka Sangham, is one of the well organised kisan organisations in the State. It was as

account of their struggle for a Board that finally our hon. Minister agreed to it. When the Board was constituted earlier, we found no representative of the growers in it. Every time we are discussing the Plan, or anything else we speak about the participation of the people, the involvement of the people, but when government form committees they forget this particular aspect of giving representation to the agriculturist or that section of the people which is concerned. (Interruptions). I do not want to attribute any motive.

MR. SPEAKER: He has not much experience of coconuts!

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour). He should arrange to distribute coconuts to Members of Parliament!

MR. SPEAKER: We will arrange to sell them!

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: I do not want to go into the question of today or other products. I am speaking only of the products after it has taken the shape of coconut.

As far as the utility of the coconut is concerned, its timber is useful, the roots are useful.

MR. SPEAKER: It is known as a *kalpa vriksha*.

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: It is called a *kalpa vriksha*. Therefore, this amendment brought forward by the hon. Minister to include three Members of Parliament and some representation to farmers

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: It should be chaired by a Member of Parliament.

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: I do not know who is to chair it, that is not the point. My main point is that there should be more representation to the direct representatives of the farmers. Since he has already accepted the principle of giving representation to them I want him to consider whether he can raise it to six from three. You

can reduce the number of officers. Why do you want so many officers? Who knows anything about coconut, whether it is a tree or a plant or a shrub how many of them know? Therefore, reduce the number of Government officers and put in their place representatives of the actual farmers. Then this will be real.

Secondly, as has been pointed out by our friends here, up till now Kerala was considered to be the main State for the production of coconut. The lines of technology for development and the information is spreading. So, there are many places where this coconut cultivation can be conducted. And I think Orissa is one of the States which has a great potential for developing the cultivation of coconuts, as also parts of Bengal, but the unfortunate part is that in none of these areas are the coconut products properly utilised. For example, I find coconut in Assam. I asked them whether they use it for tapping toddy. It is news to them. It is one of the best drinks that you get from coconut.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Arrac.

MR. SPEAKER: Not arrac.

AN HON. MEMBER: Nectar.

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: You call it nectar or anything else.

If it is given to the farmers in Kerala for toddy tapping they get a very handsome return. But none of the other States seem to use it for toddy tapping. Of course I know, the idea of prohibition is there. I gave a suggestion for that also. In many places oil is not extracted. In Assam and other areas and even in Orissa, they use it as tender coconut and not as dry coconut. I am pointing out all these things just to show the great potentiality of developing coconut cultivation not only in Kerala but in many other parts of the country also.

MR. SPEAKER: You can deal with the other Bill also. We will take up both together.

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: The real problem facing the coconut cultivator is the competition from other coconut producing countries, especially Ceylon and Philippines. They compete in coconut products. Therefore, unless we develop the productivity of our own coconut plantations, it will be very difficult to compete with them. Secondly, with regard to the processing also, unless there is a body to guide and encourage, the same old type to production will continue. Thirdly, the biggest problem facing the agriculturists today is from the pests. Now the Government of India has an Institute started forty or fifty years ago. There is some root disease which ruins the coconut tree. Up to this date, they are not able to find a solution for this. The unfortunate part is, since coconut is mainly grown in Kerala and in certain other areas, the attention given by the Scientists and the Universities where such researches are going on, is not adequate. You can get international cooperation also, if you are serious about finding a solution. Now they say that it is a virus disease. Virus means what? You know. The only way to solve it is to burn the tree, destroy the tree. If that is the only way then I think a large number of coconut trees will have to be burnt down in Kerala. I do not want that we should take this drastic step. There is another step replanting the areas where coconut has been affected by this disease. That has proved to be successful.

Especially the nuts taken from areas where this disease exists, but where the trees are healthy, they have a better resistance power and the replanting of such trees should be taken up. We had experience with Rubber Board. Formerly, we had this low yielding variety and in the larger interest, the Government of India decided to help the peasants in replanting. They give loans without interest for replanting. The realisation takes place only after the trees start yielding. Some similar method to be found by this Board also so that replanting in a big way, where this disease has spread, is attempted.

So, finding a solution for the pests and other diseases, replantation scheme, facilities for increasing production by modern methods of manuring, etc., so many things can be done in the field of increasing production and so also in the field of processing coconut how the coconut leaves can be better utilised.....

MR. SPEAKER: Coir also.

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: Yes, coir also. If a properly functioning Board is there, I am quite sure that a lot of things can be done for the improvement of cultivation and production of coconuts. So, I believe, my suggestion to put in more representatives of agriculturists in the Board by reducing some of the Government representatives will be accepted by the hon. Minister. I hope, he will heed to my request.

SHRI B. K. NAIR (Mavelikara): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate the hon. Minister for coming forward with this Bill. I am thankful to him for having earnestly taken up this bill as the first one being taken up in this session of Parliament.

The setting up of a development board for coconut has been an outcry for long of the people of Kerala. The very name of Kerala is derived from "Kera", that is, coconut tree. Kerala means the land of coconut trees. That is only cultivation in Kerala. The only wealth of the people in Kerala is taken as the number of coconut trees and the number of acres filled by the coconut trees. That position has now undergone a very serious change. There has been a basic change.

The hon. Minister, Mr. Barnala, was in Kerala in August-September, 1977 and subsequently also. He must have been impressed by green trees and impressed by the fact that the land is

so full of coconut trees. But this was a delusion. The coconut trees which he saw in Kerala, at least two-thirds of them, in the old Travancore-Cochin area, are in a state of decay. The trees are very seriously affected by pests. We do not get even one-third or one-fourth of the yield which we used to get from the coconut trees earlier. The yield has come down. Not only that. A coconut tree takes about 5 to 7 years to come to bearing. One goes on nursing the seedling, nurturing it and fertilising it. After 5 to 6 years, the first bunch of about 10 to 20 coconuts comes out and within 6 to 8 months, the leaves begin to decay. The rot starts at the top and then slowly it goes down and within a few weeks, the entire tree is decayed. The only solution suggested to the people so far is to destroy the tree.

The coconut plantation is not a large-scale holding business. Because of intensive implementation of land reforms, the size of the holding has come down. The minimum size of a plot of land held by a person is only 3 to 5 Cents. Even that man plants one or two coconut trees in the plot. The maximum holding may be about 10 or 12 acres. If you take 100 coconut cultivators, at least 85 of them will be small holders, holding less than 1 acre of land.

The basic problem in the matter of development of coconut plantation is investigation, research and intensive study. That should be the basic objective of the Coconut Board, to begin with.

But I am sorry, I do not find that seriousness and that importance reflected in the constitution of the Board. You have given it a top-heavy structure. In what was earlier conceived, you have made some changes. Out of 17 Members 13 were to be officials. What are these officials going to do? There were to be only three representatives of cultivators and others:

what are these three helpless people going to do as against this big assembly of officials? It should not be a Board just for name's sake; it should be a real Board, a live Board keenly alive to the problems of the industry. The main problem is that of rejuvenating the plantations and giving life to what is almost on the verge of death or decay. That is the main problem—that of investigation, study and research and evolution of new strains and new types, because the old types are out-dated and they are prone to disease. Therefore, evolution of new types is very necessary. Now there is a new variety called T x D variety but even that is not very successful or very helpful because even that is prone to disease. So, it may mean re-planting. And what does re-planting mean? It means clearing up vast areas and removal of entire trees in the area—that means the entire population being deprived of this main means of livelihood since their income depends on the number of trees. And so re-planting means a colossal investment of money, and that money has to be found.

A feeble attempt has been made to finance the scheme through the levy of a cess on copra. But the amount proposed is inadequate. It is proposed to collect only Rs. 5/- per quintal of copra. How will you collect this from the mills? The number of mills exceeds 4000, including rotaries and expellers. In Kerala, for example, there are 60 expellers and 1000 and odd rotaries. These rotaries are manned by only two or three workmen. They are spread over the entire country-side and it would not be worthwhile going about, collecting the cess: even the collection charges will not be met by the amount realised because you will have to employ a paraphernalia of officers to cover the entire state. Formerly, this industry used to be concentrated in Kerala, and in my own town of Alleppey there used to be several mills with 30 or 40 rotaries.

[Shri B. K. Nair]

But now this is reduced to a small scale because coconut is available all over the country and mills are also spread all over the country. So, how can you make the collection effective? It won't be effective because the amount proposed is far from sufficient for meeting the expenses.

Sir, in the matter of research I would suggest that something on the pattern of the Rubber Board should be seriously attempted. The Tea Board also, and the Tea Plantation Association too have their own development and research schemes, but the Rubber Board is ideal. Earlier the Indian Rubber Board had borrowed ideas from the Rubber Research Institute of Malaya but now they are in a position to export their ideas to other countries.

Therefore, even if the board comes to be re-constituted, I would suggest that a part from giving majority representation to the growers—because, after all, they are the people who have to deal with the problems and they have to explain the problems—the Board should be a sort of place for exchange of ideas. It should be manned by scientists and not by IAS people. What can IAS people do? It should be manned by scientists. Scientists should be there, investigators should be there, and a regular Institute of Research should be established. I would suggest that its centre should be in Kerala—not for selfish reasons but because a large percentage of the coconut plantations are in Kerala. Therefore, the headquarters of the Board should be in Kerala. We have an Institute in Kanyakulam, but it is only for name's sake. It has only a few dozen low-paid employees. They are not given any special task: they are not assigned any particular problem; they are just carrying on. You should now trust our scientists much more. Instead of sermonising and insulting them at meetings, saying they are fortune hunters etc., since our scientific department has very much developed now,

if you trust them with the job, I am sure they will be able to evolve some solution for the diseases of coconut plantations. So far, it has been only a haphazard effort. Therefore sufficient funds should be provided and, on the lines of Rubber Board, a regular Institute should be set up. Instead of a Development officer, there should be a full-fledged Coconut Production Commissioner, who will be a Member of the Board.

Here it is also provided that the Chairman of the Coir Board will be a member of the Coconut Development Board. Why should he be here? What has he to do with this? Unless you are anxious to find a place for one more official, he has no place here. Coir development, coir manufacture, coir sale, all these are handled by the Coir Board; that is an entirely different department.

One more point. After the development of this industry, what is going to happen to the product? Much of this is given for toddy-tapping. I am personally against this. When a coconut tree is given for toddy-tapping, that creates many anti-social problems—toddy drinking and all that. In any case, if that is to be so, I am suggesting that a substantial amount can be realised from the State Governments. They have to contribute a sizable amount to the Board because they are collecting huge amounts by way of excise duty from the sale of toddy. Every time an auction is held amounts go up by lakhs and lakhs of rupees. That has become a very thriving business. Many monopoly houses are there in the field and they would not mind paying a few lakhs of rupees at the auction. Therefore, one source of income may be from the State Governments themselves. They can set apart a part of their excise collection for the development of the trees. After all, the basic problem of the coconut industry is development of cultivation, improvement of cultivation. Extracting oil, development of

oil industry, finding markets, all these are insignificant compared to the basic problem of rejuvenation of the coconut trees, which means rejuvenating the population, the whole countryside of Kerala.

I have given notice of some amendments, and I will speak on them at the appropriate stage.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Barnala, you have to move formally the other Bill also.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Sir, I beg to move:*

"That the Bill to provide for the imposition of cess on copra for the development of the coconut industry and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

MR. SPEAKER Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the imposition of cess on copra for the development of the coconut industry and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Yuvraj.

श्री यशराज (कटिहार): अध्यक्ष महोदय, जो नारियल विकास बोर्ड 1978 प्रस्तुत है उस के संबंध में मैं अपनी राय रखना चाहता हूँ। इस विधेयक के प्रारम्भ में ही बोर्ड के गठन के सम्बन्ध में यह बतलाया गया है कि केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा नियुक्त एक अध्यक्ष होगा और उस के और सदस्य इस प्रकार होंगे—

भारत सरकार के कृषि आयुक्त, पदेन,
केन्द्रीय बागान उपज अनुसंधान (संस्थान (भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद्) का विदेशक, पदेन,

कवर उद्योग अधिनियम, 1953 की धारा 4 के अधीन गठित कवर बोर्ड का अध्यक्ष, पदेन,

तीन सदस्य, जो निम्नलिखित से सम्बन्धित केन्द्रीय सरकार के मंत्रालयों का प्रतिनिधित्व करने के लिये, केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा नियुक्त किए जायेंगे, अर्थात्:—(1) राजस्व, (2) उद्योग, और (3) नागरिक पूर्ति और सहकारिता, इसके बाद (च) में है—

तीन सदस्य, जो बड़े पैमाने पर नारियल उपजाने वाले केरल, तमिलनाडु और कर्नाटक राज्यों की सरकारों का प्रतिनिधित्व करने के लिए केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा इन में से प्रत्येक के लिए एक-एक नियुक्त किए जाएँगे,

और (ठ) में है—

तीन सदस्य, जो आन्ध्र प्रदेश, आसाम, महाराष्ट्र, उड़ीसा और पश्चिमी बंगाल राज्यों तथा अण्डमान निकोबार द्वीप समूह, गोवा, दमण और दीव, लक्षद्वीप संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों की सरकारों का प्रतिनिधित्व करने के लिये केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा वर्तानुक्रम से बारी-बारी से नियुक्त किये जायेंगे।

ये तीन सदस्य पाँच छः राज्यों को मिला कर होंगे। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो सब से ज्यादा नारियल उपजाने वाले राज्य हैं जहाँ नारियल की अधिक खेती होती है और जिस की एक कृषियल पोषीयता है, वहाँ की एकीता में, वहाँ प्रत्येक राज्य से एक एक प्रतिनिधि का मनोनयन होना चाहिए।

दूसरी बात मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि अपने यहां इस देश में यह एक मुख्य कृषि आप मानी जाती है और लगभग 11 लाख 26 हजार हेक्टेयर में इस की खेती होती है। जो छोटे किसान हैं उन को भी नारियल की खेती का एक मौका मिलता है। लेकिन इन छोटे छोटे किसानों को कोई मदद नहीं मिल पाती है। नारियल का पौधा जिस की उम्र लगभग 60 साल होती है लगाने के लिए कोई ऐसी संस्था नहीं है जो छोटे छोटे किसानों की मदद कर सके। जो मजाने वाला रोग है, जिसके कारण नारियल के पौधे बड़े हो कर मर जाते हैं उसके सम्बन्ध में जो रिसर्च हुई है उससे इसका कोई निदान नहीं निकला है जिसके द्वारा नारियल के पौधों को, जोकि बड़े पैमाने पर रोगग्रस्त हो जाते हैं, उनको बचाया जा सके। नारियल से हमारे देश की काफी विदेशी मुद्रा भी प्राप्त होती है। नारियल पैदा करने वाले जो छोटे छोटे किसान हैं उनको धर्मदाय, बाढ़ तथा उपयुक्त यकीनरी के अभाव में कोई मदद नहीं मिलती है। यदि इस सम्बन्ध में किसानों की मदद की व्यवस्था हो तो बड़ा प्रस्ताव होगा।

इसी प्रकार सेल्युलोज कोकोनोटे प्रोद्युसर्स स्ट्रेट्स के प्रतिनिधियों को बोर्ड में शामिल करने की बात है। जैसा कि आपने बतलाया है, आप बहुत दिनों के बाद बोर्ड बना रहे हैं। एक प्रतिनिधि मण्डल वर्गीय की अध्यक्षता में 1975-76 में तत्कालीन कृषि मंत्री

[श्री युवराज]

श्री जगजीवन राम जी से मिला था। उस शिष्ट मण्डल ने एक से मोरैडम भी दिया था। इस शिष्ट मण्डल ने उस समय श्री जगजीवन राम जी को सारी बातें कही थीं। उसके बाद 1976 में केरल में एक कोकोनेट डेवलपमेंट कार्पोरेशन बना। लेकिन जो छोटे छोटे किसान हैं जोकि बैंकबोन हैं, जोकि नारियल की खेती में अधिक काम करते हैं, नारियल के पौधों के संरक्षण का काम करते हैं, ज्यादा मेहनत करते हैं, ऐसे किसान जिनके पास प्राचा एकड़ जमीन है जिसमें वे सो पचास पीछे लगा देते हैं, जोकि एक भूमिहीन की तरह अपनी जिन्दगी बसर करते हैं, जिनकी कमाई के वन पर प्राज यह उद्योग खड़ा है, केरल में कैंस काप्स में एक तहाई आमदनी नारियल की खेती से प्राप्त होती है, श्री ये छोटे किसान जो इसके विकास की अपेक्षा करते हैं, उन्की अपेक्षा न तो केन्द्रीय सरकार और न ही राज्य सरकारों की ओर से पूरी की गई है।

15.2 hurs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

यह खरी की बात है कि सरकार ने नारियल विकास बोर्ड कायम करने के लिए एक विधेयक पेश किया है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि जिन जिन राज्यों में नारियल की खेती होती है, प्रत्येक राज्य से एक एक प्रतिनिधि बोर्ड में लेना चाहिए चाहे वह राज्य असम हो, महाराष्ट्र हो, गोवा हो या पश्चिम बंगाल हो। उन तमाम राज्यों से बोर्ड में प्रतिनिधि लेने चाहिए।

दूसरी बात यह है कि नारियल की जो कीमत है वह बहुत गिरती रहती है। इसका सबसे ज्यादा कांजम्शन अमरीका करता है और वह चाहता है कि इसकी मार्केट की रहे और फ्लोर प्राइस फिक्स न होने पाये। आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि जो किसान नारियल पैदा करते हैं उनको इतनी कीमत जरूर मिले जिससे कि वे अपने जीवन स्तर को ऊपर उठा सकें। इस बात की भी आवश्यकता है कि नारियल की अधिक से अधिक पैदावार हो और अधिक से अधिक क्षेत्र में इसकी खेती हो। छोटे किसान जो नारियल की खेती में लगे हुए हैं उनको ज्यादा लाभ मिलना चाहिए। बोर्ड में नारियल पैदा करने वाले सभी राज्यों के प्रतिनिधियों की लिया जाना चाहिए। साथ ही ऐसी व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए जिससे कि इसकी फ्लोर प्राइस निर्धारित हो सके तथा छोटे किसानों का बोझ न होने पाये।

*Shri A. SUNNA SAHIB (Palghat):
Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am greatly privileged to participate in the discussion on the Coconut Development Board Bill, 1978. I come from the State of Kerala and the mainstay of Kerala's economy is coconut. The very word 'Kerala' is derived from the word Kera Vriksham, which means coconut tree. The coconut tree has the appellations of Karpaga Vriksham, Amudha Surabhi, which mean

perennial source of wealth. I have referred to these things to stress the importance of coconut tree to the people of our country, especially to those living in the States where the coconut trees are in abundance. It is really regrettable that the coconut cultivation today is in doldrums, which has necessitated the introduction of this legislation. The Government of India have realised that coconut is a crop of great economic potential. I need not repeat that coconut cultivation is spread over nearly 11 lakh hectares and the annual production of nuts is of the order of staggering 60,000 lakhs.

At the very outset, I would like to refer to the composition of the Coconut Development Board. I am happy that representation has been given to Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. At the same time, I am sore that the coconut growers of Andaman, Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep Islands and Pondicherry have not been given representation on this Board. It is not enough that the bureaucrats from these areas are on this Board. Unless the representatives of coconut growers of these parts are given a chance on this Board, the coconut cultivation in these areas will not be helped properly. Either the elected representatives from these Union Territories or the representatives of coconut growers must be on this Board. I am sure that the hon. Members from these territories would heartily welcome this proposal. The hon. Minister himself has brought an amendment which I welcome.

Several lakhs of people, may be four lakhs or five lakhs, are engaged in the cultivation and in the processing industries based on coconut. It is really a pity that so far no significant development has taken place in the coconut product diversification and byproduct utilisation. In fact there has so far been no research and development work in this sector of national importance. For example, the cool water of tender coconut quenches the par-

ched throat, and it has also got curing effect for people affected by small pox. It is enough if you sprinkle this water of tender coconut on the person affected by small-pox. This curative effect of tender coconut must be put on sound medicinal footing so that it reaches the common people all over the country. I have personal knowledge that the poor coconut growers with their small holdings are not by themselves capable of developing or modernising this industry. There should be an institutional set-up to look after the integrated development of coconut industry. Here it is necessary that such an institutional set-up should be vested with adequate physical and fiscal powers to discharge the onerous responsibility of developing the coconut industry. Here it is necessary to mention how individual industrial entrepreneurs are helped financially and technically by the Government. I will give you an instance how scientific research has not gone to the rescue of coconut growers. The coconut trees in Kerala are afflicted by a virus disease. So far no serious effort has been made not only to control and contain this disease but also to eradicate it completely. Consequently, thousands of coconut trees have been felled by this foul disease. The Government should do something immediate in this matter and save this 'Kamadenu' from extinction.

I do not question the propriety of levying a cess on the copra. But I would like to question the steep increase from 60 paise a quintal to Rs. 5 per quintal. Secondly, besides the revenue raised from this source which may go to meet the administrative expenses of the Coconut Development Board, the Government at the Centre should give adequate subsidy to the coconut growers for the development of coconut cultivation.

As has been pointed out by the hon. Member who preceded me, I suggest that there should be a well-planned rejuvenation scheme for the existing coconut trees. Similarly, the people engaged in the cottage industry with

coconut-frond thatching must also be helped with the execution of a time-bound scheme. Here I may point that there is the possibility of generating power from coconut shell charcoal, which would be useful for operating irrigation pumps and small generators.

The Government should not rest on the laurels of having enacted this legislation. At the moment the various by-products such as shell, pith, coconut water, etc. are being wasted for want of scientific knowledge about their utilisation. To give an example, the coconut growers do not try to engage themselves in extracting oil and that is because they would not get a fair price for their products. Secondly, they also do not have marketing facilities. Besides helping them financially with substantial subsidy, they should be given technical and marketing assistance. At present coconut is mainly treated as a food item. There should be a conscious attempt to save coconut from all sides of neglect.

Before I conclude, I would reiterate that representation should be given on the Coconut Development to the coconut-growers of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep Islands and Pondicherry. The Government should not confine this representation from these territories only to officials. The coconut-growers must be assured of remunerative price for their products. The Government should also take immediate steps to eradicate the virus disease which has affected a large number of coconut trees in Kerala. Then, the cess proposed to be levied should not back-breaking. The coconut-growers must be given adequate financial assistance in the form of subsidy so that they can undertake on the spot developmental schemes. The Government should also work out a comprehensive scheme for profitable utilisation of byproducts of the coconut. The composition of the Coconut Development Board should be such as to represent both officials and non-officials of all the coconut-growing areas of the country.

I am thankful to the hon. Deputy Speaker for giving me an opportunity

[Shri A. Sunna Sahib.]

to participate in this important discussion.

SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL (Mathurapur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I extend my full support to the Coconut Development Board Bill on behalf of my party. Sir, Coconut is a crop of small and marginal farmers and this is grown in about five million holdings and the size of the average holding is as low as 0.22 hectares. Coconut is grown over an area of 1.2 hectares. The present estimated level of production is around 6500 million nuts. However, the estimated demand by the end of the Sixth Plan is around 7320 million nuts and the additional production potential of 820 million nuts remain to be covered. So, steps will have to be taken for increasing domestic production.

Sir, the proposal to form a Board for the development of the coconut industry has been demanded by the growers of coconut during the last regime, that is, the congress regime. But their feelings were not responded to by that congress regime. Now this Government has felt the need for solving their problem and that is why this Government's effort is praiseworthy.

While supporting this Bill, I would like to suggest some points for consideration:

Firstly, the import of copra should be immediately stopped. Import of copra from Ceylon, Malaysia and such other countries would hamper the interest of growers of our country. So, that should be stopped.

Secondly, I would suggest that the Head Office should remain at Kerala because Kerala is the place where large-scale production is there. Kerala literally means the place where coconut is grown. So, the Head Office should be there. There is no mention in the Bill regarding the location of the Head Office. Also, the representation of Gujarat and Karnataka has been ignored. In this Bill I do not see the name of Gujarat and Karnataka

at all. I have information that Gujarat and Karnataka have also been producing coconuts on a large scale. That is why I say that their representation should also be there on the Board.

And, regarding the Chairmanship, I would suggest that no official member—either the IAS or the bureaucrat—should be the Chairman of the Coconut Development Board. Only a member from among the growers of the coconuts should become the Chairman of the Coconut Board. I feel that the interests of the coconut growers will be served more by the grower himself than by an IAS or some other high-ranking official member.

Regarding floor price, I would like to mention that one rupee at least should be fixed per coconut. That should be the minimum floor price. Necessary steps must be taken to see that the price of coconut does not come down. If import is continued, the price of coconut will surely come down and that is why I want to suggest that the import of coconut should immediately be stopped so that the home market of coconut can flourish. In this connection, I would like to mention about the use of green coconut in the Eastern region. Here green coconut is used for drinking the sweet water in it. I consider it a great waste. They do not know the actual utility of the coconut when it is ripe. The ripe ones are turned into copra which is a valuable raw material. Therefore, a propagation should be made so that the green coconuts are not wasted on a large scale. With these words I support the Bill.

SHRI PABITRA MOHAN PRADHAN (Deogarh): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, everybody knows the manifold and various utilities of coconut. I am not going to mention about that. I would like to say about the development of the raw materials that is with the growing of coconut trees on a large scale. India is a country with maritime climate. The coconut trees

grow well in the areas of sea-shore beginning from Gujarat along the entire West Coast region and on the East coastline which extends to thousands of miles and from the seashore, well upto 30 to 40 miles into interior, the entire area is suitable for coconut growing. So, this Board should and must give due attention to the development of coconut growing in this entire area. If that is done, I think the Board's utility is best served by 50 per cent and the rest 50 per cent may be done by other ways. Now, I do not know what is the culture and convention followed in other parts of India. There is an age-old practice being followed and now also there is a socio-religious superstition that coconut trees cannot be grown by any other castes or communities except the Brahmmins.

SHRI C. N. VISVANATHAN (Tirupattur): Where is it followed?

SHRI PABITRA MOHAN PRADHAN: Here in Orissa, it is followed. I am giving this information to the House. It is said that if the non-Brahmins grow this plant, their women would become barren. That means, they would not give birth to children. That is the superstition that is followed here. So, uptill now the coconut growing lands of non-Brahmins are barren. I will give you another example I will prove it also. If you go to the villages in and around the seashore, you will find coconut trees are grown only by the Brahmin families and in the lands belonging to non-Brahmins, the coconut trees are not grown.

But, of late, persons belonging to other castes are also trying to grow, all the older coconut trees belong to Brahmins only. In this area, where only certain people have the right socially and religiously to grow coconut trees, the Board should come forward and propagate that each and every persons has the birth right to grow coconut trees.

Further, if such trees are grown to the maximum possible extent, most of the food problems and other indus-

trial problems will be solved. Lakhs of acres of land near the sea shore are lying vacant. These are, of course, sandy. Research should be conducted to find out how coconut trees can be grown in the sandy soil. The climate, of course is very good but because of the sandy soil, the coconut trees do not grow well. Then, in the interior of the country some two hundred miles away from the sea shore, coconut trees are now being grown. Even in Karnataka in the inland area the coconut trees are being grown. It is, therefore, expected that the coconut trees can also be grown in the northern India in areas like the Punjab and elsewhere. The area from which I come is at a distance of 250 miles from the sea shore, but even in that area coconut trees are grown. They grow well, but the fruit is not so luxuriant; these are tasteful but not big in size. The oil percentage is also the same.

Coming to the State of Orissa, when the hon. Minister had been to that State, he assured that lakhs of coconut trees would be grown within the coming five years. He took so much interest that he called some officers and asked them to give their suggestions and schemes for this purpose. I am told that these have already been sent but no reply has yet been given to the State of Orissa in this regard. I expect that the hon. Minister will take immediate steps in this regard.

Coming to the Board itself for whom this Bill has been brought forward, I would like to say that out of six non-official members, three come from three States and the other five or six States have to be represented by only three members. I think that this number should be increased so that one member comes from each State, for example one from Orissa, one from West Bengal, one from Gujarat, one from Goa, Daman and Diu and so on. Each State must be represented by one Member in the Board. Unless this is

[Shri Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.]

done, I think, the purpose of this Bill may not be truly served.

I expect that after the Bill is passed immediate and active steps would be taken to achieve the purpose for which this Bill has been brought forward. With these words, I resume my seat.

SHRI C. N. VISVANATHAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir: I welcome the Coconut Development Board Bill and congratulate the Government for bringing it. India is an agricultural country; and after 31 years of freedom at least the Janata Party has brought this Bill. We have to congratulate and thank the Government for doing this, at least in the second year of its rule.

I have to mention 3 essential points which will really help the coconut growers in rural areas. I have seen that there will be a non-recurring expenditure of Rs. 2 lakhs, i. e. likely to be incurred initially on the establishment of the Board and a recurring expenditure of about Rs. 8 lakhs to be incurred by the Board during 1978-79. I would suggest that in each State, there should be district branches of this Board. Otherwise they will ask the State Government to appoint some district branches for development of coconuts and to cover areas where coconuts are grown. Further, in Tamil Nadu, the agricultural officers are now looking after the growth of coconuts. But actually it is not sufficient, since these officers in Tamil Nadu have to look after all the agriculturist crops, including coconut. These Executive Officers in the Department of Agriculture in Tamil Nadu are called E.O. (Agri.) They are given some subsidies in Tamil Nadu. For one coconut crop, they are given one rupee as subsidy. I would request the Minister to provide good varieties of coconut, i.e. high-yielding varieties to the farmers through the Block Development Offices, or the branches of the Board in the State, or through the Board itself straightway, to agriculturists and coconut-growers. Fertilizers and pesticides also should be

Board Bill and Copra Cess Bill

given free or as loan to the coconut growers. After 5 or 6 years, they can collect this back, in the form of coconuts, instead of money.

Clause 14 of the Coconut Development Board Bill empowers the Board to borrow money from

“(a) the public by the issue or sale of bonds or debentures or both, carrying interest at such rates as may be specified therein;

(b) any bank or institution.”

I request the Minister to see that the nationalized banks give loans to farmers to grow coconuts. If they give Rs. 2,000/- or Rs. 3,000/- per acre, we in Tamil Nadu can definitely cultivate millions of coconuts. Soil, weather and water resources in Tamil Nadu are most suitable for coconuts. I suggest to the Minister that loans should be given. For growing sugarcane, we give Rs. 2,000/- to Rs. 3,000/- as advance or loan. Similarly, loan should be given to the poor farmers to grow coconuts; and we can definitely grow plenty of coconuts in Tamil Nadu, and throughout India also.

I now find that in Tamil Nadu, at some places, even smuggling is taking place, of copra from Ceylon. Copra is now very costly. Nowadays the price of crops per kg. is Rs. 60/- or Rs. 70/- So, they are smuggling from Ceylon. India is having a very vast land; and we are having very good coconuts. But still we have to face smuggling of coconuts into this country.

I want the Minister to take definite action regarding this Board Rs. 2 lakhs will cover only the salaries and other expenses of the Members. We cannot do any real justice to the interests of the growers and farmers, as desired in this Bill. I would request that more funds should be given to the Board which is vital for India which is an agricultural country.

Thirdly, in this Bill, Pondicherry has been left out.

Sub-clause (g) of (4) says:

"Three members to be appointed by the Central Government by rotation in the alphabetical order to represent the Governments of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal and the Union territories of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep."

Here Pondicherry has been left out
SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA:
 It has been added by an amendment.

SHRI C. N. VISVANATHAN: Thank you, Sir. Now I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister regarding marketing. Marketing is a big problem for the growers in so many places. In Delhi, I have seen that one coconut is sold at Rs. 2 whereas in Tamilnadu and other places it is sold at 50 paise and the maximum price is Re. 1/-. In our areas like Gudlattam Naniambadi Ambar and other places, it is not more than 90 paise. There must be marketing for the growers. As far as fibre is concerned, it should be given in the small scale industry to make coir. They are growing fibre without any use. I do not know what the Janata Government is doing it. When we approached the Minister of Industry about it, he said, "No, no, it is really for the cottage industry. We cannot give the licence to the small scale industry." At the same time, the farmers are suffering and with the fibre shells are being wasted. We want that the small scale industry should be brought up for improving coconut business. We suggest that licence should be given to the small scale industry for this purpose. I welcome the Bill.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): I have mentioned to my friend Shri Surjit Singh Barnala many a time that agriculture—when I say agriculture I mean horticulture and the allied disciplines—is controlled by the American lobby in this country.

That is why, precisely there has been no research; no planning, no drive for production and it has been an utter neglect. Because of coconut there could be more genetic improvement, there could be multi-cropping and there could be mixed farming. Why is it that for 30 years, it has not been done? Government owes an explanation to this House. We could have blamed the Congress Government. Now this Government has come. They should look into the papers and take the House into confidence. For 30 years, why it has been neglected?

What about the credit needs of the coconut growers? If they are cultivating coconut alone, the minimum cost per hectares would be about Rs. 2233; if it is a mixed crop, the cost might go up to Rs. 7200 per hectare. Have they ever bothered to make adequate financial credit facilities available to the coconut growers for such a precious crop? This is one of the aspects to which the hon. Minister would be owing an explanation to the House. Has any correct estimate been done? Has any preventive measure been taken? The loss on account of the disease, I am told, is three hundred million rupees per annum. This is not a small amount.

If you kindly look into the import figures of edible oil, particularly seed oil, you will find what coconut we could indigenously produce today. As days are passing, our dependence on import is increasing by leaps and bounds. Kindly look at the figures of importation of palm oil. I have been able to lay my hand on a piece of American publication where they have said that for cereals, for the time being, we have lost our market in India, but for edible oil, they will have to remain dependent on us for coming decades. They are making fresh investments in Malaysia and other places for cultivation of red oil palm. If hon. Members make a trip to Car Nicobar Island, the home of coconut, they will know. Last year the Public Undertakings Committee

[Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu.]

visited; we went to Nakori island and we made a sudden trip, unscheduled trip to a nearby island. There is a community called Akujis; they have been exploiting the tribals of Andaman-Nicobar islands for the last one century; they have taken the blood out of them. How do they do it? They have formed a fake cooperative society. Copra is dried; they smoke-cure to prevent bacterial contact; I do not think it is successful. The man there refused to show me the books of accounts. I showed him a rule from the Rules of Procedure and I could see their books of accounts. He divulged that Car Nicobar tribals were selling copra at Rs. 1.75 a kg. for oil milling; it is being entered in the books of the oil millers at Rs. 8 a kg., they are keeping three or four middlemen in between in order to evade payment of taxes. The hon. Minister has got NAFED and other organisations; they are all anxious to do good to the tribals. The previous government had been shedding crocodile tears for thirty years for the welfare of Scheduled castes and tribes. Kindly go and see what is the physical and mental condition of tribals who are living there; they are suffering from perpetual malnutrition, disease illiteracy. Why? Because a product which is worth Rs. 8 a kg. is taken out; he is forced to part with it for Rs. 1.75 a kg. The government is a helpless spectator. I am sorry to say. The entire administration of Andaman is in the complete control of Akujis; it is an empire of Akujis and the government are helpless.

Coconut is the most important ingredient for chocolate industry in the west. For the western confectionary, even Indian confectionary coconut is indispensable. What are you doing about it? Are we doing our best to take advantage of that? No. We have not set up any coconut based industry, except oil extraction, leaving aside coir. Coir is in the hands of a few unscrupulous businessmen who are exploiting labour as best as they can. Coir is used not only for mat-

ting; it is used in automobile industry for air cleaning and many other things. Is adequate research conducted on that? No. It cannot be done. In Uluberia in Howrah, they had some research on extraction of coir from green coconut. In that area people consume green coconut; you cannot prevent a Bengali from drinking a green coconut if he could. It can be done through education but it will take 20, 30 years. If you force him not to drink green coconut there will be trouble. The research that was conducted there was discontinued and after the water is drunk, the green coconut is just thrown into the Ganges, the river. No work is done on that.

About the composition of the board, I had been on various boards; with all humility I can tell you that I tried to do my job as best as I can. It is my experience that government officials go to board meetings by the morning flight; they must be all the time looking at the watch to catch the evening flight. They read the brief the same day or a day earlier. There is hardly any involvement. I am not saying that this applies to all of them; but by and large it is so. Today he is in the Commerce Ministry and represents that ministry in the Tea Board; by the time he comes back in the evening, he is posted to the ministry of industry and he will have to go to the Jute Board. There is lack of involvement. The hon. Minister should make use of his colleagues; he is basically a Member of Parliament, elected by the people. I am glad to say that. He should take his colleagues into confidence because we are a class of people who are answerable to the people every five years. We cannot escape. If we do not do our job, we will stand rejected and we will not come back here. But for the civil servant that is not the problem. As long as he can sign his attendance register, the cheque at the end of the month is in his hands. He is not answerable to the public periodically. Therefore, for the composition of the Board you

must have small growers representatives, marginal growers representatives and more of elected people representatives so that they can be answerable in their own areas.

Mr. Gopal had been a Member of the Coconut Board for three years. He has not done anything at all. Therefore, we shall teach him a lesson this time. I would earnestly request you Mr. Minister while finalising the composition of the Board kindly bear this in mind.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I welcome this Bill. This has been the aspiration of the coconut growing people especially the people of our State as we stand for 90 per cent of the coconut produce in India. We had been representing through our agricultural organisation and while the hon. Minister was there in our State, we had just taken him round the coconut zone. He was very much impressed the necessity of having this Board. I need not narrate what is the importance of the coconut in my State of Kerala.

The very name indicates—'Kera' means coconut, 'la' means waves and 'alam' means land.

The people in my State possess two to three acres of land. There is no big plantation owner because of the new land reforms.

I want to make the misconception clear regarding this coconut oil. Unfortunately, some people interpret this as an edible oil. It is not. Out of the coconut oil produce, 60 per cent of the oil is being taken for industrial purposes. Only 40 per cent of the oil is being used for edible purposes.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: But it is an edible oil.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Actual pattern of usage is more for industrial purposes.

The coconut in the State of Kerala gives directly or indirectly employment to 10 lakhs people. Nearly 40,000

people are engaged in toddy tapping of the industry. One lakh people are employed in jobs like plucking of the coconut from the trees. Six lakhs of people depend on coir industry, retting, etc. The foreign exchange earned from this industry comes to Rs. 20 crores.

I would like to bring to your kind notice that the whole crop is facing a villain type of virus. It has become a problem for the growers. The remedy found is to chop off the whole tree. You cannot take away the disease by using pesticides. Now the question of replanning and replanting comes. The Board will be of great use in this regard to make enough of researches on this point.

Coming to the composition of the Board, I would like to mention in this connection the past experience of the Board. My submission is that it should not be burdened with officers. The coconut growers of all States should be given due representation.

Regarding the real location of the Headquarters of the Board I may mention that it should be at Kerala as 90 per cent of the product is being produced in that State.

There are various ways in which the Board can function. Coconut has been put to use in many ways. It can be of use in chocolate industry, cake industry and many other industries where you can give employment to the rural poor people. In this way the Board can function. I hope, the Board will have a future and especially Kerala will benefit by the constitution of the Board. The Board will be of much use to the people of the country as well as the coconut growers of our State.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): Sir, I am glad that the whole House has welcomed this Bill.

When the Bill was presented, I received certain representations and

[Shri Surjit Singh Barnala.]

according to those representations I tried to introduce certain amendments.

Some of the Members have criticised the constitution of the Board saying that it gives representation to officials more than the non-officials. In fact, it is not so. For example, it is not mentioned whether the Chairman has to be official or non-official. He can be anybody. Then, there is the Agriculture Commissioner of the Government of India as ex-officio Member. In the commodity boards like this, his presence is very necessary because we have to deal with so many States and the Agriculture Commissioner is an authority who can go to all the States and get the work done. Then the Director of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute is there as ex-officio member. He is a very important member. We cannot say that he is somebody who does not know anything about coconut because he is the person who knows about coconut, who is doing research in coconut and his presence also is very necessary. Then there is the Chairman of the Coir Board as ex-officio member. Coir is an industry which is dependent entirely on coconut. So, it was considered that his presence would also be beneficial. Then there are two members to be appointed by the Central Government to represent Ministries of the Central Government, namely, Revenue and Civil Supplies and Cooperation. Cooperation of these Ministries is also very necessary. So, their representatives have to be there. It is not necessary that these members should be permanent members but they should continue to be members and so, we have given two representatives to these Ministries. These are mainly the officials.

Then three members are to be appointed by the Central Government one each to represent the Governments of the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, being States wherein coconut is grown on a large scale. Now, instead of three members, five members are to be appointed—I have brought an amendment—by the Central

Board Bill and Copra Cess Bill

Government by rotation in the alphabetical order to represent the Governments of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal and the Union Territories of the Andaman and Nicobar Island Goa Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep and Pondicherry also.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about Gujarat?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Gujarat is not a coconut producing State as such. There is a very small area where coconut is produced. I can give the figures also.

This year when the Board is constituted, the first name will be that of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and then, of course, Andhra Pradesh, Assam will also come up.

Earlier three members were to be appointed by the Central Government one each to represent the coconut growers of the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. We have now modified it. The Members from Kerala will be happy to know that four members are to be appointed by the Central Government, two to represent the coconut growers of the State of Kerala and one each to represent the coconut growers of the States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Particularly because Kerala is mainly a coconut growing State and it derives its name from coconut, we have two representatives from Kerala.

Then there will be "one member to be appointed by the Central Government to represent the coconut processing industry". Then two members will be appointed by the Central Government to represent such other interests connected with the coconut industry which, in the opinion of the Government, ought to be represented. We can have labour, trade, consumers and others under this.

Then, the Board will have to elect its own Vice-Chairman. Now, as the number of non-officials is much more,

they can always have a non-official Vice-chairman, because while there are 15 non-official members, there are only eight officials. It is not correct to say that it is burdened with officials. It is necessary to have some officers and we have them only in that number.

Some objection was taken by some members to the functions of the Board. Probably, some of them have not gone through the provisions of this Bill. Clause 10 of the Bill refers to some of the important functions. The first one is:

"adopting measures for the development of coconut industry so that farmers, particularly small farmers, may become participants in, and beneficiaries of, the development and growth of coconut industry;"

So, small farmers are to be given preference. Then,

"recommending measures for improving the marketing of coconut and its products in India;"

An hon. Member referred to marketing. It is provided here. Then it says:

"providing financial or other assistance for the development of highyielding coconut hybrids, adoption of improved methods of cultivation of coconut..."

Shri Viswanathan was saying that some arrangement should be made for finance. It is already provided here.

Then some hon. Members mentioned that copra should not be allowed to be imported. It is mentioned in clause 10(2) (f), which says:

"recommending measures for regulating import and export of coconut and its products;"

There is another provision which says:

"Financing suitable schemes in consultation with the Central Gov-

ernment and the Governments of the States where coconut is grown on a large scale, so as to increase the production of coconut and to improve its quality and yield;"

All these things are mentioned in the functions of the Board.

Then, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu said that no research is done on agriculture as such. Perhaps, he did not want to have an answer. That is why he has gone away. But I would strongly refute his allegation that agricultural research in the country is under any lobby. He particularly referred to American lobby. There is nothing like that. Indian agricultural science and agricultural sereach have progressed and are doing well, and that is why we have reached self-sufficiency in food production. Similarly, in horticulture and various other crops we are doing very well.

Unfortunately, so far as coconut is concerned, though research has been going on for a very long time, no suitable method has been found out to deal with the root wilt disease. In fact the only method tried so far is to replace the plants by another variety which has been evolved, which is known as the tall dwarf variety. This disease is prevalent only in a particular area; it is not prevalent throughout the State. Efforts are being made by the scientists to find out methods to deal with this disease. Though for the last 35 years efforts are being made to find out some method to cure this disease, we are sorry we have not been successful.

A few days back when I was in Kerala, I met an old man who was growing coconut, who is not a scientist, who told me that he has found a method of curing this disease. I have asked my scientists to talk to this man and find out whether he can help us. So, we are trying to get help from all possible sources and we are trying to find out in what manner

[Shri Surjit Singh Barnala.]

this can be cured, because the replacing of the trees is very costly and further it is quite a difficult task.

16 hrs.

Regarding various States it has been mentioned that representation to all the States should be given. I will mention that we have given representation considering the actual cultivation of coconuts in the various States. Kerala, as was mentioned by many hon. Members, is at the top of course. They have about 700,000 hectares of area under coconut cultivation and they are the largest producers, but not 90 per cent. The total area under coconut is about 10 million hectares. In Kerala it was 6.92 million and similarly, the production figures are that out of a total of 5,837 million nuts, Kerala is producing 3,443 million nuts. It is a very large production, but not 90 per cent or 80 per cent as was mentioned. But we keep into consideration all these figures and that is why we had given them additional representation on the Boards.

Sir, there are other States as far example, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Karnataka has also a considerable area under coconut and Tamil Nadu also similarly is producing a large quantity of coconuts. But there are other States which have lesser area and are producing lesser coconuts. They have been given representation on the Board but in the manner as provided. About Gujarat also it was mentioned, but Gujarat does not have a considerable area under coconut cultivation and so we thought that representation was not possible to be given.

SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA (Bhavnagar): The Saurashtra region of Gujarat has plenty of coconut trees and is a coconut growing area.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: I have seen it in the report.

SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL: I have seen it in the ICAR Report.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: I have also seen. There are some

localised areas where coconut is being grown. Some Member suggested that it can be grown even in areas, particularly in Himalayas and Punjab and Rajasthan. Probably it is not possible. It is not necessary that it is only grown near the sea coast. It is not so because in Assam coconut grows. So it has nothing to do with the sea coast, but all the coastal States have better production of coconuts. That is what was mentioned by me earlier.

For providing finances, we have made a provision in the Bill, as was mentioned there. So, this Board will have its own finances and I hope that they will be able to do the necessary development work and this is a beginning which was rather called for for a long time, but I think that the purpose of the Board for serving the coconut growers, for serving the coconut industry and particularly the small and marginal farmers will be served.

I request that the Bills be taken into consideration.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the development under the control of the Union of the coconut industry and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the imposition of cess on copra for the development of the coconut industry and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, we take up clause-by-clause consideration, first of the Coconut Development Board Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 4—(Establishment and constitution of the Board)

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA:
I beg to move*:

Page 2,—

after line 29, insert—

“(dd) three members of Parliament of whom two shall be elected by the House of the People and one by the Council of States;” (3)

Page 2 line 30,—

for “three members”

substitute “two members” (4)

Page 2,—

for lines 33 to 35, substitute—

“(i) Revenue; and

(ii) Civil Supplies and Cooperation;” (5).

Page 2, line 40,—

for “three members”

substitute “five members” (6).

Page 2, lines 41 and 42,—

omit “the Governments of” (7).

Page 2,—

for line 44, substitute—

“Islands, Goa, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry;” (8).

Page 3,—

for lines 1 to 3, substitute—

“(h) four members to be appointed by the Central Government, two to represent the coconut growers of the State of Kerala and one each to represent the coconut growers of the States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka;” (9).

Page 3,—

after line 5, insert—

“(j) two members to be appointed by the Central Government to represent such other interests connected with the coconut industry as, in the opinion of that Government, ought to be represented;” (10).

SHRI B. K. NAIR: I am told my amendments are time-barred. May I read them out?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No question of reading out, but you can speak on them if you want. I give you two minutes.

SHRI B. K. NAIR: A full-fledged Coconut Development Commissioner should be appointed instead of a Development Officer. He should be a permanent Member of the Board and also of the Executive, as in the Rubber Board. Then only will the importance of the post be recognised, and then only will research activity be taken up in full swing. He should be in charge mainly of research.

Mr. Barnala has said that out of 23 Members, 15 will be non-officials, I do not know how, because in most cases the representatives of the State Governments will be Government officers only. No State Government will nominate a non-official as its representative.

It being a huge body, they should have an Executive Committee also. If the Board meets only once or twice a year, it will not serve the purpose. If you want to activate it and make it useful, you should have a compact Executive Committee of experts nominated by the Government. The Chairman of the Board should be the Chairman of the Executive Committee. There should also be the Vice-Chairman and the Coconut Development Commissioner, and there should be representatives of growers and also of workmen. There is no representation for workmen in this Board. The industry employs lakhs of people. I am not talking of the coir workers, but the oil extraction workers, the people collecting the nuts etc. Lakhs of them are being employed. In the Tea Board, the Rubber Board etc., there is representation given to workers. So, I suggest that the executive committee should have representatives of workers also, as also the Board.

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Regarding workman, I had mentioned that in Clause 4(i) it has been provided that such other interests connected with the coconut industry as in the opinion of the Government ought to be represented, should be given representation. In that workmen can be given representation. We have to look to their interests also. That is why it has been introduced as an amendment.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Your suggestion will be kept in view.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: Earlier they had mentioned that the number should be larger when it was only 17. Now when I have made it 24, they say it should be smaller, I do not know why.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

†Page 2,—

after line 29, insert—

“(dd) three members of Parliament of whom two shall be elected by the House of the People and one by the Council of States;” (3)

Page 2, line 30,—

for “three members”

substitute “two members” (4)

Page 2,—

for lines 33 to 35, substitute—

“(i) Revenue; and

(ii) Civil Supplies and Co-operation;” (5)

Page 2, line 40,—

for “three members”

substitute “five members” (6)

Page 2, lines 41 and 42,—

omit “the Government, of” (7)

Page 2,—

for line 44, substitute—

“Islands, Goa, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry;” (8)

Page 3,—

for lines 1 to 3, substitute—

“(h) four members to be appointed by the Central Government, two to represent the coconut growers of the State of Kerala and one each to represent the coconut growers of the States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.” (9)

Page 3,—

after line 5, insert—

“(j) two members to be appointed by the Central Government to represent such other interests connected with the coconut industry as, in the opinion of that Government, ought to be represented.” (10).

The Motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

“That Clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4, as amended, was added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

“That Clauses 5 to 12 stand part of the Bill”.

The Motion was adopted.

Clauses 5 to 12 were added to the Bill.

Clause 19—(Constitution of Coconut Development fund)

In view of Amendment No. 3 to Clause 4 having been adopted, (i) in sub-clause (4) of clause 4, new part (dd) was re-numbered as part (e) and parts (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i) were re-numbered as parts (f), (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k), respectively; (ii) at the end of re-numbered part (j) of sub-clause (4) of Clause 4, “,” was substituted by “;” and (iii) in the proviso to clause 4, “(f) and (g)” were substituted by “(g) and (h)”, as patent errors under the direction of the Speaker.

Amendment made

"Page 7, line 36,—

for "1978" substitute "1979". (11)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 13, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 13, as, amended was added to the Bill.

Clause 14 to 18 were added to the Bill.

Clause 19—(Power to make rules)

Amendment made

"Page 10,—

omit lines 27 to 36." (12)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 19, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 19, as amended was added to the Bill.

Clause 20 was added to the Bill.

Clause 21—(New)

Amendment made

"Page 11,—

after line 11, insert—

"Rules and regulations to be laid before Parliament.

21. Every rule and every regulation made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be, after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or regulation, as the case may be, or both Houses agree that the rule or regulation, as the case may be, should not be made the rule or regulation shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule or regulation." (13)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 21(New) stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 21(New) was added to the Bill.

Clause 1—(Short title, extent and commencement)

Amendment made

"Page 1, line 6,—

for "1978" substitute "1979".
(2)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Enacting Formula

Amendment made

"Page 1, line 1,—
for "Twenty-ninth" substitute
"Thirtieth" (1)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

(The enacting formula as amended was added to the bill.)

The Title was added to the Bill.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA:
I move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now we take up the Copra Cess Bill, 1978. First we take up Clause by Clause.

Clause 2—(Definitions)
Amendments made.

"Page 1, line 9,—

for "1978" substitute "1979".
(3)

"Page 2, line 17,—

for "1978" substitute "1979".
(4)

††"Page 2,—

omit line 1 and 2."(6)

"Page 2, lines 11 to 13,—

omit "or where the said affairs are entrusted to a managing agent, such agent shall be deemed to be the occupier of the mill" (7).

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 2, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 3 was added to the Bill.

Clause 4—(Application of proceeds of cess)

Amendment made

"Page 2, line 36,—

for "1978" substitute "1979".
(5)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

††In view of Amendment No. 6 to clause 2 having been adopted, in sub-clause (1) of clause 2, parts (e), (f), (g) and (h) were re-numbered as parts (d), (e), (f) and (g), respectively, as patent errors under the direction of the Speaker.

329 Coconut PHALGUNA 1, 1900 (SAKA) Hunger strike by 330
Development Board Bill and
Copra Cess Bill Shri Manoranjan
Bhakta, M.P. (CA)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4 as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 5 to 20 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1— (Short title, extent and commencement)

Amendment made

"Page 1, line 3,—

for "1978" substitute "1979".
(2)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Enacting Formula

Amendment made

"Page 1, line 1,—

for "Twenty-ninth" substitute
Thirtieth". (1)

(Shri Surjit Singh Barnala)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended, stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

The Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The Title was added to the Bill.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: I move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.15 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

HUNGER STRIKE BY SHRI MANORANJAN BHATKA, M.P. AND SITUATION IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We now take up the Calling Attention. Shri Nihar Laskar.

SHRI NIHAR LASKAR (Karimganj): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

That indefinite hunger strike by Shri Manoranjan Bhatka, M.P. and the circumstances that led to this situation in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

16.16 hrs.

[SHRI DHIRENDRANATH BASU in the Chair]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL): Sir, In January, 1979 Shri Manoranjan Bhakta, Member, Lok Sabha, from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands sent a charter of 90 demands to the Prime Minister wherein he had stated that if the demands were not fulfilled by 9th February, 1979 he would go on indefinite hunger strike before the Chief Commissioner's Secretariat at Port Blair. Prime Minister in his letter dated 17th January, 1979 wrote