

**SHRI NITISH KUMAR:** From where can we bring an old guard like him to stand here from our side? In so far as damage assessment is concerned, the Central Team did not assess the damage. Whatever report was sent by the State Government in regard to damage was accepted by us. As per the report of the State Government, damage is estimated to be Rs. 2247.76 crore and not Rs. 868 crores. We did not challenge the report. The State Government has asked an amount of Rs. 868 crore for relief operations. We have recommended Rs. 168 crore under the norms fixed by the Centre but the State Government has so far spent only Rs. 116 crore against the demand of Rs. 867 crore. So far as this question is concerned, I have already said that the matter is under consideration of the Government and the assurance given by the hon. Prime Minister would be fulfilled. From World Bank... (*Interruptions*) Only 16 days have passed since then, just remember the old days. All this has been done in a very short time. The cyclone which hit Andhra Pradesh this time was of unprecedented nature in magnitude and ferocity. As regard assistance, the matter has been taken up with them and the World Bank, the negotiations are going on. The World Bank has accepted the preliminary assessment of Rs. 660 crore. Significant assistance is likely to be received from them also. As hon. Rangaji has said just now, a large number of houses have been destroyed there, HUDCO has agreed to construct one lakh pucca houses. One lakh more houses would be constructed under this scheme on which Rs. 99 crore will be spent. In this way different public sector undertakings have been directed to select for development different villages with a view to restore them. Thus, all possible help is being extended. Never before relief work has been started at such a large scale as has been done this time.

#### **Cold Drinks from Fish Tail Tree**

\*106. **SHRI ARVIND NETAM:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that

'Fish Tail' trees are utilised for preparing cold drink in Bastar District of Madhya Pradesh, a popular drink among tribals;

(b) whether Government are also aware that Fish Tail trees are dying as a result of some unknown disease for the last few years; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to take special steps to save Fish Tail Tree?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) It is reported that fish tail trees are tapped for toddy.

(b) and (c). An expert team deputed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) visited the Bastar area in December, 1987 and reported that continuous tapping of the palms results in their complete exhaustion which leads to the wilting and eventual death of the palms. The team made recommendations for management of the disease. The report was sent to the Collector and District Magistrate, Bastar and Director of Horticulture and farm forestry, Government of Madhya Pradesh in February, 1988. The State Government have propagated the measures recommended by the Expert Team amongst the farmers which has reduced the incidence of the disease.

**SHRI ARVIND NETAM:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, Fish Tail tree called 'salfi' in Bastar, is the source of a popular drink. It is as popular among tribals of Bastar as beer is in some sections of the society. It is a symbol of prosperity there. The section which has maximum number of trees is considered to be the most prosperous and it is also a fact that even murders take place for these trees. The hon. Minister said that continuous tapping of trees resulted in their complete exhaustion which led to wilting. But it is also a fact that the trees which have not been utilised are also dying. What are the reasons therefor? The study group has mentioned a particular disease in its recommendation.

Please give us details of those recommendations.

**SHRI NITISH KUMAR:** *The team which went there had made some recommendations in its report. The hon. Member had raised this point when discussion on I.C.A.R. was held. Subsequently these investigations had been conducted. Main recommendations made by that expert team were: 5 metre distance should be kept between two trees, fertilisers and organic manure should be used annually which includes 5 kg. oil cake of neem, irrigation should be done particularly in summer season, anti-fungus insecticide should be sprayed and after that physic sanitation should be used.*

**SHRI ARVIND NETAM:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research or the Central Government had forwarded the report to the Department of Horticulture and Farm Forestry of the State Government and a copy thereof was also sent to the Collector of Bastar. But according to my information proper publicity has not been given among the farmers regarding its preventive measures. I would like to request the hon. Minister that a small team should be sent there and under its supervision, the work of its publicity among farmers may be done. Will the hon. Minister consider this suggestion? In my opinion, the department of the Horticulture of the Madhya Pradesh Government is not an efficient department. Therefore, I would like that a team should go there to collect information on all these aspects.

**SHRI NITISH KUMAR:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a localised problem and it is a popular drink of that area. As toddy is popular at various places, this tree is similar to toddy tree. According to a survey, the number of trees there is only 30,000. It is the responsibility of the State Government and district administration to undertake this work. On the request of the hon. Member, a team was sent there and they had conducted investigations also. The Collector has also been asked to publicise all these measures so that it could be controlled. It is a local problem

and keeping in view the limited resources, a specific and wider research is not possible.

*[English]*

**MR. SPEAKER:** *Shri Janardhanan. I think you know the main Question.*

**SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARDHANAN:** Yes, I know the Question and that is why I want to put a Supplementary. The Palmyra trees are grown in Tamilnadu. Fish Tail trees and Palmyra trees come under the same species, according to the botanical terms. I want to know from the Minister whether the Ministry is aware, that a disease has attacked the Palmyra and coconut trees also and whether the Government is coming forward to rectify that. We are getting toddy from the Palmyra trees. The Palmyra workers are affected in Tamilnadu. I would like to know whether the Central Government has received any news about the disease attack in the Palmyra trees and whether they have any proposal, under the head 'Palmyra Welfare Scheme', to rectify that disease.

*[Translation]*

**SHRI NITISH KUMAR:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, its botanical name is 'Kanyota' but I do not know its name in Tamil.

*[English]*

#### **Opening of Post Offices in Villages of Maharashtra**

\*107. **SHRI SUDAM DATTATRYA DESHMUKH:** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of village in Maharashtra with Gram Panchayat Centre but without a post office, district-wise;

(b) the ranking of rural Maharashtra in the matter of facility of Post offices on all-India basis;

(c) whether government have prepared any perspective plan for open-