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# THE INDIAN JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

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CONFERENCE NUMBER

PROCEEDINGS  
of the  
SEVENTEENTH CONFERENCE  
held at Cuttack, December 1956

## SUBJECTS

1. PATTERN OF EMPLOYMENT OF HIRED LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE IN INDIA.
2. EFFECTIVENESS OF PROVISION IN THE TENANCY LEGISLATION FOR (i) SECURITY OF TENURE AND (ii) IMPROVEMENT IN TENURIAL STATUS OF TENANTS.
3. TRENDS IN THE OPERATION TECHNIQUES AND ORGANISATION OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING IN INDIA.

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## PREFACE

The current issue of the Journal contains the Proceedings of the 17th Annual Conference of the Society held in December 1956 at Cuttack. The Conference was attended by nearly 130 members from Central and State Governments, Universities and Research Institutions.

The subjects chosen for discussion at the Conference were :

- 1) Pattern of Employment of Hired Labour in Agriculture in India.
- 2) Effectiveness of Provision in the Tenancy Legislation for (i) Security of Tenure and (ii) Improvement in Tenurial Status of Tenants.
- 3) Trends in the Operation Techniques and Organisation of Agricultural Marketing in India.

An unusually large number of papers were received and read on Subject I, while on the other two subjects also there were select contributions. The level of discussions was maintained at the usual high level.

Unlike the previous Conference, it was not possible to arrange for a tape-recorder to record the discussion. Instead, arrangements were made to take down notes of the discussion by stenographers. However, notes have not been taken of the speeches of all the participants in the discussion. Hence, the discussion part on the respective subjects contain only reports which could be made available.

We take this opportunity of thanking the Utkal University under whose auspices the Conference met. We specially record our grateful thanks to Dr. S. Misra, the Local Secretary of the Conference, who had made excellent arrangements and to the Members of the Reception Committee for their generous hospitality.

15th May, 1957

Manilal B. Nanavati

*President*

PATTERN OF EMPLOYMENT OF HIRED LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE  
IN CERTAIN VILLAGES OF COIMBATORE TALUK OF  
MADRAS STATE

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Agricultural labour constitutes one of the three main pillars upholding the fabric of agriculture in India, but it has for long been the Cinderella of the Agricultural Economics sector and enquiries, studies and surveys hitherto were confined to problems of, what were considered to be of greater import, in the field of agricultural credit, agricultural marketing or tenurial reform. The Agricultural Labour Enquiry of the Government of India was the first attempt to deal in a comprehensive manner with the problems of agricultural labour in the same way as industrial labour and plantation labour had been attended to since the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour.

Rural unemployment has become a burning topic at present since it involves a wastage of man power. It is well known that agriculture offers employment only for a period variously estimated at 6-8 months and the rest of the time is spent in enforced idleness. Discussions of this pattern have been handicapped by the absence of precise magnitudes. This study was undertaken along with a member of the staff of the Agricultural Economics Section among seven villages round about Coimbatore town with the specific object of finding out the areas under different crops grown in the villages, the number of man-days required to cultivate the crops and the supply of labour available in the villages in question. The selection of the villages was based on random sampling supplemented by the questionnaire-cum-survey method. Certain assumptions had to be made regarding the man-days available and the requirements of different crops which are explained in the body of this research paper. Whether the villages were surplus or deficit is revealed in the final reckoning and the magnitude of wastage of man-power can be seen from Statement No. I. The pattern of employment of hired labour, the consequent mobility or otherwise, other earnings' potentials and other facts emerge slowly as the picture unfolds itself.

*Villages Selected*

The seven villages selected were round Coimbatore City at distances varying from five miles for Somayanpalayam to twelve miles for Alandurai village. Of the seven villages three, namely, Somayanpalayam, Thadagam and Alandurai are purely dry ones, three villages namely Kalikkanaickenpalayam, Perur Chettipalayam and Tondamuthur have dry and garden lands mixed and Tennamanallur is predominantly a garden land village (Garden land in this tract refers to land irrigated by means of wells). Hence, it is hoped, that a representative cross-selection of villages has been chosen for a firm picture to emerge regarding pattern of employment.

### *Demographic and Occupational Structure*

From a classification of the agricultural population of the seven villages on an occupational basis after the 1951 census pattern, it is seen that the total number of pattadars or title holders to lands vary from 713 in Somayanpalayam to 402 in Tennamanallur. It has been assumed that landowners with lands above 10 acres do not work in their own fields but hire labourers to do the same. On this hypothesis only 505 pattadars are relevant to the present study in Alandurai village. Further, it is assumed that 10% of these pattadars consist of women who will not work in their own fields but hire others to do so. On this basis 455 pattadars come under the category of those who labour in their own fields. The other villages are treated in a like manner.

### *Estimation of Employment Potential*

Among tenants who lease lands for cultivation, information was not available as to the exact proportion of tenants who work in their own fields. Hence an arbitrary guesstimate, which may not be far wrong, was made that 10% of tenants do not work in their own fields but employ others to do so. The remaining 90% contribute their quota to the potential availability of labour along with agricultural labourers. The figures in the above two sections include dependants also but no break up is possible in the absence of exact information. Hence following the traditional pattern it is assumed a family consists of two adults and three children. Thus man units available for labour are taken to be a man, his wife equivalent to half a man unit and a child old enough to work in the fields equal to half a man unit. The other two children are taken to be too young for work and not relevant to the present study. This procedure has been followed in the case of agricultural labourers and working tenants (after the 10% deduction mentioned above) and the total number has been divided into 2/5ths. The three sections as explained above added together constitute the working potential of the village, the availability or supply side of the equation—whose numbers are tabulated in Statement No. II. It is observed that Tondamuthur tops the list with 1356 man units followed by Perur Chettiplayam with 1338 man units and Somayanpalayam has the smallest number of man units available, namely, 731.

The total of the three groups who form the nucleus of this statement—cultivators with 10 acres and below who can be expected to work in their own fields, tenants who work in their own fields except for 10% who may not do so and agricultural labourers (2 out of a family unit of 5)—is multiplied by 260 on the assumption that a labourer is employed for that period atleast in a year. This assumption was made by the then Economic Adviser to the Government of Madras in his survey of the Tungabhadra Project Area and was borne out in these villages also from the personal investigations. On this basis the total man-days available per year are arrived at and it is found that Alandurai has 301,600 man-days available, Kalikkanaickenpalayam has 309,400 man-days at its disposal and so on.

### *Crop Pattern*

Alandurai has most of its cultivable area under dry *cholam*, *samai*, horsegram and groundnut as is to be expected. The major portion of the area in Kalikkanaickenpalayam is devoted to dry *cholam*, *samai* predominates in

Perur Chettipalayam (582 acres), *cholam* dry in Chinna Thadagam (75% of the area) and Tondamuthur, Cambodia cotton in Tennamanallur and dry *cholam* and *Karunganni* cotton in Somayanpalayam.

### *Man-day Requirements*

Unlike Tanjore district permanent or attached or *pannaiyal* or *padiyal* labour is not so significant in this tract and hence it is the fluctuations of the daily labour market, varying as it does with the peaks and slacks of the season, that arrests the attention. Owing to reasons of space the requirements of labour per acre for the different crops grown in the respective villages are not included in this paper. The operations were classified into six categories, namely, preparatory cultivation, manuring, sowing, after cultivation, irrigation and harvesting and the number of man-days and woman-days required for each operation were set forth as obtained from field enquiries at the village level. It was observed that the largest demand on the labour resources was made by tobacco (67 man-days and 101 woman-days), and chillies (67 man-days and 73 woman-days) in Alandurai and Kalikkanaickenpalayam while sugarcane takes 190 man-days and 44 woman-days in Perur Chettipalayam followed by tobacco and chillies. Chinna Thadagam has *cholam* dry as the main crop occupying 21 man-days and 18 woman-days per acre. Cambodia cotton (28 man-days, 64 woman-days), tobacco (68 man-days, 60 woman-days) and chillies (66 man-days and 72 woman-days) make the largest demand on labour in Tondamuthur village while paddy (35 man-days, 50 woman-days), Cambodia cotton (26 man-days and 48 woman-days) and chillies (66 man-days and 92 woman-days) do so in Tennamanallur village. Cambodia cotton in Somayanpalayam village takes up 32 man-days and 73 woman-days per acre. The per acre needs of the same crop may vary from village to village as the figures have been compiled from information gathered from cultivators in each village and this does not vitiate the general conclusion.

### *Seasonal Demands for Labour*

The seasonal operations for different crops are as follows: Paddy and dry *cholam* are found to have the same season, being harvested in December, *cholam* (jowar) irrigated and *cumbu* (bajra) dry are harvested in June, irrigated *cumbu*, dry *ragi*, irrigated *ragi*, *samai*, *thenai* and *varagu* (three types of minor millets), groundnut and sugarcane are harvested in August—September while Cambodia cotton and tobacco are harvested in January—March. Thus the peak and slack seasons for each crop are evident. In Somayanpalayam village it was observed that dry *cholam* makes a peak demand for men in June and October, for women in September and for both in December. *Karunganni* cotton has most demand for women labour in April and October and for men labour in August and November. In the case of each village a figure of 5% has been added for permanent improvements only for men labour. Progress away from the statusquo can only be measured by additions to permanent capital. This is what distinguishes a dynamic from a static economy and however backward Indian villages are described to be, some time and energy are devoted to capital improvements instead of current consumption. Unfortunately, no precise measure has been evolved to evaluate capital stock and its appreciation year by year in the shape of local works as advocated by the Planning Commission or as personal capital. Hence 5% of the men labour is assumed to be engaged in permanent improvements as deepening wells, bunding fields and so on.

*Requirements or Demand for Labour*

The Statement No. II shows the total labour requirement for different crops in man-days for different villages, the woman-days having been converted into man equivalents at the rate of 2 women to one man and the total of each operation multiplied by the acreage gives the total number of man-days required in each village for each operation of each crop. The total for each crop is given at the end and the grand total for all crops in the entire village is obtained by adding the individual totals plus 5% for permanent improvements. These grand totals 130,335 for Alandurai, 145,438 for Kalikkanaickenpalayam, 63,585 for Perur Chettipalayam and so forth, represent the demand or labour requirement of each village.

*Labour Balance Sheet*

The Statement No. III gives the surplus or deficit of labour in man-days for each village by subtracting total demand from total supply of labour. Unfortunately, the gap seems to be on the plus side, i.e., labour is surplus in all the villages varying from a minimum of 109,378 for Somayanpalayam to 284,295 man-days for Perur Chettipalayam. The latter and Tondamuthur show such a high surplus as the population and hence labour supply is greater than in the other villages while area under crops is least. These figures reveal the serious state of unemployment and under-employment observed in the rural parts. Over one lakh man-days are being wasted each year in all the seven villages. If this picture is true of the entire country measures have to be taken by finding subsidiary means of employment to absorb this idle manpower. The Planning Commission have gone into this problem in detail and made various recommendations. The All India Khadi and Village Industries Board, the All India Handloom Board, and the All India Handicrafts Board have been set up and the Government of India have been giving loans and grants to the State Governments including the Madras Government, to start or rehabilitate cottage industries. Time alone can solve this all pervasive and chronic problem besetting Indian agriculture as the tempo of development increases with the fruition of the Five-Year Plans.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LABOUR SITUATION

*Mobility of Labour*

From the information given by the villagers it was gathered that there is a movement of this surplus labour outside the respective villages during transplanting, weeding and harvesting seasons. Labourers from Alandurai village go a distance of one mile to Boluvampatti where wet lands predominate for work in July. Workers from Kalikkanaickenpalayam move in January to Chittraichavadi a distance of 2 to 4 miles to work in the wet lands. Similarly, casuals from Tondamuthur, Tennamanallur and Somayanpalayam proceed 4 miles to Chittarai-chavadi for work and they walk from Perur Chettipalayam to work in the wet lands of Vedapatti and Perur. A peculiar system was found in Chinna Thadagam village where labourers walk to the nearby forests at a distance of 15 miles to get fuel which they sell in the Coimbatore town thus eeking out a miserable existence. This village was found to consist of very poor labourers who were unemployed for most part of the year and yet refuse to forsake their hearths and their homes for better climes and for better times elsewhere. Some labourers,

mostly Harijans, go to the coffee plantations in the Nilgris for a season and return in time for work in the village.

A contrary movement was also reported by the villagers. During peak seasons there was an influx of labour from outside to the villages under consideration to supplement the local labour force. In Alandurai for example, workers from as far as Palladam, and Avanashi besides neighbouring villages came for the groundnut harvest. In Kalikkanaickenpalayam, Tondamuthur, Tennamanllur and Chinna Thadagam labour moved from Palladam and Avanashi for the *cholam* harvest in the month of December. This sort of migration between villages has been going on from time immemorial and is a sort of mutual help besides following the profit motive.

#### “DECASUALISATION” OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

The above question with reference to agriculture has to be considered some time or other. The seasonality of Indian agriculture—the undue dependence on the monsoons—causes this eternal ding-dong between peak and slack seasons. Unless double or triple cropping becomes possible through multi-purpose, major and minor irrigation projects in the country as a whole or through artificial rain making experiments by seeding clouds with silver iodide and by other means, as are being conducted at present by the Madras Government, thus obviating the dependence on rain, this “high and low” in agriculture will persist. This problem is connected with that posed with reference to unemployment and under-employment. In Coimbatore district, garden land cultivation has been spreading for the past three decades thus transforming the face of the countryside through tube wells and electric pumpsets. Tube wells, artesian wells and ordinary wells, renovation and desilting of tanks can all help in this process. In regions where the rains are mercifully copious three crops are raised with consequent employment of hired labour round the clock. The objective to aim at should be to provide the maximum amount of employment to labour in agriculture and if not, to provide “second strings to the bow” to such labour. Enforced idleness should become anathema to the society of the future.

#### MECHANISED AGRICULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF SURPLUS LABOUR AND UNDER-EMPLOYMENT

Threshing machines are used in Chinna Thadagam village (for 50% of crops.), Somayanpalayam and Perur Chettipalayam hired from a few rich ryots in Tudiyalur. This results in labour-saving for these labour-intensive operations leading to more under-employment and aggravating the situation. In Chinna Thadagam village it was found that tractor disc ploughing is carried out in 50% of the area which is said to save three ploughings thus displacing labour normally engaged in these operations. For preparatory cultivation, manuring and irrigation no hired labour is used and permanent or *pannaiyal* labour is considered adequate for the purpose. Only for harvesting, transplanting and weeding labourers are hired and paid daily as these operations are to be carried out in a stipulated period in all the areas and cannot be spread over for any length of time. This leads to an accentuation of the under-employment problem. The use of machinery raises

issues which have been agitating the public for a considerable time. Machinery displaces human labour and tends to be capital-intensive whereas Indian agriculture is labour-intensive. Mechanisation, though it may give increased yield and save human effort, has been opposed in the present context of "land hunger" and land pressure. This raises far reaching problems of rationalisation in industry including agriculture as in Kanpur and mechanisation which are not strictly relevant to the present paper. Hence attention is only drawn to this problem without delving into details and the *pros* and *cons* of mechanisation.

#### JUVENILE LABOUR

A minor point brought out during the enquiry was that boys were employed for tending cattle and this has not been taken into account in the demand for or supply of labour. The employment of boys and women for agricultural operations raises some complicated issues, in particular the competition of women with men for various chores of the farm leading to depressed wages for men and an aggravation of under-employment. It is true in certain operations as transplanting and weeding women may be more proficient than men but this has only come about due to tradition and usage and is hardly a justification. It is surprising that in the United Kingdom the war and its aftermath of urgency for home grown food and full or "over full" employment led to the employment of women in the Women's Land Army (W. L. A.) as tractor drivers or for milking while in India it is under-employment and poverty that leads to such sub-human practices. It is to be hoped and devoutly wished for that as more children are compulsorily educated upto fifteen or more in elementary, secondary and higher secondary schools and as increasing standards of life are obtained consequent on the economic development in the country with the implementation of the Five-Year Plans and as family planning becomes popular through the adoption of the rhythmic method or other oral methods and less women go to work in the fields, this competition in the labour market will tend to be reduced to nullity leading to fuller utilisation of man power and less under-employment. This alone will lead to a happier future and one in conformity with international standards of the International Labour Organisation—a future akin to that prevalent in advanced countries where women and children are regarded as the protectors of the home and of the future respectively whose rightful place is in the hearth or school rather than as hewers of wood, drawers of water or drivers of cattle. Children in the formative years should be moulded by education to be fit citizens of the morrow rather than exploited for a "haporth of broth" thus degenerating into delinquency.

#### EARNINGS PATTERN OF HIRED LABOUR

There seems to be an under-lying unity and similarity of wage payment in all the villages studied with Re. 1/- for men and As. 8 to 10 for women and children as standardised rates. Nevertheless, there seems to be diversity in this uniformity. Thus in Alandurai ploughing with pairs for paddy and dry *cholam* costs Rs. 4 while in Tennamanallur *cholam* ploughing with pairs costs Rs. 4 to 5 per day. It was found that certain operations as transplanting or weeding are confined to women and certain operations as harvesting and threshing are generally paid in kind. Even here a variation from routine practice is noticed

in certain villages where harvesting and threshing are also paid in cash at Rs. 1/4/0 and Re. 1/- respectively for men. On enquiry it was found that this was due to the prevalent low prices of foodgrains and an insistence on the part of the labourers for payment in cash thus providing an example of the impact of economic forces on systems of wage payment. As noted above threshing in most of the villages was done by mobile threshing machines hired at the rate of Rs. 3 per hour (capable of threshing 10 *Salagais* or 600 Madras measures or 1500 lb. per hour). Thus a most lucrative piece of operation connected with agriculture has been taken over by mechanical contrivances. As far as groundnut harvesting is concerned it was found that 2/3rds of pods earned in kind were disposed of then and there to dealers who were lying in wait outside the farm for this purpose and one-third was kept for domestic use.

The wage payment for harvesting for Cambodia cotton was of the piece rate variety at the rate of Re. 0/8/0 per maund picked. Certain operations as ploughing, manuring and irrigation were mostly performed by the landowners themselves occasionally assisted by permanent labour whereas sowing is done by casual labour for certain crops as Cambodia cotton and groundnut and by attached labour for *Karungami* cotton and *cholam*. Transplanting of paddy, *ragi*, tobacco, chillies and sugarcane is done by hired labour. Weeding, harvesting and threshing are invariably done by casual labour.

It was found that there has been an increase of 100% in Alandurai and Tondamuthur in the wages paid to casual labour at present as compared to the pre-war period. In certain villages not included in this study as Devarayapuram the increase was of the order of 300% and as low as 60% in Orathukuppai Chettipalayam. This reveals a picture of uneven rises and it is clear that the inflationary upward trend in prices occasioned by the war and its aftermath has not been matched by corresponding increase in earnings of the labourers. Certain villages seem to be in the "Sunny side of the Street" with earnings corresponding to the rise in the cost of living index as Devarayapuram, while others seemed to suffer by the vicious spiral. It is noteworthy that villages with the lowest wage payments in 1939 as Devarayapuram have benefited most while the real cost of living of villages where payments were already high have suffered. It is well known that wage payments are a consequence of the relative pulls and strengths of the two parties concerned in the bargain. As surplus labour and indigence prevail in most villages the agricultural hired labourers are in a weak, negotiating position rather than bargaining from "positions of strength." It is clear that the disadvantaged classes of whom the agricultural labourers form a part find it extremely difficult to make both ends meet. Separate enquiries conducted by the Agricultural Economics Section pertaining to the family budgets of labour families confirm the findings of the Ramamurthi Committee and reveal deficit budgets of serious orders of magnitude. A peculiar system was found to be in vogue in Alandurai village where 30% of the casual labourers have received advances of Rs. 10 to 100/- from landlords on condition that whenever work is available they ought to come and work for the prevailing rates of wages. These advances are interest free and seem to be a sort of insurance against peak pressure during harvesting and threshing times.

## ATTACHED LABOUR

*Pannaiyals* do not form such a significant proportion in the villages of this taluk. In Alandurai such labourers seem to be drawn from five particular communities, viz., *Chakkiliars*, *Kurumbars*, *Okkiliars*, *Irulars* and *Malasars*. The real cost of living as evidenced by perquisites varies a good deal from one village to another. In Alandurai, for example, perquisites seem to amount to a considerable figure. The advances to farm servants seem to show a similar variation and in the above village the practice of giving advances seems to be falling into disuse. The *Irulars* employed from the bordering hills are provided with huts and get 30 to 40 Madras measures a month. The *Chakkiliars* get 40 to 50 Madras measures, and the *Kurumbars* and *Okkiliars* get the same quantity and boys get 6 to 40 Madras measures. During sickness upto 15 days leave is given and big landlords help their servants for medical treatment. In Tondamuthur no house or hut is provided by the landlord, but the servant can build a hut at his own cost on the farm. He is also not allowed to graze any animal he may own nor is any fuel supplied to him. Caste Hindu servants are paid 40 to 50 Madras measures a month for adults and 20 to 30 Madras measures for boys. Harijan labourers get 36 to 45 Madras measures per adult per month while the boys get the same as caste Hindus. Perquisites consisting of clothes worth Rs. 3 to 5 are given to each labourer during *Deepavali*. Besides one *Cumbli* or blanket is also given by a few landlords. In Tennamanallur caste Hindu adult labourers are paid 60 Madras measures per month while Harijans get 50. Boys are paid 8 Madras measures to 20 Madras measures according to age. Clothes worth Rs. 3 to 5 are given to each *pannaiyal* during *Deepavali*. Some *pannaiyals* have been provided with huts on the farm or where huts are not available the employer supplies him the materials for the same. In a few cases they are allowed to graze their cow or goat (if owned) on the farm. No restrictions were placed on the Harijan labourers except regarding entry into the masters' households.

It is observed from the foregoing that the wages to permanent labourers are not fixed but vary according to the age of the labourer, the nature of his work and past services. It was found that boys were generally employed for tending cattle as permanent labour. The period of employment was from the first of *Chitrai* (April-May) to the next *Chitrai*. The labourers could not leave in between but were at perfect liberty to go on the first *Chitrai* if the advances had been repaid. It was found that most of the attached labourers have become so in name as well as in fact and continue in service with the same employer for generations. In this region the conditions of work for attached labour are not harsh unlike Tanjore district.

## REST PERIODS AND CASTEISM

Except for minor variations it is found that the work day is divided into two parts—the forenoon and the afternoon with a rest interval in between during the hottest part of the day. No maxima exists for total working hours especially in a season-bound occupation like agriculture and this is shown by the fact that hours of work vary from 7 hours to 9 hours in the different villages. It is noteworthy that working hours also differ as between smaller and bigger farms. In the latter the working hours are generally longer probably by an extra half an hour as is to be expected.

Community differences and echoes of casteism cast their influence in the agricultural labour market also. There seemed to be a discrimination against Harijan labourers and a differentiation in tasks performed by caste Hindu and Adi-dravida labouring classes. In spite of legislation to the contrary it was found in all the villages visited that Harijan labourers were not allowed inside the houses of landlords to do any domestic work. They work only in the fields and outside the houses of the landlords while caste Hindu labourers were allowed to work inside the house also but the discrimination was confined solely to the social sector and did not permeate the economic plane as is evidenced by the fact that there were no differences in wages between different communities or castes for the same work unlike the practice prevalent in South Africa and the South Rhodesian copper mines. Caste Hindu *pannaiyals* are given extra wages in kind of 4 to 8 Madras measures since they are also engaged in household chores.

Though some aver to the contrary, there is no difference in quality and quantity of work turned out by different castes and communities. Extraneous considerations rather than economic ones determine the choice of particular communities for work. Thus the advantage of hiring Harijan labourers lies in the fact that they can be admonished for slackness and urged to work quickly whereas caste Hindu labourers take quick exception to chastisement of this nature. The second factor to note is that during harvest of grains like paddy, *cholam*, *ragi*, *samai*, etc., Harijan labourers are not loath to take the rejects left on the threshing floor whereas caste Hindus insist on kind payment in prime quality grains.

#### CONCLUSIONS—SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

(1) Unemployment and under-employment are serious problems not only in all the seven villages taken up for study varying from one to three lakh man days in the year but also in the country as a whole. Subsidiary avenues of employment, "second strings to the bow", have to be explored to solve this problem. The Karve Committee on Village and Small Scale Industries has made various recommendations to revive, develop and expand village industries and Rs. 200 crores are set apart for this purpose in the Second Five-Year Plan. If its recommendations regarding the village ghani industry are implemented subsidiary employment can be provided to agricultural labourers and artisan classes especially since groundnuts are an important commercial crop in this region. Similarly, *Karunganni* and Cambodia cotton familiar in this tract can be utilised for hand-spinning and weaving. By syphoning of the excess labour from the agricultural sector to more remunerative employment in the secondary and the tertiary fields the urgency and severity of this problem can be tempered greatly. This will come to pass with the increasing emphasis on industrialisation envisaged in the Second Five-Year Plan. This is evidenced by the Rourkela, Bhilai, Durgapur and various other projects springing up all over the country. This is a long term problem and time alone can solve it.

(2) Connected with the above point is the cyclical nature of employment or swings of the pendulum in agriculture as a whole which can be corrected by "decasualisation" of labour through lesser dependence on vagaries of the weather. This can be achieved by surer and adequate means of water supply involving a study of ground water resources and rain making experiments.

(3) Minimum Wages Legislation is being implemented by stages and it is imperative that, as in the United Kingdom, minimum wages should pervade the agricultural sector also. It was found that the real cost of living in certain villages had deteriorated compared with certain others since 1939. Besides, variations in wages are found for the same employment calling for time and motion studies. Along with this holidays with pay as recommended by the International Labour Organisation should also be made a regular feature. Agriculture is a depressed and non-profitable industry in under-developed countries and the expansion of cost in relation to price ratio caused by these improvements will act as a stumbling bloc. The only way of circumventing this vicious circle is to improve agriculture technically, economically and morally. Unless agriculture becomes an efficient occupation no remedial measures to improve the lot of its components can even be broached.

(4) It was found that in general labourers are not helped by employers financially or otherwise with regard to medical facilities. An exception consists of the richer and bigger landlords who help the *pannaiyals* working under them, often for generations by sending them to hospitals or by giving money for medicines while wages are not cut during the period of absence. Social security benefits are slowly being extended for industrial labour in Coimbatore district under the Employees' State Insurance Scheme and it is to be hoped that atleast sickness and unemployment benefits will be extended to agricultural labourers. Rural housing schemes should be boosted up and though the above measures may involve considerable outlays they will return many fold dividends in the shape of a prosperous and contented agricultural labour sector.

(5) Women and boys are found doing arduous agricultural operations or tending cattle during hours which should profitably be spent in schools. Hence educational facilities in villages especially compulsion in the elementary stage, is an imperative to syphon of the boys and girls from the agricultural labour market. Besides long term measures of educational reforms, increased standard of living in the country as a whole and inculcation of the precepts of family planning whether by the rhythmic, oral or other methods can alone end this unhappy state of affairs.

(6) Machinery seems to present a formidable competition to labour in some of the villages and a pattern is to be evolved wherein the two can co-exist without detriment to each other. The role of machinery in agriculture is a controversial one. Thus certain machineries, for example, installation of pumpset and conversion of dry land into garden land facilitate intensive agriculture leading to more crops and further employment opportunities for labour whereas certain others as tractorisation lead to displacement of human labour. The whole subject deserves further study.

(7) A technical suggestion is that a technique should be evolved of measuring unemployment on the lines adopted in the United Kingdom or United States of America. Rampant unemployment and under-employment in agriculture are often deplored but no exact idea of the statistical magnitude seems to prevail. This subject was discussed at Jaipur in 1953 and, as stated then, the best agency for this purpose, with all its imperfections, is the village *karnam* who can be trained

adequately and asked to keep figures of agricultural labourers in general, and unemployed ones in particular, till such time as a more suitable agency is evolved.

The study of patterns of employment of hired labour in agriculture reveals the low standard of life of the agricultural labour communities and the narrowness of the gap which exists between subsistence and bankruptcy. The leeway which is to be made good in order to ensure a contented and prosperous labour force is considerable but the task is being tackled slowly and gradually so that the dawn of a new era for agricultural labour cannot be far off.

STATEMENT I

SUPPLY OF LABOUR IN MAN-DAYS AVAILABLE

S. No.	Group	Alandurai	Kalikkanaickenpalayam	Perur Chettipalayam	Chinna Thadagam	Tondamuthur	Tennamanalur	Somaianpalayam
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Group I	455	292	344	367	480	311	606
2.	Group II	83	129	27	61	145	189	28
3.	Group III	622	769	967	526	731	539	97
	Total/day	1160	1190	1338	954	1356	1039	731
	Unit/year (x 260)	301600	309400	347880	248040	352560	271340	190060

## STATEMENT II

TOTAL REQUIREMENT OF LABOUR FOR DIFFERENT CROPS IN MAN-DAYS FOR DIFFERENT VILLAGES

Crop	Alan- durai	Kali- kka- naicken palayam	Perur Chetti- pala- yam	Chinna Thada- gam	Thonda- muthur	Tenna- manal- lur	Soma- yanpa- layam
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Paddy .. .. .	6438	6922	3172	—	793	5916	—
Cholam .. .. .	31770	67161	11155	45600	51806	34162	30764
Cumbu .. .. .	129	4832	2624	—	576	1504	802
Tenai .. .. .	215	1345	—	351	156	—	6708
Ragi .. .. .	5249	7180	2501	1081	1646	6257	938
Varagu .. .. .	—	7039	—	—	2457	—	—
Samai .. .. .	17818	7466	11349	567	4387	1053	8132
Horsegram .. .. .	6038	4116	2737	714	4851	871	1113
Pulses other than Horsegram .. .. .	83	198	55	902	209	64	171
Cambodia Cotton .. .. .	9328	—	11186	—	3780	31866	1367
Karunganni Cotton .. .. .	—	4140	1380	830	—	—	25239
Groundnut .. .. .	45045	2081	—	—	3099	—	490
Other Oilseeds .. .. .	—	115	—	—	139	—	18
Tobacco .. .. .	588	11858	5053	—	978	—	—
Chillies .. .. .	627	1027	591	—	395	6557	—
Sugarcane .. .. .	—	—	6148	—	—	—	—
Onions .. .. .	—	4116	1616	—	—	—	—
Vegetables .. .. .	880	5500	990	—	—	—	1100
Grand Total .. .. .	124128	138512	60557	50285	75372	88250	76840
Add 5% Permanent Improve- ment .. .. .	6207	6926	3028	2514	3769	4413	3842
Total .. .. .	130335	145438	63585	52799	79141	92663	80682

## STATEMENT III

LABOUR BALANCE SHEET OF THE VILLAGES

S. No.	Particulars	Alan- durai	Kali- kka- naic- kenpala- yam	Perur Chetti- pala- yam	Chinna Thada- gam	Tonda- muthur	Tenna- manal- lur	Soma- yanpa- layam
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Total supply of labour in mandays .. .. .	301600	309400	347880	248040	352560	271340	190060
2.	Total demand for labour in mandays .. .. .	130335	145438	63585	52799	79141	92663	80682
3.	Surplus of mandays per year .. .. .	171265	163962	284295	195241	273419	178677	109378
4.	Percentage of mandays un- employed to total supply of labour (mandays) .. .. .	57	53	81	78	77	65	57