

was the entire economics for the tribal farmers in these islands. Therefore, I requested that NAFED may be given the green signal to immediately procure this copra.

3. Release of pending payments of ANCOFED and EHL:
I had assessed the pending payments of ANCOFED & EHL on 13.9.01 before leaving for the meeting. I was informed by the representatives of ANCOFED that their pending payment amounted to Rs. 41.00 lakhs while the pending payments of EHL amounted to Rs. 1.09 crores (which includes Rs. 33.00 lakhs of disputed payments). I informed Secretary(A&C) that while the financial condition of ANCOFED was okay, due to large pending payments the financial condition of EHL was not very good and therefore it was imperative that these payments may be released by NAFED immediately.

4. Price support for arecanut/betelnut: The matter regarding procurement of arecanut/betelnut has been taken up by this administration with the Ministry of Agriculture vide copy of letter of the earlier LG placed below at F/A followed by reminder in this regard from hon'ble LG on 26.6.01 (F/B). I informed Secretary(A&C) that 6100 tonnes of areca nut is grown in these islands annually of which only 10% is locally consumed and the remaining over 5000 tonnes are available as market surplus. Since the price of arecanut has gone down from Rs. 125 to Rs. 25 per kg in the last 3 years, there was an urgent need to support the farmers by introducing the Market Intervention Scheme for arecanut. I brought to their attention the tax received from Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, GOI, on 12.9.01 mentioning the criteria for covering

✓ Rs 10.00 L
were made
on 15/9.