

S.S.m. 19. BABY JACOB—A blue print for export development of Kerala—1985—Dr. K.C. Sankaranarayanan

Kerala has to its credit a glorious history of foreign trade stretching over many

centuries past. It had enjoyed virtual monopoly over the export of Spices, Cashew kernels, Seafood, Coir and Coir products. In the case of some of these items the monopolistic position has already been lost while in the case of others it is under threat. The migration of traditional export-oriented industries from Kerala to adjoining states should be a matter of deep concern. A major part of the cashew industry in the private sector has already moved from Quilon – the centre of the industry in Kerala – to Kanyakumari District in Tamil Nadu for reasons of lower processing cost and difference in wage rates. The seafood industry, due to declining fish landings and other factors, is also moving from the State's traditional bases. The Coir industry is in the grip of a grave crisis precipitated by unrealistic government policies and aggravated by a rapidly shrinking share in the International market.

The present study is done with a diagnostic perspective. Besides investigating into the causes of the stagnant situation, the study with its specific reference to agricultural exports attempts a critical review of the policies of the government and an evaluation of the programmes and performance of the various organisations entrusted with the responsibility of the development of respective agricultural commodities.