

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF AN ABNORMAL
EARHEAD IN PADDY

An abnormal earhead in paddy (*Oryza sativa* L.) was spotted in a seed multiplication plot of PTB. 10, a short duration strain, in 1961 at the Agricultural Research Station, Patlambi. The culm of this paddy plant was found to give rise to two identical panicles on the terminal internode. The culm in paddy is normally made up of a number of internodes the topmost one being the longest, carrying the inflorescence. But in this particular plant two exactly identical panicles emerged from within the flag leaf in which they remained enclosed. Each of these panicles was also found to have separate flag (plate) leaves (Fig. 1).

Jones (1925) described the production of culm from the lower nodes in deep water paddy as branching. Ramiah (1950) and Israel *et al.* (1958) observed the branching of culm when either the terminal bud or even an axillary bud was destroyed, this branch being developed from another axillary bud.

In the present observation both the panicles with separate identical flag leaves were found to originate from the same point of the terminal node, with all the parts of a complete panicle, enclosed in a

common flag leaf. The plant did not reveal any evidence of insect attack and this abnormality appeared to be a case of abnormal forking of the terminal bud to give rise to two identical panicles.

Both the panicles produced well filled grains which were grown in the following season when this phenomenon was seen not repeated. Neither did it reappear in the selfed progeny and so it was not a hereditary character, but a developmental abnormality,

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Reference

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