

National Drought Policy

39. SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a national drought policy to prevent repetition of drought in various States every year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Government have initiated a few schemes viz. the Drought Prone Areas Programme, the Desert Development Programme and the All India Co-ordinated Dryland Agricultural Project for development of areas frequently affected by drought. These schemes aim at minimising the severity of the incidence of drought and improving ecological and production conditions which would reduce the frequency of drought.

(b) and (c) Details of these schemes are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Drought Prone Areas Programme

Drought has been a recurring phenomenon in some parts of the country. Prior to independence, various problems that arose in the wake of drought and scarcity, were tackled on an *ad hoc* basis as and when such distress occurred and as long as it lasted. The widespread droughts in the mid-1960s drew the attention of the Government to the need of tackling the problems of chronically drought affected areas on an organised basis so that at least some security could be provided against drought to the population of these areas. In areas identified as drought prone, a Rural Works Programme was started from 1970-71, with the principle objective of gradually mitigating the severity of scarcity conditions. Labour intensive and production oriented works were taken up under the Programme. These included medium

and minor irrigation schemes, soil conservation, afforestation, roads and drinking water projects. After the mid-term appraisal of the Fourth Five Year Plan, this Programme was re-oriented on an area development approach and redesignated as the Drought Prone Areas Programme.

Government also set up a Task Force on Integrated Rural Development in October, 1971 to spell out the main elements of the broad strategy of integrated rural development during the Fifth Plan. The Task Force reviewed and examined the content, coverage and progress of different special rural development programmes and made recommendations on the approach and strategy of the Drought Prone Areas Programme. The Task Force suggested that the main thrust of efforts under the Programme which covers 74 districts, partly or fully in 13 States, should be in the direction of restoration of a proper ecological balance. Some of the important elements of this programme were identified as follows:—

(i) restoration of ecological balance;

(ii) development and management of irrigation resources;

(iii) re-structuring of cropping pattern and pasture development;

(iv) soil and moisture conservation and afforestation;

(v) changes in agronomic practices;

(vi) livestock development;

(vii) provision of drinking water supply;

(viii) development of small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers.

During the Fourth Plan, an expenditure of about Rs. 92 crores was incurred under the Programme which helped in the creation of irrigation potential of about 1.64 lakh hectares, soil conservation measures over 4.62 lakh hectares, afforestation of about

0.97 lakh hectares and construction/upgradation of about 9900 kms. of roads.

During the Fifth Plan (1974-79), an expenditure of about Rs. 289 crores was incurred. During 1979-80, an expenditure of Rs. 38.40 crores has been reported till January, 1980. During 1974-79, irrigation potential of about 2.51 lakh hectares was created, about 12.53 lakh hectares of agricultural land was treated with soil conservation measures, about 13.12 hectares were brought under afforestation and pasture development, 33.25 societies of primary milk producers were established and 62.93 milch animals distributed to small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. 1,008 Sheers Co-operative Societies were established under the Programme. Wage employment of about 180 million mandays was generated during this period. During 1979-80 (till December, 1979), additional irrigation potential of about 21,000 hectares was created, afforestation and pasture development was taken up over 1.65 lakh hectares and about 83,000 hectares were treated with soil and moisture conservation measures. 329 milk producers' cooperative societies and 203 sheep cooperative societies were established. 90417 milch animals were distributed and employment of about 20.65 million mandays generated.

Desert Development Programme:

For the development of desert areas, the Desert Development Programme was started from 1977-78. This programme covers 20 districts in the States of Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. Expenditure to the tune of about Rs. 18 crores has been incurred under this Programme in these States. Afforestation, irrigation, soil and water conservation, development of agriculture and animal Husbandry are the major components of this Programme. In Rajasthan, development of rural electrification for energisation of tubewells has also been taken up under this Programme.

All India Coordinated Dryland Agricultural Project:

For extensive research on the problem of drought and the uncertainty of rainfall, the ICAR started the All India Co-ordinated Dryland Agricultural Project during the Fourth Five Year Plan. There are 23 main and sub-centres under this Project. The primary objective of this project is to stabilise and enhance crop production in the rainfed areas. To achieve this goal, the following three basic principles have been developed:—

(i) to conserve soil and moisture,

(ii) to make the best use of the conserved moisture for crop production;

(iii) to evaluate contingent plans to meet seasonal aberrations.

Considerable progress has been made during the last one decade in this Project. The major achievements are in the form of identification of suitable crops and varieties for different agro-climatic conditions, development of contingency plans to meet seasonal aberrations and dissemination of the latest dryland technology.

Acquisition of Land Under Master Plan by D.D.A.

40. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) the total acreage of land acquired under the Master Plan by the Delhi Development Authority for development and colonisation;

(b) how much land has so far been developed, colonised and the number of houses built and allotted to registrants from first registration onwards; and

(c) how many registrants are still awaiting allotment of flats?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) The Delhi Development Authority have informed that as per their records, an area of 80,439 acres has, up-