

failure category. Its reasons have been stated. Lack of maintenance was found responsible for this. Therefore, the human failure was attributed to this. Action was also taken against them.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : If the House agrees, we can have a Half-an-hour Discussion on 'train derailments and accidents'.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. SPEAKER : All rights.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Sir, my second supplementary is there.

MR. SPEAKER : You take it up during Half-an-Hour Discussion. The House has agreed to it.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA (Kanpur) : Sir, I have very important suggestions to make. That is why, I seek your permission.

MR. SPEAKER : You can make your suggestions during Half-an-Hour Discussion.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : I shall not speak in more than three sentences.

MR. SPEAKER : All right, but be very brief.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : I have come to know that most of such accidents are being occurred due to human failure. You have no control on it. Shri Sultan Singh Jain, a Scientist from Roorki has made a research on it. (Interruptions) He has expended the Railway Operating System. He also exhibited it before Railway Board and Department of Railway. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You are committing accidents in the House also.

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, if any train is running ahead, it will stop automatically, if there is unmanned crossing, there will be red light automatically. I would like to ask the honourable Minister that Shri Sultan Singh Jain, who is a scientist in Rurki University and who has developed Railway Operating System, whether the Department of Railway would like to take advantage of this operating system and whether it will give an opportunity to him to demonstrate this system?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not have any immediate information about it that a person has developed such a system. If it comes to us or comes to Railway Board it will be studied and examined completely. As far as its study is concerned, I would

like to inform the House that so far no study has been conducted on the interaction of track and wheel but, some work in R.D.S.O is being undertaken sometime or the other. If the persons who are working there go to other places after transfer, they do not percolate the information at the lower level. Therefore, we have taken a decision that Rs. 50 lakh is being spent to study the interaction of Rail and Wheel and to create a post for Professor in Rurkee University so that it can be studied. If there is any disturbance, it can be decided only after conducting study and concrete results as to what action can be taken by us.

[English]

### Safe Drinking Water

\*263. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government had fixed any target for providing safe drinking water to every village to the country by 2000;

(b) if so, the progress made so far State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite the work in order to achieve the target fixed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

### Statement

(a) to (c) Drinking Water Supply is a State subject. State Governments have been implementing Rural Water Supply Programmes under the State Sector Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Government by providing central assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). A statement indicating State-wise coverage of rural habitations with safe water facilities as on 1.4.98, as per the information furnished by the State Governments, is enclosed as Annexure-I.

The National Agenda for Governance of the Government envisions providing safe drinking water to all villages of the country in the next five years starting from 1998. The Action Plans prepared by the State Governments in consonance with the National Agenda for Governance indicates that all rural habitations of the country except for a few in Rajasthan would be provided with drinking water facilities during the 9th Plan period, subject to availability of funds.

**Annexure-I***Status of Coverage of Habitations as on 1.4.98*

S.No.	State/UT	NC Habs.	PC Habs.	FC Habs.	Total Habs.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	00	28083	41649	69732
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	666	1248	2384	4298
3.	Assam	8623	23485	38561	70669
4.	Bihar	2522	7596	195318	205436
5.	Goa	45	45	325	405
6.	Gujarat	1008	5893	23363	30269
7.	Haryana	60	573	6915	7545
8.	Himachal Pradesh	4590	14047	25530	45367
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	2618	4544	8564	15726
10.	Karnataka	1942	13898	40842	56682
11.	Kerala	990	6809	1884	9763
12.	Madhya Pradesh	6909	30714	122245	159868
13.	Maharashtra	2985	40689	33450	77124
14.	Manipur	220	592	1979	2791
15.	Meghalaya	1005	1621	6013	8639
16.	Mizoram	24	642	245	911
17.	Nagaland	448	745	332	1525
18.	Orissa	7136	6360	100603	114099
19.	Punjab	6000	3123	4326	13446
20.	Rajasthan	7077	41341	55648	104066
21.	Sikkim	0	862	817	1679
22.	Tamil Nadu	0	24945	41686	66631
23.	Tripura	888	2102	4422	7412
24.	Uttar Pradesh	384	27012	247245	274641
25.	West Bengal	0	26109	54268	80377
26.	Andaman & Nicobar Island	11	21	472	504
27.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	128	216	172	516
28.	Daman & Diu	0	1	28	29
29.	Delhi	0	62	138	200
30.	Lakshadweep	0	10	0	10
31.	Pondicherry	0	0	276	276
32.	Chandigarh			24	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>56269</b>	<b>313473</b>	<b>1060921</b>	<b>1430663</b>

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Hon. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that, "The National Agenda for Governance of the Government envisages providing safe drinking water to all villages of the country in the next five years starting from 1998." It has also been stated that the Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Government by providing Central Assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP).

Kutch District, my constituency, which is the largest district in area in the whole country, suffers from acute shortage of drinking water - even the cattle do not get the drinking water - and as a result many people have migrated from that area. The only way to provide drinking water in my constituency is to get water from South Gujarat River, which is at a distance of 700 Kilometres.

MR. SPEAKER : You must ask a very good question now.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any special assistance can be given under ARWSP for providing drinking water in this part of the Gujarat State.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I understand the feelings of the hon. Member, but I am very sorry to say that these schemes are implemented by the State Governments concerned. Of course, we supplement the efforts of the State Governments. Let me give the picture about the present status. There are 14,30,663 habitations in India out of which, 56,269 habitations have not yet been covered, 3,13,473 habitations have been partially covered, and the rest 10,60,921 habitations have been fully covered. We have prepared an Action Plan, and we require Rs. 9,149 crore for this. The hon. Member can see the details in Annexure I. The Action Plan has been prepared in consonance with our National Agenda, and it is duty of the Government of India to assist the State Governments in implementing the programmes prepared by them.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Sir, the Central Government is giving assistance to the State Governments but I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether or not the Central Government could make any special provision for the places where there is acute shortage of water. If you take the country as a whole, then there are certain places where the people feel the acute shortage of water and have to travel a few kilometres to fetch water. I would like to know very specifically from the hon. Minister whether in such cases the Central Government could compel the State Governments to do something and also provide more assistance to them.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : The State Governments are autonomous in planning and implementing the schemes. We are not implementing the Schemes.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : I would like to know whether the Central Government would like to make any special provision for that.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : There is no such provision.

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, many times you have given the directions to associate Members of Parliament but State Government does not associate them. Here the Minister submits that it is a plan of State Government. Ultimately what we will do here. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you should give directions in this regard.

[English]

They should give clear cut directions. . . (Interruptions) The State Government is not associating us in the schemes . . . (Interruptions) The MPs would have to be associated with the schemes.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Not just now, we will take it up later on.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, whatever honourable Member is saying, there is stability in it. We defer it by saying that it is the work of State Government so they should do it. We have given the money but we do not come to know whether State Government is doing it or not. The question is whether things are made available to the people or not? It should be our responsibility. Honourable Minister has said that he is ready to go and I am ready to take him to Rajasthan. On the one hand you have promised this, on the other in the month of Jyaishta, I will take you towards the mounds of Rajasthan where there is no drinking water. then you will not make any complaint to me. You will get Paramvir Chakra for it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in Jaisalmer, Barmer, Bikaner areas of Rajasthan people have to go 10 miles away to fetch water. Government has done a lot in this regard but in these places the matter has been resolved. I would like that special attention should be paid to these places and water should be made available. If water is finished, then human life will come to an end there. In this situation even crops are ruined. Therefore, there is a need to provide drinking water to the people easily. There should be priority for this. We have means due to coming of Indira Canal. There is a need to do the work, water cannot be provided only by laying water pipe, water is provided by arranging

water. . . (Interruptions) Therefore, to support your point I want to ask honourable Minister that he should appoint you and I to the duty so that we can also see that in this work money would be spent or not, whether honourable Minister is agree with this?

[English]

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, I have written letters to all the State Governments to involve the MPs in the Programme and my Secretary also had written letters to the Secretaries of the States on 26th August, 1998 for involving the MPs in these programmes.

[Translation]

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : About Maharashtra . . .

[English]

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : The Government of Maharashtra has replied that the participation of the MPs and the MLAs are being done in planning, implementation and monitoring of the Centrally-sponsored programmes. They are going to include them. The process has started in Maharashtra . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : It is not right you please sit down.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, we have asked the State Governments to involve Members of Parliament in this programme. We cannot encroach upon the powers of the State Governments.

[Translation]

SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI (Machhalishahar) : Honourable Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to know from the honourable Minister that in the places where the level of ground water has become very low and where India Mark-2 handpump are not working, whether Government of India are proposing a separate plan for these places and on the plan to provide special assistance and whether it will do the survey of these places?

[English]

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, the ground water level is going down every year. The sources are drying up. The 'Villages not covered' are emerging every year. We are making some exercises in the Ministry for a ground water recharging programme. For that, under EAS, we have specifically mentioned that 50 percent of the money should be used for ground water recharging programme. I have also written letters to the Minister of Agriculture and the

Minister of Forests to club all these programmes for ground water recharging. Very soon we are going to have a comprehensive programme for ground water recharging.

DR. RANJIT KUMAR PANJA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you for allowing me to speak.

Rural water supply in West Bengal has a very special problem. In six Districts, the soil is laden with arsenic. This arsenic is being consumed by people through drinking water. This arsenic causes cancer. It is causing cancer killing hundreds of people. As this is a State subject, I would like to know whether this special health hazard has been brought to the notice of the Central Government by the State Government, and whether any measures have been taken, or are being taken at the national level for water supply to the rural areas.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, there is a separate Technology Mission, namely, Rajiv Gandhi Technology Mission, for such quality-affected areas. If the State Government comes with a project for treatment of water, we will consider it. . . (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Projects are already there.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : If there is a project with us, we will definitely consider it.

SHRI S. SUDHAKAR REDDY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, like in West Bengal, in many parts of Andhra Pradesh, there is a serious problem of fluoride content in drinking water. Because of excess fluoride content in drinking water, deformity of bones and premature deaths are occurring. There used to be special funds earmarked for fluoride-affected areas. Now the Government has withdrawn such special funds and some funds are given to each State against which this has to be adjusted. I would like to know whether the Government has got any plan to give special funds for fluoride-affected areas, particularly, for my constituency in Andhra Pradesh where a number of villages are affected by this fluoride content in drinking water.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, we have not withdrawn the programme under Rajiv Gandhi Technology Mission. We have delegated powers to the State Governments to implement those programmes. Only the funding pattern has been changed. If the hon. Members request to go to the earlier funding pattern, I will consider that also.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the whole country level of ground water is going down. Particularly in Gujarat the level of water has gone so down that water is available at the depth of 500 feet. Honourable

Minister has explained in his reply that it a State subject. State is trying to provide water in every village. But I am listening for the last ten years that whichever Government comes it says that in the coming two years every village of Hindustan will get pure drinking water. But for the last ten years this question has not been solved. Through pipeline Government of Gujarat wants to give pure drinking water to every village. I want to know from honourable Minister that whether Government of India would give any special financial assistance in this regard?

[English]

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, for depleting ground water, we have identified 595 blocks as grey and dark. For this, we are having a programme. If the State Government comes with some projects to recharge these grey and dark blocks, we are going to release funds under this programme.

[Translation]

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the problem of drinking water in our country is such that in my constituency from where Ganga-Jammu originates even there also drinking water is not available to us. Honourable Minister is right in saying that State Government is responsible for this. But really most painful situation is that villages which are shown benefitted here, even water is not available in those villages. I, therefore, would like to know from honourable Minister that whether they will start monitoring system after discussion with State Government, in which Members of Parliament should also be involved so that it can be seen that the villages which are shown benefitted what is the situation of water there and villages which are not shown benefitted how water would be provided there. Whether honourable Minister would tell something about starting a monitoring system based on Members of Parliament.

[English]

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, I have already answered this question . . . (Interruptions)

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM : Sir, the hon. Minister has not answered this question.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : I have written letters. . . (Interruptions)

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM : I am asking for the monitoring arrangements which have the authority. Here, he is only requesting the State Governments. I want to know specifically from the hon. Minister as to whether he is willing to accept the necessity of a system whereby monitoring will be done by the Centre.

. . . (Interruptions) Otherwise, he is helpless. He is just saying that everything will be done by the States. Then why should he come here? Then, we should not ask questions here. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI K.S. RAO : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as everybody is aware, shortage of drinking water is a major problem in our country. Whenever we ask for sanction of water tanks in a villages sanction is being made. But the villagers are being asked to contribute partly the cost of the project, that is, water tank, and sometimes where the villagers are not in a position to contribute, they are not getting the water tanks. That means, most of the investments are going only to the rich villages where the local villagers can afford to pay more than what is required.

Now, I wish to bring to his kind knowledge that . . .

MR. SPEAKER : You have to ask the supplementary and not to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister.

SHRI K.S. RAO : Sir, crores of rupees which are invested in constructing water tanks are not being used because either the pipelines are not laid or they are incomplete and all that. So, I wish to know from the hon. Minister as to whether he will ask the State Governments or the concerned Departments to make an assessment of those projects which are incomplete and where crores of rupees have been invested for the last couple of years, and find a way out as to how to complete them and put them to use in order to have the public money.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, we are not asking people to contribute any money under the ARWSP and MNP.

MR. SPEAKER : He is asking about the incomplete schemes.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Under the World Bank Schemes, they are asking for some five per cent or 10 per cent contribution. . .

SHRI K.S. RAO : Sir, I am talking about the projects where the villagers are concerned.

MR. SPEAKER : Please let him complete.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : As regards, World Bank Schemes, with the agreement of the people, they are entering into agreement with the NGOs and the public, to contribute five per cent or 10 per cent.

SHRI K.S. RAO : Sir, I am not talking about them. I am talking about villagers.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, under the ARWSP, we are not asking the people to contribute any money.

About the incomplete projects, if the hon. Member has a specific reference

SHRI K.S. RAO : It is not one. There are hundreds and hundreds of incomplete projects pending in my constituency. Here, I am talking about the whole country.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, I will see to it. . .  
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : If the House agrees, I have no objection to have Half-an-Hour Discussion. What is the reply from the hon. Minister? Do you agree for Half-an-Hour Discussion?

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : We have discussed the matter many times. We have prepared an Action Plan. We have also prepared the programme for ground water recharging.

MR. SPEAKER : Are you agreeable for Half-an-Hour Discussion?

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : I am agreeable, if Hon. Members are very much interested in it.

MR. SPEAKER : We will have Half-an-Hour Discussion. The hon. Minister has agreed.

#### People Living Below Poverty Line

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\*264. SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR :  
SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA :

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any survey is being conducted to ascertain the percentage of the people living below poverty line in the country; and

(b) if so, the norms being adopted for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) The percentage of people living below poverty line is estimated from time to time by the Planning Commission utilising the National Sample Survey Data on Consumer Expenditure. However, to identify the persons living below poverty line, a 'Below Poverty Line Census' is being carried out in rural areas of all the States and Union Territories at the behest of this Ministry.

(b) For the estimation of the percentage of the people living below poverty line as well as for the 'Below Poverty Line Census', the poverty line as fixed by the Planning Commission, is taken as the norm.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : I will be very brief. Will the hon. Minister let me know whether there are any instructions to the persons conducting surveys that

those who have fans, tiled roofs, sewing machines, stone walls, tin sheds and electricity should be omitted from the list of poverty line? They are not being included according to their income. Is there any guideline in this regard?

Secondly, the Prime Minister had assured this House last time that nearly Rs. 2,700 crore for the year 1997-98 was unutilised and that a meeting of all the Party representatives would be called. I would like to know whether this will be done in this Session at least.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : These data are not being used for identification of poverty. We are using these data for our self-employment programmes like IRDP, DWACRA and other programmes.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : I will give one example. You can check. I will give the name of one specific village, Brashitakli in the district of Akola, Maharashtra where in the last census of survey of the population below poverty line, the people living below poverty line there was found to be 46 per cent. This time the census has been completed and it has been brought down to 20 per cent. These norms have been used to reduce the number of persons living below poverty line. Will you confirm this and report the fact to the House whether it is true or not?

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : The Planning Commission is not taking into consideration these figures.

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : I am just asking you whether you will confirm the facts which I have stated and come before the House. It is my specific point. We are not interested in the Planning Commission. I am asking you a specific point. I have given you the name of one village where the population below poverty line was 46 per cent. This time it is 20 per cent. Will you report to the House whether it is a fact or not?

12.00 hrs.

SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL : Sir, poverty is a relative term. We are assisting the poorest of the poor.  
(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : I am giving you a concrete example.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Praksh Ambedkar, please sit down. What is this confrontation?

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : This question is very important. This is not a reply. This is a fraud which is being committed on the people. . .  
(Interruptions)