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**STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON AGRICULTURE  
(1998-99)**

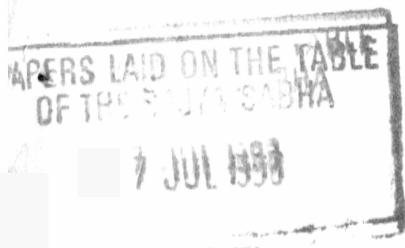
**TWELFTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (1997-98)**

**FIFTH REPORT**

*[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Twelfth Report (1996-97) of Standing Committee on Agriculture (1996-97) (Eleventh Lok Sabha)]*



*Authenticated*  
Chairman  
Standing Committee  
on Agriculture

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

*June, 1998/Jyaistha, 1920 (Saka)*

## FIFTH REPORT

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MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (1997-98)

*[Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Twelfth Report (1996-97) of Standing Committee on Agriculture (1996-97) (Eleventh Lok Sabha)]*

*Presented to Lok Sabha on.....  
Laid in Rajya Sabha on.....*



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI

*June, 1998/Jyaistha, 1920 (Saka)*

**COA No. 61**

*Price : Rs. 29.00*

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Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Ninth Edition) and Printed by Jainco Art India, 13/10, W.E.A., Saraswati Marg, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005.

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE (1998-99)

**Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu — Chairman**

**MEMBERS**

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Ramchandra Bainda
3. Shri D.C. Sreekantappa
4. Shri Nandkumar Singh Chauhan
5. Dr. Ramkrishna Kusmaria
6. Shri Baliram Kashyap
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29. Dr. Sushil Kumar Indora
30. Lt. Gen. (Retd.) N. Foley

*Rajya Sabha*

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32. Maulana Habibur Rahman Nomani
33. Shri Ramji Lal
34. Shri Virendra Kataria
35. Shri Devi Prasad Singh
36. Shri Shiv Charan Singh
37. Shri Ramnarayan Goswami
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39. Shri H.K. Javare Gowda
40. Shri T.M. Venkatachalam
41. Shri Sharief-Ud-Din Shariq
42. Shri Sukh Dev Singh Dhindsa

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri G.C. Malhotra	— <i>Additional Secretary</i>
2. Shri P.D.T. Achary	— <i>Joint Secretary</i>
3. Shri S. Bal Shekar	— <i>Deputy Secretary</i>
4. Smt. Anita Jain	— <i>Under Secretary</i>
5. Shri K.L. Arora	— <i>Assistant Director</i>
6. Shri Ramesh Lal	— <i>Reporting Officer</i>

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1998-99) having been authorised by the Committee to submit Report on their behalf, present this 5th Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the 12th Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1996-97) (Eleventh Lok Sabha) on the Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Water Resources.

2. The Twelfth Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1996-97) on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Water Resources was presented to Lok Sabha on 11th April, 1997. The Ministry of Water Resources was requested to furnish action taken replies of the Government to recommendations contained in the Twelfth Report. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received.

3. The Committee considered the Action Taken Replies furnished by the Government in its sitting held on 17th June, 1998 approved the draft comments and adopted the 5th Report. Minutes of the Sitting are given in Appendix-I.

4. An analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the 12th Report (Eleventh Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI;  
June, 1998  
*Jyaistha, 1920 (Saka)*

K. YERRANNAIDU,  
*Chairman,*  
*Standing Committee on Agriculture*

**AUTHENTICATED**  
  
Chairman  
Standing Committee  
on Agriculture

## **CHAPTER I**

### **REPORT**

This Report of the Committee on Agriculture deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 12th Report (Eleventh Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (1996-97) on Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Water Resources which was presented to the Lok Sabha on 11.04.97 and laid in Rajya Sabha on 22.04.97.

1.2 Action Taken Replies have been received from the Government in respect of all the 17 recommendations contained in the Report. These have been categorised as follows:

- (i) Recommendations/Observations that have been accepted by the Government: (Chapter-II of the Report)—

Recommendation Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17.

(Total 11)

- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: (Chapter-III of the Report)—

Recommendation Nos. 3 & 14.

(Total 2)

- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which reply of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: (Chapter-IV of the Report has been commented upon in Chapter-I of the Report)—

Recommendation Nos. 1, 2 & 4.

(Total 3)

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited: (Chapter-V of the Report)—

Recommendation No. 5.

(Total 1)

1.3 The Committee will now deal with the recommendations which have not been accepted and have been included in Chapter-IV of the Report.

### **Recommendation No. 1**

#### *Reduced Plan Allocations*

1.4 The Committee note that the effectiveness of the performance of the Irrigation Sector has been crippled mainly due to the gradual reduction in the plan allocations in favour of the Irrigation Sector. The plan allocation which was 18.7% of the overall plan size in the First Five Year Plan have now come down to 7.5% in the 8th Plan while it was 9.4% in the 7th Plan. It has been noted that even many irrigation schemes that have been started in the Second Five Year Plan are still incomplete and the allocation in favour of the major and medium sector had been much less than that was required even for completing the schemes in hand. This has led to a situation where the Planning Commission has proclaimed a ban on new schemes despite the fact that water is the most crucial input which is required to attain the target of 210 million tonnes of foodgrains by 2000 A.D. and the country is now unable to record any growth in the foodgrains production in the last two years with a looming danger of the country entering into a food-trap. Under these appalling circumstances there is urgent imperative of the augmentation of water resources which alone can ensure the production of the much needed foodgrains. There is urgent need for an integrated approach and close coordination and perspective planning with agriculture and allied sectors if the country has to be bailed out of an inevitable situation of starvation in the years to come. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should open their eyes to this harsh reality and make available the overall financial requirement of Rs. 12,672.14 crores under IX plan for the entire central plan of the water resources sector proposed to them so that this country would be saved from a grave calamity.

### **Reply of the Government**

1.5 The recommendations are for the entire IX Plan (1997—2002). Although the IX Plan outlay has not been finalised by the Planning Commission, allocation made by the Planning Commission for the first year of the plan period, i.e. 1997-98 does not indicate any improvement.

The Planning Commission has provided Rs. 341.00 crores only for the Central Sector Plan Schemes of the Ministry in the Annual Plan 1997-98, which is even lower than the allocation of Rs. 366.93 crores for the Annual Plan 1996-97, the last year of VIII Five Year Plan. The Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources has already written letters to the Hon'ble Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and also to Hon'ble Minister of Finance, requesting a review and raise the allocation for the Ministry in the Year 1997-98. The recommendations of the Standing Committee regarding IX Plan allocation for the Central Sector Schemes have also been communicated to the Planning Commission for necessary action (Annexure I—Pages 46-47 given below. The letters from Secretary (WR) to Member Secretary, Planning Commission, Secretary (Expenditure) of the Finance Ministry are also being sent.

#### Comments of the Committee

1.6. The Committee are distressed to find that inspite of their strong recommendations for increasing budget allocation to this sector during the 9th plan, the Planning Commission has not made any improvement even for the first year of the plan period, i.e. 1997-98. The budgetary allocation of Rs. 341 crore for 1997-98 is even lower than the allocation of Rs. 366.93 crore made in 1996-97. It shows that Planning Commission has not given due importance to this sector disregarding the fact that there is an imperative need to augment water resources to increase production of much needed foodgrain which has remained stagnant in the last two years. The Committee therefore strongly reiterate their recommendation that sufficient budgetary allocation should be provided as per the Ninth Plan outlay for Ministry of Water Resources so that various irrigation schemes do not suffer due to financial constraints and inadequate water facilities do not become an impediment in the way of achieving the target of 210 MT of foodgrain by 2000 AD.

#### Recommendation No. 2

##### *Ineffective Role of the Union Ministry of Water Resources*

1.7. The Committee observe that the Union Ministry of Water Resources has been rendered weak and ineffective in getting various water resources projects implemented within a time frame in view of the original constitutional role it has to play. The Committee find that the Ministry could only make proposals and thereafter it is for the

State Governments to implement them and there is no power available with the Central Ministry to ensure compliance of the advice tendered by them to the States. As a result of this sorry state of affairs, several thousand crores of rupees allocated for the development of the water resources sector have virtually gone down the drains and no tangible improvements could be seen in the last four five year plans under this sector. Even the River Board Act has remained only in the statute books and is totally ineffective and unimplementable in the present constitutional scheme. The Committee observe that the awards of the water tribunals remained unimplemented for years together. Even the international financial institutions have become aware of these maladies and are not ready to render aid for many of our vital irrigation projects for which internal resources are not available. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to take drastic constitutional and legal remedial steps to salvage the situation immediately lest things should come to such a pause where no progress could be possible. The Committee desire that they should be apprised of the details of the appropriate measures contemplated in this regard and also of the time frame within which these effective measures would be realised in concrete terms.

#### **Reply of the Government**

1.8. Entry 56 of List I of the Seventh Schedule of the constitution pertains to the power of the Union Government in respect of the Regulation and Development of inter-State rivers and river valley to the extent such regulation and development under the control of the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the Public interest.

In pursuance of Entry 56 of the constitution, the Union Government has enacted "The River Boards Act 1956".

However, no Board could be set up under the Act so far as it is felt that if a Board is set up under the Act it may not have sufficient powers. A proposal to modify the existing River Boards Act. 1956 is under process in this Ministry for making the Act more effective, so that it could serve the purpose for which it was enacted. The major rivers in India are inter-State in character having catchments/water sheds in two or more States. Often water disputes arise among basin States with regard to water sharing, use, distribution and development, etc.

The Constitution of India has provided different provisions in regard to relations between the Union and the States. Article 246 of the Constitution confers exclusive power to the Parliament to make laws with respect to any of the matters enumerated in List I in the Seventh Schedule (in the Constitution referred to as the "Union List").

Entry 17 under List II of Seventh Schedule provides that "Water, that is to say, water supplies, irrigation and canals, drainage and embankments, water storage and water power subject to the provisions of Entry 56 of List I".

Under Article 262 of the constitution, the Government of India has enacted Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 for adjudication of disputes relating to Waters of Inter-State rivers and river valleys.

The Central Government first tries to resolve the Inter-State water dispute through negotiations. However, when such negotiations fail and when any request is received from any State Government in respect of any water dispute and the Central Government is of the opinion that the water dispute cannot be settled by negotiations, the Central Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, constitute a Water Disputes Tribunal for the adjudication of the Water dispute, under Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956.

Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations submitted its report in the year 1988 wherein under Chapter 17 of the Report dealing with the Inter-State river water disputes, it made certain recommendations for amendment to the existing Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956. The Commission made five recommendations (212 to 216) under Para 17.6.01 to 17.6.05 of the Report.

The recommendations accepted by the Sub-Committee of the Inter-State Council are enclosed (Annex. II Pages 48-49).

The recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission have been discussed in the second meeting of the Inter-State Council, held on 15.10.96. It was decided in the meeting that in view of the reservations expressed by some States, the observations and proposals made by the members of the Council at the meeting along with their views on the recommendations would be referred to the Standing Committee for their consideration.

The meeting of the Standing Committee is yet to take place.

As a follow up the assurance given by the Minister (WR) to the Parliament, this Ministry is examining the need of the transferring the subject of "Water" from List II (State List) to List III (Concurrent List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

Following actions are therefore to be taken/initiated/proposed to be completed in next five years:—

1. Committee of Secretaries is being requested to persuade Planning Commission for making more and project specific allocation in the irrigation sector.
2. Ministry of Water Resources has taken up Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) during 1996-97 to assist and encourage States to complete the projects early.
3. Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) under National Banking For Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is also assisting the States in funding of the irrigation projects since 1995-96.
4. Draft guidelines were prepared for allocation of Inter-State River Water among Co-basin States and sent to the States for comments. The revised draft has been discussed in the Third Meeting of the National Water Resources Council and in the meetings of National Water Board. These guidelines would help in sharing the Inter-State River Waters.
5. The River Boards Act, 1956 is proposed to be amended as necessary.
6. The Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 is also proposed to be amended.
7. More Inter-State River Authorities/ Boards are proposed to be set up wherever necessary.
8. The proposal to transfer the subject of "Water" from List II (State List) to List III (Concurrent List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution is under consideration in the Ministry of Water Resources.

9. A model bill for regulation and control of Ground Water Development has been circulated to States and Union Territories in June 1996 for its suitable enactment and enforcement by them. However this could be done by an old Act of Parliament provided the subject of "Water" is transferred from List II (State List) to List III (Concurrent List) of the Constitution.
10. In pursuance of the order passed by the Supreme Court of India, Central Ground Water Board has been constituted as an Authority on 14.1.97 under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for the purpose of Regulation and Control of Ground Water Management and Development for a period of one year.

#### **Comments of the Committee**

**1.9** The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Government about the time-frame of five years within which they propose to complete a number of measures to enable the nation to make full use of the available water resources of the country. The Committee find that the unlimited powers conferred upon Union Government by entry 56 of the Central List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution have not been forcefully exercised, although a Central Act known as 'The River Boards Act, 1956' was enacted four decades ago. It is a matter of grave concern that in the last forty years not a single River Board could be constituted to regulate and develop even one inter-state river or its valley. In this backdrop, the time-frame of five years set by the Ministry of Water Resources only indicates that still no sense of urgency has been felt by the Ministry in resolving the matter which really requires an emergency treatment in view of the various ills that affect the system at present. The Committee are further unhappy to find that the recommendation made by Sarkaria Commission in its report in 1988 for amendment of the Inter State Water Disputes Act are still under consideration and no final decision in this regard has been taken. This shows a lack of will on the part of Govt. to act decisively on the matter with the result that the matter of amendment of the Act has been pending for more than a decade.

The Committee recommend that immediate effective steps should be taken to amend the River Board Act 1956 and Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956 so as to have effective implementation of various Water Resource projects within a time frame of one year. The

**Committee further recommend that the Government should come forward with an immediate legislative proposal to transfer the subject of 'Water' from List II (State List) to List III (concurrent List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution within one year from the date of presentation of this Report.**

#### **Recommendation No. 4**

##### *Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal Project*

1.10 The Committee are disappointed to note that no progress could be made in the completion of the 100% centrally funded SYL Canal Project, although budgetary allocations have been made successively year after year. Despite the Committee's repeated recommendations, the matter has been sought to be neglected and allowed to drift interminably for years together since July, 1990. It is a matter of grave concern that the matter has not been taken up at the highest political level for resolution, although the Committee has been harping on this measure year after year. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to take the matter to a logical conclusion with the intervention of the Hon'ble Prime Minister who is the Chairman of the Central Water Resources Council without waiting any further.

#### **Reply of the Government**

1.11 Ministry of Water Resources considers that the matter is very sensitive due to inter-State conflict between the States of Punjab and Haryana. With a view to resolving river water dispute between Punjab & Haryana, the Central Government set up the Ravi and Beas Waters Tribunal on 2nd April, 1986 and referred to it the matter specified in paragraph 9.1 and 9.2 of the Punjab Accord, which concerns sharing of river waters between Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. The Tribunal gave its interim report on 30th January, 1987, which was forwarded to the States in May, 1987. The Tribunal in its decision has also stated that in answering the two points referred to them, they have strictly confined themselves to the terms of reference and paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2 of the Punjab Settlement, but they thought that it would not be out of place to mention that paragraph 9.3 of Punjab Settlement envisaged the construction of SYL Canal and its completion by 15th August, 1986. The Tribunal has observed that this canal is the lifeline for the farmers of Haryana and unless it is expeditiously completed, Haryana will not be in a position to utilise the full quantum

of water allocated to it and that it was necessary to make concerted effort to see that the construction of the canal is completed at an early date without further loss of time. As required under Section V(3) of the ISWD Act, 1956, in August, 1987, the Central Govt. and the States of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan have sought clarifications/guidance from the Tribunal. The Tribunal has not been functioning for the last about 9 years, at first due to the request of the Govt. of Punjab over adjournment on the ground of prevailing political situation in the State, than due to flood situation in the State and finally due to resignation of Justice A.M. Ahmadi of the Gujarat High Court on 9.3.89 on his elevation as Judge of the Supreme Court.

The matter was brought before the CCPA vide notes dated 1990, 1991 and 1992 also, which deferred consideration of the Note. This issue was also discussed in the inter-State meetings with the Chief Ministers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan convened by Ministry of Water Resources in July, August, 1992, when the construction of SYL Canal alongwith a number of Inter-State Water related issues between the three States were discussed. Most of the issues were satisfactorily resolved. Further meetings could not be held due to one reason or the other and hence final seal of agreement could not be put on the issue. Chief Minister, Punjab held discussion with the Minister (WR) in February, 1994 also, when it was emphasised that the Agency and time schedule for completion of balance works of SYL Canal may be fixed by the State Govt. immediately. Subsequently a letter was received from Secretary, Irrigation and Power, Govt. of Punjab, wherein acceptance of State Govt.'s responsibility for completion of SYL Canal through the States Irrigation Department was indicated. However no time schedule for resumption and completion of Canal was given. Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Home Affairs convened the meetings of Chief Secretaries of the concerned States in 1995, but the officers from Punjab did not attend.

On 5th October, 1995 Govt. decided to fill up the vacancy of Member in the Ravi Beas Waters Tribunal to enable resumption of its proceedings for completion of final report. The post has since been filled up and a Gazette Notification to this effect has been issued on 18.11.96. Meanwhile consultations started with Ministry of Home Affairs in view of sensitivities involved.

Before taking further action, Minister (WR) on 23.10.96 has suggested to Chief Minister Punjab, for a meeting to discuss the issue.

Chief Minister, Punjab has informed on 31.1.97 that it would not be feasible for the Punjab Govt. to resume the construction of SYL Canal till the final settlement of river waters Disputes. Govt. of Punjab, while linking the issue of construction of SYL Canal with the sharing of Yamuna Waters, have stated that whereas, the waters of river Ravi have been allocated to the State of Haryana, waters of river Yamuna have not been allocated to Punjab. Govt. of Punjab is of the view that if allocation of river waters is made as per their contention, Haryana's share can be delivered through the existing Bhakra Canal System and there would not be any necessity of the SYL Canal. Punjab has also taken the stand that the Govt. of Haryana has filed a Civil Suit in the Supreme Court of India (Suit No. 1 of 1995) during November, 1995 in the matter regarding construction of SYL Canal etc., the matter is *sub judice*.

Govt. of Haryana unanimously passed a resolution on March 13, 1997 regarding the State's territory and river water dispute. Haryana Vidhan Sabha has resolved that Govt. of India may get the remaining portion of SYL Canal completed immediately by entrusting it to a Central Agency and Canal be got commissioned within a period of 6 months on war footing.

Minister (WR) on 2nd June, 1997 in a letter addressed to Chief Minister, Punjab has reiterated that sharing of Yamuna waters and sharing of surplus Ravi Beas waters are entirely separate issues governed by different agreements and have been dealt with likewise by the Ministry of Water Resources.

As the issue is highly sensitive, Ministry of Water Resources has been making all efforts to persuade Chief Minister, Punjab for holding discussions to fix the time schedule for resumption of construction and completion of SYL Canal. Ministry of Home Affairs has also been informed about the developments and appropriate advice sought on issues having direct bearing on SYL Canal. Ministry of Water Resources is of the opinion that efforts for holding talks and reaching an agreement on such a sensitive issue amongst the States should continue further, before the alternative recourse of taking up the matter with National Water Resources Council is resorted to.

#### **Comments of the Committee**

**1.12 The Committee feel highly disappointed to note that no attempt has been made so far to resolve the question of completion**

of Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal project at the highest political level with the intervention of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, so that the Project, which is already more than 90 per cent complete, can be made to yield the desired results. The Committee urge upon the Government to prevail upon the Chief Ministers of both the States to come to the negotiating table in the presence of the Honourable Prime Minister for immediate resolution in the interest of the farming community, as all other alternatives are time-consuming and have not proved successful.

## CHAPTER II

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

#### **Recommendation No. 6**

##### *Need for a Water Resources Action Plan for Kalahandi*

2.1 The Committee note with concern the situation of famine and penury prevailing in the Kalahandi, Balangir, Nuapada, Koraput and Baragada districts of Orissa and desire that a fully centrally funded scheme be formulated expeditiously by the Ministry of Water Resources for ensuring permanent availability of adequate water Resources in that particular districts so that the plight of want could be banished from the districts for all times to come. This should be taken up as a model test case for devising further such action plans in respect of other adjoining districts there.

##### **Reply of the Government**

2.2 A high level team of officers under the Chairmanship of Shri Z. Hasan, Member (WP & P), Central Water Commission and representatives from Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, Planning Commission, CGWB and Government of Orissa (Irrigation Department) as Members and Commissioner (WM & MI), Ministry of Water Resources as member-Secretary has been set up vide Ministry of Water Resources O.M. dated 13.5.97. The terms of reference of the team include visit to Orissa to assess drought situation in Kalahandi and adjoining districts and suggest suitable schemes for solving the water problem in the area. The team is to recommend necessary short-term measures to tide over the present situation and also long-term measures for providing adequate water to the area to find a lasting solution to the problem of drought. The team shall identify schemes which can be taken up for the above purpose. The team is to submit its report within two months.

The first meeting of the team was held in Delhi on 3.6.97. Various proposals which could be considered were discussed in the meeting. A visit of the team to the drought affected districts for making an on the spot assessment is scheduled for the first week of July, 1997.

### **Recommendation No. 7**

#### *Arsenic Chemicals in Ground Water in West Bengal*

2.3. With reference to incidence of arsenic chemicals in the ground water in certain areas in West Bengal, the Committee have been informed that the causes of this pollution is being studied through a research project in association with the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and also the National Institute of Hydrology. The Committee desire that the research project should be expeditiously completed and suitable action plans should be drawn up in the light of findings of the research project team with a view to save the lives of the helpless people inhabiting the area. The Committee recommend that a suitable budget provision should be made for the activities to be undertaken by the Research Project Team and also for the implementation of the Action Plan in this regard.

#### **Reply of the Government**

2.4 (1) The incidence of arsenic in West Bengal occurs in shallow aquifers and spreads over 67 blocks in 8 districts of Malda, Nadia, Murshidabad, North and South 24-Parganas, Burdwan, Howrah and Hoogli. Based on studies carried out so far a status report on the menace of Arsenic in West Bengal has been prepared by CGWB. Now an Action Plan has been prepared to study the causes and possible remedial measures of the problem of Arsenic toxicity. This study is now taken up in consultation with NIH, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Bombay.

(2) A Budget provision of Rs. 6 lakh has been made during 1997-98 for the implementation of the Action Plan.

### **Recommendation No. 8**

#### *Rapid Depletion of Ground Water Level*

2.5 The Committee express their serious concern over the rapid depletion in the ground water level in various parts of the country which will lead to a very dangerous situation of drought especially in those areas where intensive agricultural operations area undertaken. The Committee have been informed that the Government has serious concern over the matter and certain plans have been formulated in this regard. However, the trend of allocations of funds for the schemes

of artificial recharge of ground water do not match the concern expressed by the Government. While the allocation for this scheme during 1996-97 was Rs. 99 lakhs, the allocation for the current year 1997-98 has been reduced to Rs. 74 lakhs to implement the scheme. For the Centrally sponsored scheme for assisting the States for undertaking artificial recharge activities, no financial allocation has been made and the scheme appears to have been put on the hold. According to recent studies it has been revealed that the decline in ground water levels has been beyond 4 meters in certain pockets in various districts in AP, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, MP, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, U.P. and West Bengal which require immediate attention. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to take up this centrally sponsored scheme on a much larger scale with an adequate budgetary provision to address this urgent problem.

#### **Reply of the Government**

2.6 In order to arrest the depleting ground water level in certain parts of the country, the CGWB has taken up two-fold measures:—

- (i) A Model Bill has been circulated to State Governments and UTs to enact suitable legislation for the control and regulation for the control and regulation of ground water development.
- (ii) Recharge programme has been chalked out to take up experimental and operational ground water recharging projects.

The on-going Central Sector Scheme of CGWB for a cost of Rs. 367 crores aims at evolving site specific ground water recharging methodologies for their application by State Governments. This scheme is in operation in the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, NCT Delhi and UT Chandigarh. Activities under this scheme have also been extended for the construction of sub-surface dams for the conservation and augmentation of ground water in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal. The scheme is in the terminating year of its operation.

CGWB has also formulated a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to assist States in recharge of ground Water at an estimated cost of Rs. 101.50 crores in about 200 over-exploited blocks in different States. The scheme is still at consultation stage with the Planning Commission for its approval. A revised scheme has been forwarded by Ministry of Water Resources to Planning Commission for approval on 13th May, 1997.

### **Recommendation No. 9**

#### *Subsidy for Providing Pump Sets in the North-Eastern States*

2.7 The Committee note that in the North-Eastern States water has to be lifted by the use of pumps for the purposes of irrigation. Since the farmers of the North East have very small holdings and are mainly small and marginal farmers, they require assistance for procuring pumpsets to irrigate their lands. The Committee, therefor, recommend that there should be a special central scheme of subsidy that should be implemented for the purpose of providing pumpsets to these poor farmers in the difficult hilly terrains of the North-East.

### **Reply of the Government**

2.8 Secretaries of all the North-Eastern States including Sikkim have been requested to suggest schemes which could be considered for formulating a centrally sponsored scheme for giving needed financial assistance for the purchase of pumpsets to the farmers in hilly terrain of North-East, with very small holdings. A reply has been received from the Government of Assam that they are in the process of formulating a few schemes in this regard. Similar response from other States is awaited.

### **Recommendation No. 10**

#### *Command Area Development Programme*

2.9 The Committee note that the physical achievement of targets fixed for land levelling and land shaping activities during the Eighth Plan period under the Command Area Development (CAD) programme have not been satisfactory, as only 22.50 per cent of the target could be achieved upto March 1996. In the case of activities relating to Field Drains, under the CAD programme the achievement upto March 1996 is only 53.30 per cent of the target. Although an amount of Rs. 604.2 crores out of the allocation of Rs. 607.5 crores have been spent on various items under the CAD programme, the physical achievements do not match the financial expenditure. The Committee desire to know as to how the physical achievements in respect of these two items of work could fall short of the target while almost the entire financial allocation has been spent. The Committee desire that urgent corrective action should be undertaken to tone up the working of the CAD programme in respect of these two items of work so that the programme is effectively implemented.

The Committee is not satisfied with answers given in response to the supplementaries. The department accepts that gap between potential created and utilised has increased. The main aim of CAD was to bridge the gap between created and utilized irrigation potential which Committee views is widening. Committee is of the opinion that MOWR should prepare a comprehensive work plan to achieve the main objective of CAD programmes. A complete revamping of CAD programmes is needed to make it a multidisciplinary authority in true sense.

### **Reply of the Government**

2.10 Achievement under the activity land levelling and shaping has been low mainly due to the following:—

This activity is not financed through grants from the Central and State Governments. It is financed by loans—from financial institutions. However, half the cost of subsidy to be adjusted against Loans to small and marginal farmers, co-operatives and community works on the IRDP pattern is available under the financing pattern for 'Land Levelling and Shaping'. However, very little of it is availed of by these farmers. Since land levelling is mostly dependent on the availability of institutional finance and is relatively a costly item of work, there is a natural reluctance on the part of the beneficiaries to take up the work. Moreover, many farmers are ineligible for taking loans for this purpose because of overdues of other loans or default in repayment. It has also been seen that most of the holdings of farmers are small which are not bankable. In some of the States Land Development Corporations have been set up to implement this work like the Maharashtra Land Development Corporation Ltd., Pune, Rajasthan Land Development Corporation Ltd., Jaipur, Madhya Pradesh Bhoomi Vikas Nigam, Bhopal and Kerala Land Development Corporation, Trivandrum. But most of them have not been able to cope up with this work as they are reportedly not functioning well and have run into continuous losses.

### *Progress under Field Drains*

The main reasons for slow progress under this CAD activity are as follows:—

- (i) It has been observed that collector, intermediate and main drains are either not provided or are not functional in the commands.

As a result, farmers are reluctant to construct field drains because these will not give any benefit in the absence of collector and main drains.

- (ii) Construction of field drains was till recently not fully financed by grants from Central and State Governments. Fifty per cent of the activity was financed through loans. This also led to its slow progress.

#### *Physical Achievements and Financial Expenditure*

The financial assistance is also provided for on-farm-development works other than construction of field drains and land levelling which mainly include construction of field channels, enforcement of warabandi, conducting adaptive trials, training, soil survey, topographical survey, planning and design, monitoring and evaluation, expenditure on establishment etc. So far as achievements under on-farm-development works are concerned, progress under construction of field channels and enforcement of warabandi have been very good. There has been 105 per cent achievement under construction of field channels. About 55 per cent of total expenditure has been incurred on construction of field channels. Eighty per cent of targets under warabandi have been achieved.

Moreover, the cost of construction of field channels is six times more than the cost of construction of field drains according to the norms fixed by the Ministry of Water Resources (Rs. 6000 and Rs. 1000 per ha. respectively).

Owing to the above reasons while financial targets have been nearly met, there has been a shortfall in the achievement of physical targets in respect of these works.

The Ministry of Water Resources has taken the following steps as corrective action for improving the progress under construction of field drains and land levelling and shaping:—

- (i) A decision has recently been taken by the Government to give grant for the construction of field drains to be shared on a matching basis between the Central and the State Governments instead of 50 per cent grant and 50 per cent loan under the previous financing pattern to be shared on a matching basis.

- (ii) The Working Group on CAD programme for the Ninth Plan has recommended that the construction of collector, intermediate and main drains should be included under the CAD programme so that the required length of field drains could be constructed to prevent waterlogging. The Planning Commission has yet to take a view on this Report.
- (iii) It has been observed that at present there is a very little awareness of the need for drainage in the irrigated commands in the State Governments. An effort is being made to create awareness through Workshops and seminars, dissemination of information on various aspects of drainage and training.
- (iv) The State Governments have been urged to fix targets for land levelling and shaping realistically after undertaking proper surveys.

*Gap between Potential Created and Utilised*

The Department has submitted in its replies to the supplementaries that there has been an increase in the utilisation of irrigation potential in the areas where CAD activities have been taken up. This has been substantiated by various evaluation studies and other analysis done by the Ministry.

A few micro level studies undertaken in the Command Area Development Projects during the 8th Plan have revealed that utilisation of created irrigation potential has increased. The studies are as follows:

- (i) Mayurakshi Project, West Bengal
- (ii) Bhadar Project, Gujarat
- (iii) Chambal Project, Rajasthan
- (iv) Jamuna Project, Assam
- (v) Kukadi Project, Maharashtra
- (vi) Dharoi Project, Gujarat
- (vii) Sharda Canal System, Uttar Pradesh
- (viii) East Yamuna Canal Project, Uttar Pradesh

The irrigation potential created and utilised under the CAD Projects for the past few years (1990-91 to 1994-95) is as follows:—

Year	Potential created	Potential utilised	Gap (2-3)	(Unit in million hectare)	
				Gap (2-3)	%age utilisation of created potential
1990-91	14.81	10.90	3.91	73	
1991-92	14.83	11.41	3.42	77	
1992-93	15.01	11.89	3.12	79	
1993-94	14.80	11.99	2.81	81	
1994-95	14.94	11.98	2.95	80	

It is seen from the above table that there has been an improvement in the utilisation of irrigation potential from 73 per cent in 1990-91 to 80 per cent in 1994-95. However, while the activities under the CAD Programme help in bridging the gap between potential created and utilised, the following factors which are not within the purview of the CAD Programme, tend to widen the Gap:

- (i) Lack of proper maintenance of the main irrigation system;
- (ii) Changes in the cropping pattern;
- (iii) Availability of water in the reservoirs of many projects is less than the designed capacity; and
- (iv) Losses in the system are more than the losses assumed at the time of the project formulation.

Furthermore the definition of potential created and potential utilised are based on the following two assumptions at the time of project design:

- (i) fixed availability of water; and
- (ii) a static cropping pattern

However, both these factors, i.e., water availability and the cropping pattern change over time. Therefore, utilisation of potential increases

or decreases according to the variability of the above two factors whereas the potential created is assumed to be constant.

#### *Comprehensive Work Plan*

(3) In order to rectify the system of deficiencies, the Ministry has taken initiatives through National Water Management Projects (NWMP) and Water Resources Consolidation Project (WRCP) to rehabilitate the irrigation system. The Ministry has also taken several initiatives to create an atmosphere conducive to the implementation of the programme of Participatory Irrigation Management so that the responsibility for operation and maintenance and collection of water rates can be given to the Associations of Farmers' upto a certain hydraulic level.

A comprehensive evaluation study is currently underway to suggest the revamping of the programme. This, coupled with recommendations of the Working Group will further enhance the utility of the Programme.

The State Governments have been urged continuously at all levels to make the Command Area Development Authorities multi-disciplinary since the Command Area Development Programme was conceived of as a programme in which different disciplines concerned with the increase in agricultural production and productivity such as irrigation, agriculture, cooperation etc. should work in an integrated manner under one umbrella.

The State Governments have also been advised for better co-ordination between the Department of Command Areas Development and other related departments such as irrigation, so as to ensure availability of water at the government out let which is a pre-requisite for the success of the objectives of the Command Area Development Programme. They have also been requested for allocating sufficient outlay for this Programme in the State Budget for achieving the targets set under the programme.

#### **Recommendation No. 11**

##### *Central Ground Water Board*

2.11 Central Ground Water Board is engaged in assessment, monitoring and management of ground water resources in the country.

so many scheme has been launched by the Central Ground Water Board for formulating the policies/strategies for optimal utilization of ground water. Inspite of all these ground water level is declining in many parts of the country. This will become a serious problem in the future as the country is marching towards intensive agriculture. Last year also Committee has expressed its serious concern.

In enumerating various steps taken to overcome the problem of depleting ground water level; the Ministry has listed many measures:

- (i) Formulation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme for a cost of Rs. 101.50 crores to assist States in the recharge of ground water.
- (ii) Circulation of manual by CGWB to States to help them in the formulation of ground water recharge scheme.
- (iii) Circulation of model bill by Government for suitable enactment of legislation by States and Union Territories for the control and regulation of ground water.
- (iv) Preparation of a National Perspective Plan for recharge to Ground Water by utilization of surplus monsoon run off. Ministry has replied that ICAR has not provided any new technologies while the Ministry has listed number of technologies developed by the ICAR. This is self contradictory. It is, therefore necessary that a mechanism of coordination be developed between WRD and ICAR so that the problem of ground water management and recharge is taken up on war footing.

#### **Reply of the Government**

2.12 (1) The CGWB has prepared a National Perspective Plan for recharge of ground water by utilising surplus monsoon run-off. The Plan was released on Water Resources Day in March, 1997. A meeting is being planned to be held to evolve a mechanism of co-ordination with ICAR towards problems of Ground Water Management and recharge.

#### **Recommendation No. 12**

##### *Methodology of Assessment of Created and Utilized Irrigation Potential*

2.13 The Committee is not satisfied with the replies given by the Ministry on the issue of reappraisal of irrigation potential created in

1986 after the end of the VI plan (1985-90). As an effect of which irrigation potential of 2.31 million ha. was destroyed in the Seventh Plan. Ministry should come out with a clear methodologies for the assessment of created and utilized irrigation potential and co-ordinate with the Ministry of Agriculture for finalising the statistical information.

### **Reply of the Government**

2.14 A note indicating the methodology for assessment of created and utilised irrigation potential, is enclosed as per Annexure IV—55 to 59.

The Working Group on Major and Medium Irrigation Programme on IX Five Year Plan while reviewing the overall performance of this Sector, recommended that the States should reassess the ultimate irrigation potential that could be created through each project *viz.* completed, ongoing and new schemes yet to be taken up. The Working Group also recommended setting up of IIIrd Irrigation Commission, *inter-alia*, to review the ultimate irrigation potential created and utilised. Thus, the methodology for the assessment of created and utilised irrigation potential to be adopted by all the States could form part of the agenda items of the proposed Irrigation Commission.

Also, for suggesting a methodology for assessment of created and utilised irrigation potential of minor irrigation a committee with Chairman, CWC as Chairman and representatives from Planning Commission, Ministry of Agriculture, CWC, CGWB, Minor Irrigation Deptt. of Govt. of Uttar Pradesh, Deptt. of Irrigation, Govt. of Tamil Nadu as members and with Commissioner (WM & MI), Ministry of Water Resources as Member-Secretary has been set up for the purpose vide Ministry of Water Resources O.M. dated 8th May, 1997. The terms of reference of the committee include:

- (i) To look into the various aspects and firm up the figures of ultimate irrigation potential of surface water minor irrigation works and ground water schemes.
- (ii) Firm up the figures of irrigation potential created/utilised in various states through minor irrigation works upto the end of VIII Five Year Plan.
- (iii) Suggest methodology for compilation of data on development of minor irrigation in the States.

The committee is to submit its report within 3 months. A meeting of the committee is to be held shortly.

### **Recommendation No. 13**

#### *Waterlogging and Salinity in Irrigation Commands*

2.15 Committee expresses its serious concern over the increase in waterlogged and saline areas in the irrigation commands. On one side we are increasing the area under irrigation and at the same time we are losing part of the irrigated areas due to the salinity and waterlogging. Committee was shocked to known that such area has increased to 5.76 m. ha.

Committee is of the opinion that a joint effort of Ministry of Water Resources and ICAR is needed to solve this problem. A lot of research work has been done by the AICRP on Agricultural Drainage and other ICAR institutions. Committee is happy to learn that Ministry of Water Resources has been taking help from CSSRI and Water Technology Centre of IARI which are pioneering in doing research in the field of waterlogging and salinity.

It is evident from the replies furnished by the Ministry of Water Resources that major input in this field have come from the ICAR institution like CSSRI, Water Technology Centre and State Agricultural Universities. This shows the expertise of ICAR in tackling the problem of waterlogging and salinity and there should not be any hesitation from the MOWR's part in involving the experts of this field in the various activities of the Central Water Commission (CWC) and Command Area Development Programme.

Committee is happy to learn that a Directorate is functioning in CWC exclusively to look into drainage related problems in irrigated areas. However, there is need to involve/recruit the experts of this fields like Agricultural Engineers in this Directorate. Last year also the Committee has emphasised this point. By doing so, Directorate will strengthen its activities. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommend that Agricultural Engineers should be recruited in the Directorate of CWC which is looking into the drainage related problems.

### **Reply of the Government**

2.16 (1) The Ministry of Water Resources have taken the following steps in this regard:

- (i) A component "Reclamation of Waterlogged Areas in Irrigated Commands" has been recently included under the CAD Programme. Under this, Central assistance to the extent of 50 per cent would be available for survey, prioritisation of areas, reclamation, monitoring and evaluation etc.
- (ii) Letters have been written to State Governments to initiate action and prepare project proposals for reclamation of areas afflicted by this problem and send the same to the Ministry for approval.
- (iii) Areas of co-operation between the Ministry of Water Resources and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) are being increased constantly for combating waterlogging and soil salinity. A Workshop was held during 23-24 April, 1997 in Kota, Rajasthan to follow up the recommendations of the National Workshop on Waterlogging held at New Delhi during 26-27 December, 1996. Senior scientists of ICAR including scientists from CSSRI, Karnal participated in it. Efforts are being made for better co-operation between ICAR and Ministry of Water Resources.

(2) The irrigated Area's Drainage Directorate is mainly assigned with the following tasks at present.

- (i) Preparation of data base on drainage related problems in different States; and
- (ii) Technical examination of drainage projects/drainage component of the new projects.

Besides, in the 9th Plan, this Directorate is considering to take up:

- (i) mapping of waterlogged/salinity affected areas by remote sensing technique in a few command areas; and
- (ii) Formulation of reclamation schemes by conjunctive use of surface and ground water alongwith other appropriate technologies, subject to availability of funds.

Posting of an agronomist and agricultural engineers with drainage background at Assistance Director or Deputy Director level may improve upon functioning of this Directorate. Action is being initiated to create a post of Agricultural Engineers in CWC.

### **Recommendation No. 15**

#### *Central Water and Power Research Station*

2.17 One of the mandate of this institute is to provide Research & Development support in the irrigation sector. To have strong Research & Development team it is necessary to have an inter-disciplinary team of professionals of various fields like Agricultural Engineering/Soil Science/Agronomy etc. Until and unless there is a strong team of this nature the real output of Research & Development effort in irrigation water management cannot be realised. Irrigation Science cannot be developed without the involvement of agricultural Scientists. Committee was disappointed to know that Central Water and Power Research Station does not have even a single inter-disciplinary research project involving Agricultural Engineers, Agronomists, Soil Scientists etc. This is strange. Therefore the Committee strongly recommend to review the mandate of the institute to facilitate the involvement of Agricultural Scientists in the research programmes related to the irrigation water management.

### **Reply of the Government**

2.18 (1) CWPRS is the premier institute in the country offering advice on numerous problems relating to river control, river regulations and river training such as location and investigations and design for hydraulic structures, location and protection of barrages, exclusions of sand from off takes, training works etc. and has benefitted in increasing the irrigation potential of the country. The institute is devoted to research in the area of Water Resources Development and water-borne transport. The activities of the institute encompass a number of sectors irrigation and flood control, energy and shipping and transport. The institution is required to advise on a variety of R&D aspects pertaining to river training and flood control, development of river basins and setting up of multipurpose projects, design and testing of turbines and pumps, design of ports and harbours, ship model testing, geophysical and seismological investigations, foundation and structural engineering and a number of other disciplines associated with the development of

water and energy resources. It would, thus, be seen that CWPRS has been called upon to shoulder a high degree of responsibility with regard to critical sectors of various plans since the independence of the country.

(2) At present there is one scheme, "Automated Operation of Irrigation Canal Systems" under execution in which automation of irrigation canals is being studied. The improved techniques of automation are being employed on prototype canal in Chambal. Thus, the projects at CWPRS are indirectly contributing to the irrigation and in turn agriculture.

(3) However, it may be realised that a mandate of the CWPRS precisely and constructively encompasses all the disciplines supporting water resources management in the country. The research conducted being of sponsored research category, essentially the CWPRS adopts inter-disciplinary approach to satisfy the client's specific needs in particular. As may be seen from the expertise available, each of the disciplines supplement the efforts of the clients in boosting the agricultural sector, implicitly or explicitly. The irrigation sector in the country has benefitted to a large extent due to the involvement of CWPRS in almost all the river valley projects. CWPRS is proposing to have a joint research projects with ICAR involving Water Engineers and Agricultural Scientists and Soil Scientists. It will be helpful inter-disciplinary research projects.

#### **Recommendation No. 16**

##### *National Institute of Hydrology*

2.19 Committee is satisfied with the performance of NIH. However, NIH should become more realistic by selecting the real life problems for finding the solution. Committee is of the opinion that NIH should devote more time towards sponsored research and consultancy work. This will facilitate their involvement in finding the solution to the real life problems and generate funds.

#### **Reply of the Government**

2.20 (1) Main objective of NIH is to undertake, aid, promote and coordinate systematic and scientific work in all aspects of basic and applied hydrology as per directive and guidance of Technical Advisory Committee, Governing Body, and Society of NIH. The work of

technology transfer and to take up sponsored and collaborative projects dealing with field oriented problems in water sector are also important parts of the mandate.

(2) Over the years the Institute has developed expertise gained experience and procured equipment and created facilities to take up research studies in some specific and problematic areas of hydrology and water resources of national interest requiring immediate attention.

(3) The Institute has recently completed the following sponsored/ consultancy projects:

1. Estimation of Snow and Glacier melt Contribution of Chenab and Ganga River (sponsored by Min. of Water Resources).
2. Sabarmati System Studies (sponsored by Govt. of Gujarat).
3. Impact of Irrigation Application in a Part of IGNP Stage-II Command Area underlain by Hydrologic Barrier (sponsored by Command Area Development Authority, Government of Rajasthan).
4. Subsurface Drainage Investigation in Stage-II of IGNP (RD 838) (sponsored by Command Area Development Authority, Govt., of Gujarat).
5. Preparation of Reservoir Operation Manual & Flood Forecasting Scheme for Machhu-I & II (sponsored by Govt. of Gujarat)
6. Preparation of zonal Plan UNDP-GEF Project on Optimising Development of Small Hydro-resources Hilly region of India (sponsored by AHEC, Roorkee)
7. Hydrological Study to be conducted in and around the plant site of the proposed gas based power project of National Power Coop. at Kayakulam, Allephey, Distt. Kerala (sponsored by NTPC, New Delhi).
8. Dam break flood study for Pulinchintala Multi Purpose Project (sponsored by Env. Protection Training & Research Institute, Hyderabad).

The work in respect of the following projects which have been taken up, is in progress.

9. Survey and Evaluation of Hydrologic Instruments and Structure and Identification of suitable set up for Watershed Hydrology for different regions (sponsored by Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India, New Delhi).
10. Indigenous Development of Hydrologic Instruments with the provision to use data logger for the measurement of rainfall, runoff and sectional load (sponsored by Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India).
11. Hydrological Studies at Jhamkotra Mines (sponsored by Rajasthan State of Mines and Minerals Ltd.)
12. Indigenous development of Data Logger and Sensor Unit for Watershed Hydrology (sponsored by Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India).
13. Hydrological Studies of Lake Naini, Distt. Nainital (sponsored by Deptt. of Env., Govt. of U.P.)
14. Temporal Distribution of Dokriani Glaciermelt Runoff and its relationship using meteorological parameters (sponsored by DST, New Delhi).
15. Development of Instrument for automation of Irrigation Scheduling and Ground Water Recharge Monitoring Using Soil Moisture Measurement (sponsored by Min. of Agriculture, Govt. of India).
16. Exploration of construction of Infiltration Gallery inside the Bed of River Yamuna at Agra (sponsored by U.P. Jal Nigam).

Two new projects have been taken up by the Institute a few months back and work has been initiated.
17. Hydrology of Myntdu Leska Hydro-Electric Project in Meghalaya (sponsored by Meghalaya State Electricity Board, Shillong).
18. Integrated hydrological study for sustainable development & management of two hilly watershed in U.P. (sponsored by DST, New Delhi).

Besides, the Institute has started a real life problem study entitled "Arsenic study in Yamuna Sub-basin, Nadia and 24-parganas district, West Bengal for finding solutions for the problem. This is a collaborative study with CGWB and work has been started from January, 1997 and expected to be completed by July, 1998. The objective of this study is to model arsenic contamination in groundwater and to suggest the remedial measures. NIH will take up the work of simulation of arsenic transport in groundwater.

National Institute of Hydrology is also making further efforts to get problem-oriented projects from various State and Central Government organisations and has recently requested the Southern States to refer their hydrologic problems to NIH in the form of projects.

#### **Recommendation No. 17**

##### *Problems of Erosion in Farakka Barrage Project*

2.21 Large scale erosion has taken place in the right embankment of River Ganges down stream of Farakka Barrage.

Adequate attention should be given and required funds be allocated in consultation with the State Government of West Bengal.

#### **Reply of the Government**

2.22 (1) The problem of bank erosion of river Ganga in Malda and Murshidabad districts of West Bengal was studied by an Expert Committee appointed by the Planning Commission in September, 1996. The Committee submitted its report in December, 96. It recommended both short term and long term anti-erosion measures to check the erosion of the river banks of Ganga in Malda and Murshidabad District. The cost of recommended short term works has been estimated as Rs. 315 crores and that of the long term works as Rs. 612 crores.

The report was discussed in the meeting taken by Secretary (WR) on 28.2.97 and which was attended by representatives from Planning Commission. The following decisions were taken:—

- (a) The short term and long term measures would be taken up on the basis of the jurisdictional control of the Centre and the State *vis-a-vis* the Farakka Barrage Project Authority and State Government.

- (b) The Intense priority of the short term and the long term measures shall be decided jointly by General Manager, Farakka Barrage Project Authority and Chairman, GFCC. In respect of works identified for the State Sector, the priority decided jointly shall be vetted by the State Government.
- (c) The works identified for implementation by the Farakka Barrage Authorities as per *interse* priority shall be funded by the Centre. This matter would also be taken up with the Ministry of Surface Transport for making adequate provisions for implementation.
- (d) In respect of works identified to be implemented under the State Sector, Planning Commission shall decide the pattern of funding, i.e., the extent to which the Centre could provide assistance.
- (e) The Schemes will be planned and implemented as per the *interse* priority. The schemes reports shall take into account flood damage statistics of ten years. These reports would be examined by GFCC for their techno-economic feasibility as per prescribed norms.

The prioritisation of the works has since been done and conveyed to the Planning Commission. Further, the Planning Commission has been requested to allocate adequate funds for the purpose.

## CHAPTER III

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT REPLIES

#### Recommendation 3

##### *Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme*

3.1 The Committee note that at the revised estimate stage for the year 1996-97 the budgetary allocation has been reduced to Rs. 500 crores from the original budget estimate of Rs. 900 crores under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP). The Committee find that the programme could be taken up for implementation properly only from December, 1996 although the scheme was announced in the budget speech of the Finance Minister in July, 1996. The Committee also find that the programme was approved by the Cabinet only on 30th October, 1996 and formal orders could be issued only by mid November, 1996 by which time the State Governments had already finalised and passed their budgets and as such they could not take up any projects under this scheme. The Committee regret to note the lethargic manner in which the proposal was processed by the Government, due to which the programme could not achieve the desired results. The Committee feel that the State Governments should have been asked in the month of July itself to make proper budgetary provisions in their respective budgets in anticipation of the approval of the AIBP so that the programme could take off immediately on finalisation of the guidelines. The Committee desire that the reactions of the State Governments to the scheme to dispense with the provision of matching contribution should be viewed in a favourable manner and consider offering the assistance as grants instead of loans. The Committee are disappointed to note that on this stage the Government had not taken any action and had preferred to remain silent on this aspect in their action taken replies submitted to the Committee. The Committee, however, desire that necessary safeguards in accounting procedures of the State Governments should be made in respect of the assistance received under AIBP so that the funds received cannot be diverted to other schemes and be utilised only for this scheme.

### Reply of the Government

3.2 (1) The Finance Minister while announcing the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) in his Budget speech for the year 1996-97 in July 1996 had also announced that the details of the Programme would be announced by the Planning Commission in the next few days. Accordingly, the Planning Commission had initiated action and invited proposals from the State Governments on 23rd July, 1996. However, as the budget provision was in the Budget of the Ministry of Water Resources, the matter was taken up with the Planning Commission for operation of the scheme by this Ministry. As such, the guidelines for selection and prioritisation of projects were prepared by the Ministry of Water Resources during August, 1996. The rate of interest on Central Loan Assistance (CLA) and period of repayment of loan including the grace period, if any, to be allowed for repayment were also finalised in consultation with the Ministry of Finance. After finalisation of the guidelines the State Governments were requested to forward their proposals for CLA under AIBP as per the guidelines on 23rd September, 1996. The proposals received from them were considered during the month of October, 1996. In the meanwhile, the scheme was forwarded to the Cabinet for their approval and the same was approved by the Cabinet on 30.10.1996. Thereafter, in the month of November, 1996 letters to the State Governments were issued intimating the CLA approved under the AIBP for the projects of the States and the first instalment of 50% of the CLA was released to the State Governments.

The State Governments have been able to fully utilise the CLA released under the Programme. An amount of Rs. 818.50 crores was approved as CLA for 52 projects of 18 States. A statement giving the project-wise details of the CLA approved and CLA released for the projects is enclosed. (Annex. III—pages 50 to 54).

The budget provision under AIBP was revised to Rs. 500 crores from Rs. 900 crores at the RE stage 1996-97. The full amount of Rs. 500 crores has been released to the State Government as Central Loan Assistance.

(2) The Accelerated Irrigation Benefit programme was launched for providing loan assistance to the State Governments for accelerating implementation of large irrigation and multipurpose projects costing more than Rs. 1,000 crores which are beyond the resources capability

of the States and for completion of other projects which are in an advanced stage of completion and with just a little additional resources, the projects could be completed and farmers could get the assured water supply to one lakh hectares in the next four agricultural seasons. As the programme has been approved by the Parliament as a loan assistance programme, it was not possible for this Ministry to consider this assistance as grants instead of loans and as such, no comment was made on this point. The provision of matching contribution has been made in the programme to encourage the States to make project specific allocations and to concentrate on the projects which could be completed early. It would not be desirable to dispense with this provision at this stage.

However, the following relaxations to the existing guidelines were approved by the Cabinet in March, 1997:—

- (i) Projects costing Rs. 500 crores or more may be included as against the present ceiling of Rs. 1,000 crores or more;
- (ii) to release Central Loan Assistance (CLA) in two instalments of 50% each, with the second instalment being released only after the States, have released their matching contribution for the first instalment; and
- (iii) to relax conditions of providing equal funds by the North-Eastern States and other hilly areas to 50% of the amount of CLA.

The Cabinet did not approve the proposal for funding minor irrigation projects under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP). However, they desired that the requirement of funds for minor irrigation projects may be met through loan from RIDF/NABARD.

(3) The Central Water Commission and Department of Programme implementation are monitoring the implementation of AIBP. On the basis of reports of the Central Water Commission further instalments were released to the State Governments during 1996-97. It is being ensured through CWC that the funds allocated for the projects are spent on the projects. For this matching budget provision is to be made by the State Govt. in its own budget. It is, therefore, considered sufficient safeguard in the accounting procedure of the State Govt. For the year 1997-98 there is a budget provision of Rs. 1300 crores under

AIBP. For release of funds during 1997-98 under AIBP guidelines have been formulated in consultation with the Ministry of Finance. These guidelines will be circulated to all concerned States shortly.

The guidelines being finalised ensure limited expenditure on Establishment, Rehabilitation and Resettlement and Land Acquisition out of the funds provided under the programme.

It has been informed by the Ministry of Finance that the Central loan assistance provided under AIBP is a part of the States plan assistance and would be released to the State Govts. by the Ministry of Finance on the recommendation of Ministry of Water Resources. For this purpose the Planning Commission has indicated for each State financial projection (a sort of ceiling) which have been finalised by the Planning Commission in consultation with the Chief Ministers. Although the Budget provision at present is in the Budget of Ministry of Water Resources, the same is likely to be transferred later on to the Budget of Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance had indicated that the Central Loan Assistance will be released in four instalments instead of two instalments of 50% each as recommended by the Cabinet. The matter was taken up with the Ministry of Finance and now they have agreed to release Central Loan Assistance for AIBP to the State Govt. in two instalments of 50% during 1997-98.

It may therefore be seen that:—

- (1) the Govt. could not make any commitment to the State Govt. until the budget was approved by Parliament.
- (2) The scheme was approved by Parliament as assistance to the States in the form of loans and hence it is now not open to this Ministry to go beyond the approved scheme.
- (3) The State Govts. are required to make matching contribution for each State and has to provide funds double the amount of CLA approved under the AIBP to the Project.

#### **Recommendation No. 14**

##### *Coordination between ICAR and MOWR*

3.3 Realising the poor coordination between Ministry of Water Resources and ICAR, the Committee strongly recommends to from a

joint action team of the experts of the two organisations for tackling the water management related problems in the country.

### **Reply of the Government**

2.4(1) A Joint Action Team/Panel of Experts of Ministry of Water Resources and ICAR is at work. ICAR-CWC Joint Panel constituted by ICAR is valid till 27th January, 1999. The functions assigned to the panel are as under:—

- Promote inter-organisational (ICAR-CWC/MOWR) Collaboration in research, education, and extension activities related to water resources management.
- Promote linkage at the state level among agricultural universities, WALMIS, CAD Agencies, State Irrigation Agriculture and other relevant Departments.
- Identify researchable issues amenable to inter-institutional collaboration.

CWC is providing weekly/fortnightly information/data on storage position of 63 important reservoirs in the country for planning crop strategies and emergent action to be taken to boost food production by the Crop Weather Group of the Ministry of Agriculture. Preparation of a manual on Water requirement has been taken up by the ICAR-CWC Joint Panel.

Most of the schemes for catchment area treatment are being implemented under the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operation through funds provided by them. The important schemes include "Scheme for Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Projects" (RPV) and "Integrated Watershed Management in the catchments of Flood Prone Rivers."

The progress of these schemes is being monitored through quarterly, Half yearly and Annual progress reports. For this purpose, a Standing Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation with Members from Central Government including Central Water Commission, ICAR and State Governments. All catchments of RVP Scheme have been divided into four Zones and for each zone the meeting of the Standing Committee is held at least, once a year to review the progress and programme.

**A representative of CWC is regularly participating in the meetings of the various zones.**

Besides participating in the meetings, Coordination of MOWR with Ministry of Agriculture in the field of catchment area treatment covers representation in the working group meetings on Soil and Water Conservation. CWC also provides data of reservoir sedimentation, catchment etc. for preparation of schemes and examines and offers comments/suggestions in the selection of catchments etc.

## CHAPTER IV

### RECOMMENDATIONS / OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

#### **Recommendation 1**

##### *Reduced Plan Allocations*

4.1 The Committee note that the effectiveness of the performance of the Irrigation Sector has been crippled mainly due to the gradual reduction in the plan allocations in favour of the Irrigation Sector. The plan allocation which was 18.7% of the overall plan size in the First Five Year Plan has now come down to 7.5% in the 8th Plan while it was 9.4% in the 7th Plan. It has been noted that even many irrigation schemes that have been started in the Second Five Year Plan are still incomplete and the allocation in favour of the major and medium sector had been much less than that was required even for completing the schemes in hand. This has led to situation where the Planning Commission has proclaimed a ban on new schemes despite the fact that water is the most crucial input which is required to attain the target of 210 million tonnes of foodgrains by 2000 A.D. and the country is now unable to record any growth in the foodgrains production in the last two years with a looming danger of the country entering into a food-trap. Under these appalling circumstances there is urgent imperative of the augmentation of water resources which alone can ensure the production of the much needed foodgrains. There is urgent need for an integrated approach and close coordination and perspective planning with agriculture and allied sectors if the country has to be bailed out of an inevitable situation of starvation in the years to come. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should open their eyes to this harsh reality and make available the overall financial requirement of Rs. 12,672.14 crores under IX plan for the entire central plan of the water resources sector proposed to them so that this country would be saved from a grave calamity.

#### **Reply of the Government**

4.2 The recommendations are for the entire IX Plan (1997-2002). Although the IX Plan outlay has not been finalised by the Planning

Commission, allocation made by the Planning Commission for the first year of the plan period, i.e., 1997-98 does not indicate any improvement. The Planning Commission has provided Rs. 341.00 crores only for the Central Sector Plan Schemes of the Ministry in the Annual Plan 1997-98, which is even lower than the allocation of Rs. 366.93 crores for the Annual Plan 1996-97, the last year of VIII Five Year Plan. The Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources has already written letters to the Hon'ble Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and also to Hon'ble Minister of Finance, requesting a review and raise the allocation for the Ministry in the year 1997-98. The recommendations of the Standing Committee regarding IX Plan allocation for the Central Sector Schemes have also been communicated to the Planning Commission for necessary action (Annexure I Pages 46-47). The letters from Secretary (WR) to Member Secretary, Planning Commission, Secretary (Expenditure) of the Finance Ministry are also being sent.

### **Comments of the Committee**

4.3 For comments of the Committee please refer to Para No. 1.6 of Chapter I of this Report.

### **Recommendation 2**

#### *Ineffective Role of the Union Ministry of Water Resources*

4.4 The Committee observe that the Union Ministry of Water Resources has been rendered weak and ineffective in getting various water resources projects implemented within a time frame in view of the original constitutional role it has to play. The Committee find that the Ministry could only make proposals and thereafter it is for the State Governments to implement them and there is no power available with the Central Ministry to ensure compliance of the advice tendered by them to the States. As a result of this sorry state of affairs, several thousand crores of rupees allocated for the development of the water resources sector have virtually gone down the drains and no tangible improvements could be seen in the last four five year plans under this sector. Even the River Board Act has remained only in the statute books and is totally ineffective and unimplementable in the present constitutional scheme. The Committee observe that the awards of the water tribunals remained unimplemented for years together. Even the international financial institutions have become aware of these maladies and are not ready to render aid for many of our vital irrigation projects

for which internal resources are not available. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to take drastic constitutional and legal remedial steps to salvage the situation immediately lest things should come to such a pause where no progress could be possible. The Committee desire that they should be apprised of the details of the appropriate measures contemplated in this regard and also of the time frame within which these effective measures would be realised in concrete terms.

### **Reply of the Government**

4.5 Entry 56 of List I of Seventh Schedule of the constitution pertains to the power of the Union Government in respect of the regulation and development of inter-State rivers and river valley to the extent such regulation and development under the control of the Union is declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the Public interest.

In pursuance of Entry 56 of the constitution, the Union Government has enacted "The River Boards Act, 1956".

However, no Board could be set up under the Act so far as it is felt that if a Board is set up under the Act it may not have sufficient powers. A proposal to modify the existing River Boards Act, 1956 is under process in this Ministry for making the Act more effective, so that it could serve the purpose for which it was enacted. The major rivers in India are Inter State in character having catchments/water sheds in two or more states. Often water disputes arise among basin states with regard to water sharing, use, distribution and development, etc.

The Constitution of India has provided different provisions in regard to relations between the Union and the States. Article 246 of the Constitution confers exclusive power to the Parliament to make laws with respect to any of the matters enumerated in List I in the Seventh Schedule (in the Constitution referred to as the "Union List").

Entry 17 under List II of Seventh Schedule provides that "Water, that is to say, water supplies, irrigation and canals, drainage and embankments, water storage and water power subject to the provisions of Entry 56 of List I".

Under Article 262 of the Constitution, the Government of India has enacted Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956 for adjudication of disputes relating to Waters of Inter State rivers and river valleys.

The Central Government first tries to resolve the Inter State water dispute through negotiations. However, when such negotiations fail and when any request is received from any State Government in respect of any water dispute and the Central Government is of the opinion that the water dispute cannot be settled by negotiations, the Central Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, constitute a Water Disputes Tribunal for the adjudication of the Water dispute, under Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956.

Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations submitted its report in the year 1988 wherein under chapter 17 of the Report dealing with the Inter-State river water disputes, it made certain recommendations for amendment to the existing Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956. The Commission made five recommendations (212 to 216) under Para 17.6.01 to 17.6.05 of the Report.

The recommendations accepted by the Sub-Committee of the Inter-State Council are enclosed (Annex. II Pages 48-49).

The recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission have been discussed in the second meeting of the Inter-State Council, held on 15.10.96. It was decided in the meeting that in view of the reservations expressed by some States, the observations and proposals made by the members of the Council at the meeting along with their views on the recommendations would be referred to the Standing Committee for their consideration.

The meeting of the Standing Committee is yet to take place.

As a follow up of the assurance given by the Minister (WR) to the Parliament, this Ministry is examining the need of transferring the subject of "Water" from List II (State List) to List III (Concurrent List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

Following actions are therefore to be taken/initiated/proposed to be completed in next five years:—

1. Committee of Secretaries is being requested to persuade Planning Commission for making more and project specific allocation in the irrigation sector.

2. Ministry of Water Resources has taken up Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) during 1996-97 to assist and encourage states to complete the projects early.
3. Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) under National Banking for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is also assisting the states in funding of the irrigation projects since 1995-96.
4. Draft guidelines were prepared for allocation of Inter-State River Water among Co-basin states and sent to the States for comments. The revised draft has been discussed in the Third Meeting of the National Water Resources Council and in the meetings of National Water Board. These guidelines would help in sharing the Inter-State River Waters.
5. The River Boards Act, 1956 is proposed to be amended as necessary..
6. The Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956 is also proposed to be amended.
7. More Inter-State River Authorities/Boards are proposed to be set up wherever necessary.
8. The proposal to transfer the subject of "Water" from List II (State List) to List III (Concurrent List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution is under consideration in the Ministry of Water Resources.
9. A model bill for regulation and control of Ground Water Development has been circulated to States and Union Territories in June 1996 for its suitable enactment and enforcement by them. However this could be done by an old Act of Parliament provided the subject of "Water" is transferred from List II (State List) to List III (Concurrent List) of the Constitution.
10. In pursuance of the order passed by the Supreme Court of India, Central Ground Water Board has been constituted as an Authority on 14.1.97 under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for the purpose of Regulation and control of Ground Water Management and Development for a period of one year.

### **Comments of the Committee**

4.6 For comments of the Committee please refer to Para No. 1.9 of Chapter I of this Report.

### **Recommendation No. 4**

#### *Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal Project*

4.7 The Committee are disappointed to note that no progress could be made in the completion of the 100% centrally funded SYL Canal Project, although budgetary allocations have been made successively year after year. Despite the Committee's repeated recommendations, the matter has been sought to be neglected and allowed to drift interminably for years together since July, 1990. It is a matter of grave concern that the matter has not been taken up at the highest political level for resolution, although the Committee has been harping on this measure year after year. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to take the matter to a logical conclusion with the intervention of the Hon'ble Prime Minister who is the Chairman of the Central Water Resources Council without waiting any further.

### **Reply of the Government**

4.8 Ministry of Water Resources considers that the matter is very sensitive due to inter-State conflict between the States of Punjab and Haryana. With a view to resolving river water dispute between Punjab & Haryana, the Central Government set up the Ravi and Beas Waters Tribunal on 2nd April, 1986 and referred to it the matter specified in paragraph 9.1 and 9.2 of the Punjab Accord, which concerns sharing of river waters between Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. The Tribunal gave its interim report on 30th January, 1987, which was forwarded to the States in May, 1987. The Tribunal in its decision has also stated that in answering the two points referred to them, they have strictly confined themselves to the terms of reference and paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2 of the Punjab Settlement, but they thought that it would not be out of place to mention that paragraph 9.3 of Punjab Settlement envisaged the construction of SYL Canal and its completion by 15 August, 1986. The Tribunal has observed that this canal is the lifeline for the farmers of Haryana and unless it is expeditiously completed, Haryana will not be in a position to utilise the full quantum of water allocated to it and that it was necessary to make concerted efforts to see that the construction of the canal is completed at an early date

without further loss of time. As required under Section V(3) of the ISWD Act, 1956, in August, 1987, the Central Govt. and the States of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan have sought clarifications/guidance from the Tribunal. The Tribunal has not been functioning for the last about 9 years, at first due to the request of the Govt. of Punjab over adjournment on the ground of prevailing political situation in the State, then due to flood situation in the State and finally due to resignation of Justice A.M. Ahmadi of the Gujarat High Court on 9.3.89 on his elevation as Judge of the Supreme Court.

The matter was brought before the CCPA vide notes dated 1990, 1991 and 1992 also, which deferred consideration of the Note. This issue was also discussed in the inter-State meetings with the Chief Ministers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan convened by Ministry of Water Resources in July, August, 1992, when the construction of SYL Canal alongwith a number of Inter-State Water related issues between the three States were discussed. Most of the issues were satisfactorily resolved. Further meetings could not be held due to one reasons or the other and hence final seal of agreement could not be put on the issue. Chief Minister, Punjab held discussion with the Minister (WR) in February, 1994 also, when it was emphasised that the Agency and time schedule for completion of balance works of SYL Canal may be fixed by the State Govt. immediately. Subsequently a letter was received from Secretary, Irrigation and Power, Govt. of Punjab, wherein acceptance of State Govt's responsibility for completion of SYL Canal through the States Irrigation Department was indicated. However no time schedule for resumption and completion of Canal was given. Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Home Affairs convened the meetings of Chief Secretaries of the concerned States in 1995, but the officers from Punjab did not attend.

On 5th October, 1995 Govt. decided to fill up the vacancy of Member in the Ravi Beas Waters Tribunal to enable resumption of its proceedings for completion of final report. The post has since been filled up and a Gazette Notification to this effect has been issued on 18.11.96. Meanwhile consultations started with Ministry of Home Affairs in view of sensitivities involved.

Before taking further action, Minister (WR) on 23.10.96 has suggested to Chief Minister Punjab, for a meeting to discuss the issue. Chief Minister, Punjab has informed on 31.1.97 that it would not be feasible for the Punjab Govt. to resume the construction of SYL Canal

till the final settlement of river waters disputes Govt. of Punjab, while linking the issue of construction of SYL Canal with the sharing of Yamuna Waters, have stated that whereas, the waters of river Ravi has been allocated to the State of Haryana, waters of river Yamuna has not been allocated to Punjab. Govt of Punjab is of the view that if allocation of river waters is made as per their contention, Haryana's share can be delivered through the existing Bhakra Canal System and there would not be any necessity of the SYL Canal. Punjab has also taken the stand that the Govt. of Haryana has filed a Civil Suit in the Supreme Court of India (Suit No. 1 of 1995) during November, 1995 in the matter regarding construction of SYL canal etc., the matter is subjudice.

Govt. of Haryana unanimously passed a resolution on March 13, 1997 regarding the State's territory and river water dispute. Haryana Vidhan Sabha has resolved that Govt. of India may get the remaining portion of SYL Canal completed immediately by entrusting it to a Central Agency and Canal be got commissioned within a period of 6 months on warfooting.

Minister (WR) on 2nd June, 1997 in a letter addressed to Chief Minister, Punjab has reiterated that sharing of Yamuna waters and sharing of surplus Ravi Beas waters are entirely separate issues governed by different agreements and have been dealt with likewise by the Ministry of Water Resources.

As the issue is highly sensitive, Ministry of Water Resources has been making all efforts to persuade Chief Minister, Punjab for holding discussions to fix the time schedule for resumption of construction and completion of SYL Canal. Ministry of Home Affairs has also been informed about the developments and appropriate advice sought on issues having direct bearing on SYL Canal. Ministry of Water Resources is of the opinion that efforts for holding talks and reaching an agreement on such a sensitive issue amongst the States should continue further, before the alternative recourse of taking up the matter with National Water Resources Council is resorted to.

#### **Comments of the Committee**

4.9 For Comments of the Committee please refer to Para No. 1.12 of Chapter I of this Report.

## CHAPTER V

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

#### **Recommendation No. 5**

*Rashtriya Pariyojna Nirman Nigam Ltd.*

5.1 The Committee note that the Ministry of Water Resources have finalised the Cabinet Note regarding the revival plan of the RPNN Ltd. The Committee feel that the matter is being processed at a snail's pace in the Ministry of Water Resources, as the Ministry could finalise the Cabinet Note only recently and no urgency has been shown in pursuing the matter with the Ministry of Finance earlier for securing the approval for the revised CCEA note in this regard. The Committee wish to impress upon the Government that the matter brooks no delay and it should be got expeditiously cleared from the Cabinet Committee without any further loss of time and the revival package should be put into operation urgently to save the company from completely sinking into losses irrevocably.

#### **Reply of the Government**

5.2(1) The CCEA note for deciding the future course of action of RPNN Limited was forwarded to the Ministry of Finance in August, 1996 for their comments/concurrence. The Ministry of Finance after a lot of persuasion has requested this Ministry in March, 1997 to revise the projections of profitability of the Company as per discussions held with them. The revised projections have also been forwarded to the Ministry of Finance in April, 1997. Secretary (WR) has written to the Secretary (Expenditure) (May 2, 1997) for expediting the comments of Ministry of Finance. That Ministry now desires that CCEA note be revised as per the revised projections of profitability of the Company. CCEA note is accordingly being revised for further processing.

ANNEXURE—I



भारत सरकार  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
जल संसाधन मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES  
श्रम शक्ति भवन, रफी मार्ग,  
SHRAM SHAKTI BHAWAN, RAFI MARG,  
नई दिल्ली-110001  
NEW DELHI-110001

K.C. Aggarwal  
Commissioner (PP)  
Tel. No. 3711946.

D.O. No. 35/3/97-PP

5.6.1997

Dear Shri Navalawala,

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture while scrutinising the Demands for Grants (1997-98) of the Ministry of Water Resources, have, *inter-alia* made a number of recommendations/ observations. One of the recommendations pertaining to Reduced Plan Allocations for the Ministry of Water Resources is enclosed herewith.

The Committee has noted that the effectiveness of the performance of the irrigation sector has been crippled mainly due to the gradual reduction in the plan allocations in the irrigation sector. They have also stressed on the urgent need for the augmentation of water resources to ensure production of much needed foodgrains.

The Committee has recommended for full allocation of Rs. 12672.14 crores under the IX Plan (1997-2002) for the Central Sector Schemes of the Ministry of Water Resources as proposed by this Ministry.

I shall, therefore, request you to kindly consider the recommendations of the Standing Committee while finalising the IX Plan allocations for this Ministry.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

Encl : As above.

Sd/-  
(K.C. Aggarwal)

Shri B.N. Navalawala,  
Adviser (I&CAD),  
Planning Commission,  
Yojana Bhawan,  
New Delhi.

## CHAPTER VI

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

#### **1. Reduced Plan Allocations**

The Committee note that the effectiveness of the performance of the Irrigation Sector has been crippled mainly due to the gradual reduction in the plan allocations in favour of the Irrigation Sector. The plan allocation which was 18.7% of the overall plan size in the First Five Year Plan has now come down to 7.5% in the 8th Plan while it was 9.4% in the 7th Plan. It has been noted that even many irrigation schemes that have been started in the Second Five Year Plan are still incomplete and the allocation in favour of the major and medium sector had been much less than that was required even for completing the schemes in hand. This has led to a situation where the Planning Commission has proclaimed a ban on new schemes despite the fact that water is the most crucial input which is required to attain the target of 210 million tonnes of foodgrains by 2000 A.D. and the country is now unable to record any growth in the foodgrains production in the last two years with a looming danger of the country entering into a food-trap. Under these appalling circumstances there is urgent imperative of the augmentation of water resources which alone can ensure the production of the much needed foodgrains. There is urgent need for an integrated approach and close coordination and perspective planning with agriculture and allied sectors in the country has to be bailed out of an inevitable situation of starvation in the years to come. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance should open their eyes to this harsh reality and make available the overall financial requirement of Rs. 12,672.14 crores under IX Plan for the entire central plan of the water resources sector proposed to them so that this country would be saved from a grave calamity.

**RECOMMENDATIONS ACCEPTED BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE  
OF THE INTER-COMMITTEE**

Recommendation details (as made by Sarkaria Commission)	Report of Sub-Committee
<b>Recommendation No. 212</b>	Accepted with modification as follows:—
<p>“Once an application under section 3 of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act (33 of 1956) is received from a State, it should be mandatory on the Union Government to constitute a Tribunal within a period not exceeding one year from the date or receipt of the application of any disputants State. The Inter-State River Water Disputes Act may be suitably amended for this purpose.”</p>	<p>Once an application under Section 3 of the Inter State River Water Disputes Act (33 of 1956) is received from a State. It should be mandatory on the Union Government to constitute a Tribunal within a period not exceeding two years from the date of receipt of the application of any disputant State. The Inter-State River Water Disputes Act may be suitably amended for this purpose.</p>
<b>Recommendation No. 213</b>	Accepted.
<p>“The Inter-State Water Disputes Act should be amended to empower the Union Government to appoint a Tribunal <i>suo motu</i>, if necessary when it is satisfied that such a dispute exists in fact.”</p>	Accepted.
<b>Recommendation No. 214</b>	
<p>There should be a Data Bank and information system at the national level and adequate machinery should be set up for this purpose</p>	

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**Recommendation details (as  
made by Sarkaria Commission)**

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**Report of Sub-Committee**

at the earliest. There should also be a provision in the Inter-State Water Disputes Act that States shall be required to give necessary data for which purpose the Tribunal may be vested with powers of a Court.

**Recommendation No. 215**      Accepted

"The Inter-State Water Disputes Act should be amended to ensure that the award of a Tribunal becomes effective within five years from the date of constitution of a Tribunal. If, however for some reasons, a Tribunal feels that the Five years period has to be extended, the Union Government may on a reference made by the Tribunal extended its terms."

**Recommendation No. 216**      Accepted

"The Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 should be amended so that a Tribunal's award has the same force and sanction behind it as an order or decree of the Supreme Court to make a Tribunal's award really binding."

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**ANNEXURE III**

**LIST OF PROJECTS WHICH RECEIVED CLA DURING 1996-97  
UNDER AIBP**

(Amount Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Amount of C.L.A. approved	Amount of C.L.A. released	Category
1	2	3	4	5
<b>ANDHRA PRADESH</b>				
1.	Sriram Sagar Stage-I	63.00	31.50	I
2.	Cheyyru Irrigation	7.50	3.75	II
		<u>70.50</u>	<u>35.25</u>	
<b>ASSAM</b>				
3.	Pahumara	1.20	0.60	II
4.	Hawaipur Lift Irrigation	1.75	0.075	II
5.	Rupahi Lift Irrigation	0.51	0.755	II
6.	Kallong Irrigation	1.00	0.50	II
7.	Dhansiri Project	3.00	1.50	II
8.	Champamati	2.00	1.00	II
8A.	Borolia	1.00	—	II
		<u>10.46</u>	<u>5.23</u>	
<b>BIHAR</b>				
9.	Kosi Project	20.00	10.00	I
10.	Upper Kiul	5.00	2.50	II
11.	Durgawati	2.00	1.00	II
		<u>27.00</u>	<u>13.50</u>	

1	2	3	4	5
<b>GUJARAT</b>				
12.	Sardar Sarovar Multipurpose Project	95.00	71.25	I
13.	Jhuj	2.40	1.20	II
14.	Mukteshwar	0.65	0.4075	II
15.	Harnav-II	0.13	0.065	II
16.	Umaria	0.27	0.135	II
17.	Sipu	3.27	1.635	II
		<u>101.72</u>	<u>74.7725</u>	
<b>HARYANA</b>				
18.	Water Resources Consolidation Project	40.00	30.00	I
19.	Gurgaon Canal	5.00	2.50	
		<u>45.00</u>	<u>32.50</u>	
<b>JAMMU &amp; KASHMIR</b>				
20.	Marwal Lift	1.00	0.50	II
21.	Lethpora Lift	0.60	9.30	II
22.	Koli Lift	1.00	0.50	II
		<u>2.60</u>	<u>10.30</u>	
<b>KARNATAKA</b>				
23.	Upper Krishna State-I	114.00	57.00	I
24.	Malaprabha	3.00	1.50	II
25.	Harehalla	5.50	2.75	
		<u>122.50</u>	<u>61.25</u>	

1	2	3	4	5
<b>KERALA</b>				
25. Kallada Project		5.00	3.75	II
		<u>5.00</u>	<u>3.75</u>	
<b>MADHYA PRADESH</b>				
27. Bansagar Multipurpose	31.00	23.25		I
28. Indira Sagar	50.00	37.50		I
29. Upper Weinganga	5.00	2.50		II
	<u>86.00</u>	<u>63.25</u>		
<b>MAHARASHTRA</b>				
30. Goshikhurd Project	20.00	10.00		I
31. Surya	4.00	2.00		II
32. Waghur	4.00	2.00		II
	<u>28.00</u>	<u>14.00</u>		
<b>MANIPUR</b>				
33. Khuga	0.60	1.30		II
<b>ORISSA</b>				
34. Rengali Irrigation (Part of WRDP, Orissa)	15.00	9.90		I
35. Upper Indravati Right Bank Canal	38.00	19.00		I
36. Subernarekha Multipurpose	36.00	18.00		I
37. Anandpur Barrage	3.10	1.55		II
	<u>92.10</u>	<u>48.45</u>		

1	2	3	4	5
<b>PUNJAB</b>				
38.	Ranjit Sagar Dam	90.00	67.50	I
		<hr/> <u>90.00</u>	<hr/> <u>67.50</u>	
<b>RAJASTHAN</b>				
39.	Jaisamond Modernisation	1.85	0.925	II
40.	Chappi	3.50	1.75	II
		<hr/> <u>5.35</u>	<hr/> <u>2.675</u>	
<b>TRIPURA</b>				
41.	Manu	1.75	1.3125	II
42.	Gumti	3.12	1.56	II
43.	Khowai	1.80	0.90	II
		<hr/> <u>6.67</u>	<hr/> <u>3.7725</u>	
<b>TAMIL NADU</b>				
44.	Water Resources Consolidation Project	40.00	20.00	I
		<hr/> <u>40.00</u>	<hr/> <u>20.00</u>	
<b>UTTAR PRADESH</b>				
45.	Sharda Sahayak	20.00	15.00	I
46.	Sarju Nahar	10.00	9.00	I
47.	Upper Ganga including Madhya Canal	20.00	15.00	I
48.	Rajghat	6.00	3.00	II

1	2	3	4	5
49.	<b>Gunta Nalla Bandh</b>	2.00	1.00	II
50.	<b>Providing Kharif channel in Hindon Krishi Doab</b>	1.00	0.50	II
		<u>67.00</u>	<u>43.50</u>	
<b>WEST BENGAL</b>				
51.	<b>Teesta Barrage</b>	10.00	5.00	I
		<u>10.00</u>	<u>5.00</u>	
	<b>Grand Total :</b>	<b>809.90</b>	<b>504.70</b>	

## NOTE INDICATING THE METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF CREATED AND UTILISED IRRIGATION POTENTIAL

There is a general feeling that the irrigation potential created is not utilised fully with the result that a lag between the figures of irrigation potential created and utilised always remains and it is increasing with each year of enhanced construction activity in irrigation sector. Incidentally such figures are also borne out from Government publications of relevant statistics.

It is therefore necessary that factual position is brought out and the methodology adopted for reporting figures of irrigation potential created and utilised, is properly understood so as to allay the apprehensions with regards to under utilisation of irrigation potential created with huge investments during the plan period.

According to Planning Commission's letter of 1973.

- (a) The 'Irrigation Potential' created by a project at a given time during or after its construction is the aggregate gross area that can be irrigated annually by the quantity of water that could be made available by the connecting and completed works upto the end of water course or the last point in the water delivery system upto which Government is responsible for construction.
- (b) The 'irrigation potential' utilised is the total gross area actually irrigated by a project during the year under construction.

It has however been experienced that the data furnished for potential utilised does not give a correct picture of utilisation of irrigation potential created. For example, in respect of major and medium irrigation projects, the gross area actually irrigated during the year by a particular scheme is termed as 'Potential Utilised' in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Tamil Nadu. But in the State of Uttar Pradesh, the maximum irrigation achieved by a project in any year is termed as its potential utilisation. In the case of Bihar similar definition is followed. In Gujarat the concept of hectare

watering is followed for reporting utilisation. In Maharashtra utilisation is reported as the basis of Rabi equivalent area.

The area which can be irrigated need to be precisely assessed in view of the actual cropping pattern adopted by the farmers on ground and actual water availability during the year which depends on the rainfall in the catchment. Obviously these would be different from the figures arrived at the time of formulation of the irrigation scheme.

In Planning Commission's letter dated 10.10.79 regarding 'utilisation of irrigation potential construction and maintenance of water course and field channels' *inter-alia*, it was mentioned that:

- “(a) There is great anxiety that the lag between the potential created and the potential utilisation thereof is reduced as much as possible and for this purpose an efficient distribution system right upto the farmer's field is considered to be absolutely essential. Government have been making considerable investments in developing distribution systems of irrigation projects upto the blocks of 100 acres (40 hectare) in size. Since it has not been possible to make much headway in construction of field channels at the farm level beyond the watercourses, it has been decided in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Government of India, that it would be expedient to construct field channels as a part of the irrigation project itself up to at least of block of 5 to 8 hectares within the outlet command.
- “(b) The above criteria should apply to on-going and new projects immediately. In case of the completed projects, the provision of field channels as a part of the project on the basis of the above criteria should be taken up as a part of the modernisation programme.”

A number of projects have been completed by the end of 1979 with the earlier criteria of constructing water-courses upto 40 hectares block before the above directions were given. Considering the principle of Planning Commission's letter, the full potential thus was not created for such projects which had been completed before 1979, because field channels upto 5-8 hectares block were not constructed.

The various reasons for lag in utilisation of created potential are briefly indicated as under:

The irrigation projects are planned for giving a success of 75% dependability to irrigation supplies. Thus, it is inbuilt that for 25% of the period (in one hundred sequence) the water requirement of full irrigation potential will not be met and even if the design cropping patterns are followed there will be a lag in potential utilised irrespective of the extent of field channel. Thus the irrigation supplies themselves depend upon the river inflows which in turn are dependent on the rainfall, snow melting and other resources in the upper catchment area of the project. In a particular year when the rainfall is inadequate or scanty and snowfall or snow-melting is inadequate, the river flows available for irrigation use would be less than normal and anticipated flows (as envisaged in the planning) would not be available for utilisation, consequently resulting in lesser irrigation in the particular year.

Delay in the construction of distribution networks, specially water courses, field channels and preparation of the command area for efficient use of irrigation water also acts as the bottleneck causing slower and lesser utilisation of irrigation potential created.

At times it happens that due to unforeseen circumstances, water supplies for domestic water supply and industrial requirements have to be made on priority basis from irrigation schemes and this causes curtailment in irrigation supplies and results in reduced irrigated areas.

Actual cropping pattern is different from cropping pattern adopted in the project report. As such comparison of utilisation, to irrigation potential as per sanctioned projects, is not realistic. As more water consuming crops are adopted in practice, specially in head reaches the command area in tail reaches are deprived of their due share of irrigation. Due to this the utilisation when reported against created potential is low and this shows lag in utilisation of created potential.

Also a lag of few years between the creation of irrigation potential and its full utilisation is unavoidable as the farmer has to be given reasonable time for switching over from the age old rainfed cultivation to irrigated agriculture which, *inter-alia*, has to be supported with agriculture extension services, availability of adequate and proper inputs (like fertilizers, seeds, labour etc.) and of course the availability of irrigation water as and when required by the crops. In many cases reclamation of new areas brought under irrigation taken consideration time.

The Committee of Secretaries (COS) in its meeting held on 19.6.95 under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary considered the Planning Commission's note of 'under-utilisation of irrigation potential already created and its remedies.' One of the recommendations made by the COS in this regard was to reconcile the methodology for defining the performance indicators of irrigation system.

Planning Commission *vide* their recent note received *vide* D.O. No. 3(16)/S/94—I & CAD dated January 11, 1996 addressed to Secretary, MOWR have suggested for changing the reporting norm for irrigation potential from prevailing norm in terms of land area to the number of watering hectare.

Due to different practices being followed by various States in reporting the figures of utilisation it would seem appropriate to devise a uniform practice for assessing the utilisation. One of the methodology could be to switch over from the present 'area concept' to the 'amount of water' supplied. However without volumetric supply of water or measurement, it may be difficult to follow this in practice at present. It would be possible to do so when supplies are made on volumetric basis and adequate arrangements for measurement are made for the same.

The suggestion contained in the Planning Commission note to switch over to the norm of number of watering hectare could be referred to the 3rd Irrigation Commission recommended to be set up by the Working Group.

As would be seen from the above there being number of variable in achieving the utilisation of the potential created, following points are placed for consideration of the concerned authorities:

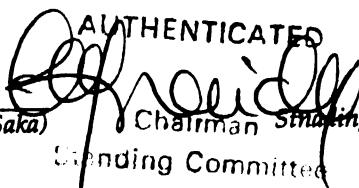
1. The potential created indicate only the building up of infrastructure and facilities for providing irrigation supplies to the given area.
2. Utilisation of potential could be different due to several reasons and the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation, Department of Agriculture with its extensive field network may continue to collect and report the statistics of the utilisation of irrigation potential.
3. The Ministry of Agriculture should also monitor the cropping pattern actually adopted and water utilised by the farmers *vis-a-vis* the cropping pattern and water utilisation envisaged in the sanctioned project.

4. A lag of 3 to 5 years between potential created and potential utilised should be considered normal. Similarly, if 90% of the potential created is utilised it should be considered satisfactory.
5. Where the potential utilised is between 75% to 90%, of the potential created in a normal year even after a lag of 5 years the Ministry of Agriculture should find out if this is due to change in cropping pattern or due to deficiencies in project implementation/operation. Necessary remedial measures should be taken by the concerned department to remove the deficiencies.
6. In projects where the potential utilised is less than 75% of potential created even after a lag of 5 years during a normal year the concerned departments of the States should make a critical review of the causes of shortfall and suggest remedial measures. A malady remedy approach project by project will go a long way in more efficient utilisation of irrigation facilities created.
7. Any developmental mechanism or system has an element of efficiency and irrigation systems are no exception. With various natural and physical constraints these cannot be expected to run at 100% efficiency. Therefore an overall gap of 10% in potential created and utilised should not be considered abnormal.

#### **Recommendations**

- (i) MOWR may report only the figures of potential created to indicate the building up of infrastructure.
- (ii) Ministry of Agriculture may collect and report the statistics of utilisation of irrigation potential.
- (iii) If 90% of the potential created is utilised it should be considered as satisfactory.
- (iv) In case of project where the potential utilised is less than 75% of potential created critical review to the causes and shortfall to take remedial measures may be undertaken.

NEW DELHI;  
June, 1998  
Jyaistha, 1920 (Saka)

  
AUTHENTICATED  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Agriculture  
Standing Committee  
on Agriculture

K. YERRANNAIDU,  
Chairman,  
Standing Committee on Agriculture

## APPENDIX I

### MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, THE 17TH JUNE, 1998 AT 1100 HRS. IN COMMITTEE ROOM 'B', PARLIAMENT HOUSE ANNEXE, NEW DELHI

The Committee sat from 1100 hrs. to 1300 hrs.

#### PRESENT

Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaиду — *Chairman*

#### MEMBERS

*Lok Sabha*

2. Shri Ramchandra Bairdu
3. Shri D.C. Sreekantappa
4. Dr. Ramkrishna Kusmaria
5. Shri Baliram Kashyap
6. Smt. Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo
7. Shri M. Master Mathan
8. Shri Raj Narain Passi
9. Shri Virendra Verma
10. Shri Sudhakarrao Rajusing Naik
11. Shri Ramkrishna Baba Patil
12. Shri Maganti Venkateswara Rao
13. Shri Kantilal Bhuria
14. Shri Mahaboob Zahedi
15. Shri Abdul Hasnat Khan
16. Shri Mitransen Yadav
17. Shri K.P. Munusamy
18. Shri Anup Lal Yadav
19. Shri Bashist Narayan Singh
20. Shri Ram Shanker
21. Dr. Sushil Kumar Indora

*Rajya Sabha*

22. Maulana Habibur Rahman Nomani
23. Shri Ramji Lal
24. Shri Devi Prasad Singh
25. Shri Shiv Charan Singh
26. Shri Ramnarayan Goswami
27. Shri Sharief-Ud-Din Shariq
28. Shri Sukh Dev Singh Dhindsa

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri G.C. Malhotra	— <i>Additional Secretary</i>
2. Shri S. Bal shekar	— <i>Deputy Secretary</i>
3. Smt. Anita Jain	— <i>Under Secretary</i>
4. Shri K.L. Arora	— <i>Assistant Director</i>

Chairman (AC) took the Chair and welcomed the Members. Thereafter the Committee took up for consideration the draft Reports on Action Taken by the Government in respect of the recommendations/observations contained in the following reports:

1. 1st Report on Demands for Grants (1996-97) relating to Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture and Co-operation).
2. 9th Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) relating to Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture & Co-operation).
3. 10th Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) relating to Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Research & Education).
4. 11th Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) relating to Ministry of Agriculture (Department of animal Husbandry & Dairying).
5. 12th Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) relating to Ministry of Water Resources.
6. 13th Report on Demands for Grants (1997-98) relating to Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

The Committee considered the draft comments of the Committee and adopted the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Action Taken Reports (1998-99) one by one with minor additions.

The Committee, then, authorised the Chairman to present all the six Action Taken Reports (1998-99) of the Committee to the House on a date and time convenient to him.

The Committee then adjourned to meet again soon after the lunch at 1400 hrs. on the same day.

## APPENDIX II

(*Vide* introduction of the Report)

### ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE 12TH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE (11TH LOK SABHA)

(i) Total Number of Recommendations	17
(ii) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government .....	
Serial Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 & 17)	
Total	11
Percentage	64.7%
(iii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies	
Serial Nos. (3 & 14)	
Total	2
Percentage	11.7%
(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee	
Serial Nos. (1, 2 & 4)	
Total	3
Percentage	17.6%
(v) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited	
Serial Nos. (5)	
Total	1
Percentage	5.8%