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Title :Need to provide additional funds for National Rural Drinking Water Programme in Kerala.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM) : The National Rural Drinking Water Programme is the principal means through which Rural Water Supply Coverage is achieved. The State of Kerala is reliant on this program to ensure that its citizens have permanent access to safe drinking water.

The State of Kerala's allocation of funds under the Programme have fallen dramatically. The Rs. 170.78 crore in 2012-13 is now just Rs. 45.28 crore in 2015-16. The 73.49 percent decrease is followed with a change in funding pattern that collectively affects the effectiveness of the programme.

The other major concern is the revised guidelines that limit new projects to quality affected areas and the Saansad Adarsh Grama Yojana Panchayats.

The coverage of treated water is only 30 per cent in Kerala's rural areas, and therefore in the need of urgent investment to meet the growing water demands.

Therefore, I urge the Government to urgently increase the quantum of funds to the State of Kerala towards the National Rural Drinking Water Programme.