

Shortage of drinking water

88. SHRI GULAM RASOOL

KOCHACK:

SHRI P. M. SAYEED:

Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) whether there has been acute shortage of drinking water in various States, especially those which are badly hit by drought and declared as such;

(b) whether a Central Study team had visited such States to study the problem;

(c) if so, whether the team had submitted its proposals to the Government and identified the States which are affected by shortage of drinking water; and

(d) if so, the details of the proposals of the Central Study team and the Government's reactions thereto in regard to their implementation?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). On the request of the drought affected States, the Government of India deputed the Central Teams for on the spot assessment. On the basis of the reports of the Central Teams and on the recommendations of the High Level Committee on Relief, the Government of India approved ceilings of additional expenditure for purposes of Central assistance. These include provision for Drinking Water programme also. The Prime Minister's Twelve Point Programme also lays emphasis for preparation of contingency Plans for supply of water to the identified villages and advance action for arranging tankers, trucks, drums, diesel, etc. Further the Central Government have mobilised rigs and made them available to the States for taking up the drinking water programme on war footing for boring and

deepening of wells in the most seriously affected areas.

Review Committee on distribution of Flood Relief in States

89. PROF. RUP CHAND PAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Review Committee set up by the Centre had visited West Bengal to investigate the distribution of flood relief and its report to the Centre said that "apparently, however nothing seems to be wrong about it"; and

(b) whether the Centre had sent the Review Committee to any other State than West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). Government of India had decided, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, to depute Review Teams to the States for reviewing the utilisation of Central assistance given to them for relief of distress due to natural calamities. Such Teams will be visiting all the States concerned after firm figures of expenditure incurred are available. So far no Review Team has visited any State. However, the Central Teams which visit the States to assess the damage caused by natural calamities, make to the extent possible broad review of the progress of expenditure of Central assistance made available earlier. A Central Team which visited West Bengal in February, 1979 had reviewed only some aspects of the progress of expenditure met out of Advance Plan Assistance for flood relief and suggested necessary readjustments in the ceilings of expenditure. This Team did not have financial expenditure statements of the West Bengal Government and therefore had not come to any conclusion with regard to utilisation of funds in a proper manner or otherwise.