

Loss of Ravine Lands

1091. SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the country is losing almost 8000 hectares or ravine land every year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) steps taken to check this; and

(d) the result achieved so far from such steps ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) and (b). According to the Report of National Commission on Agriculture (1976), the country is losing annually about 8,000 hectares of agricultural land. This is due to formation of gullies and ravines on account of increased human pressure on land, extension of cultivation to the marginal and submarginal lands, removal of essential vegetation cover and inadequate programmes for protection of table lands and stabilisation of gullies and ravines.

(c) and (d). The Central Government launched a Centrally sponsored scheme during 1961-62 to carry out surveys for identification and categorisation of ravinous areas for enabling formulation of suitable programmes. An area of 8.3 lakh ha. was surveyed in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Three Soil Conservation Research Demonstration and training Centres were set up in the ravinous areas at Agra (Uttar Pradesh), Kota (Rajasthan) and Vasad (Gujarat). These Centres through research projects and Job-to-Land programme developed suitable package of practices including the appropriate species of tree and horticultural plantations and also grass for pasture development. A National policy was formulated during 1967 for reclamation and development of ravinous areas on watershed basis. This was also pursued

through Central Ravine Reclamation Board and inter-Ministerial Working Group. A Central Sector scheme of pilot project for ravine reclamation was launched during the Fourth Plan in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. In accordance with the decision of the National Development Council, the scheme was transferred to State Sector on 1.4.1979. Prior to its transfer, till 1978-79, an area of 36.670 ha. was treated at a cost of Rs. 649.22 lakhs. Availing the funds through different soil conservation schemes, upto the end of 1984-85 an, area of about 1.5 lakh ha. was covered under State Sector programmes.

The Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training institute and its centres through evaluation studies have concluded that the programmes implemented were useful and helped to enhance the crop productivity and fuel-cum-fodder for the beneficiaries. Based on the recommendations of the working Group on Land Reclamation and Development for formulation of Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90), the Working Group on Accelerated Development of Dacoit Prone Areas of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and also considering the magnitude of the problem in Gujarat a Centrally sponsored scheme for ravine reclamation and development with an outlay of Rs. 102.7 crores for treating 2.04 lakh ha. in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat was proposed for the Seventh Plan. A token provision of Rs. 10 lakhs has been kept for 1985-86 in anticipation of the final approval of the scheme.

Mine Accidents During 1984-85

1092. SHRI JAGANNATH PRASAD : will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) number of mine accidents occurred during the year 1984-85 and the number of labourers killed in these accidents as compared to those killed during the last year;