

[English]

Conversion of Barren Land into Fertile Land

2507. SHRI ZAINUL BASHER : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the portion of barren land out of total agricultural land in the country, where cultivation is not possible;

(b) the area in hectares of barren land converted into fertile land under the programmes formulated for converting the barren land into fertile land during the last three years; and

(c) the time by which, the remaining barren land will be converted into fertile land ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) Land Use Statistics for the country are collected and reported in a 9-fold land use classification. As per the 9-fold land use classification, agricultural land does not include barren land. However, the barren and unculturable land constitute 20.14 million hectares out of the total reporting area of 304.11 million hectares under

various land uses according to Land Use Statistics for 1982-83 (latest available year).

(b) and (c). Barren and unculturable lands include exposed steep mountain slopes and extremely inhospitable arid tracts which cannot be brought under cultivation except at a very high cost. There is no programme to provide vegetative cover to all barren lands without regard to its suitability and cost involved.

However, in order to restore culturable waste lands to productive use, the National Wastelands Development Board have reported raising of tree plantation in 4.03 million hectares during the last three years. Another 14,700 hectares of land was covered under two schemes *viz.*, Propagation of Water Conservation/Harvesting Technology under Central Sector and Popularisation of Seed-cum-Fertilizer Drills, growing of improved varieties. etc. for development of dryland agriculture under the Centrally sponsored sector covering 19 districts in 15 States. Under these schemes, area which was not suitable for growing crops was covered under pastures and afforestation. The physical achievement under the Drought Prone Area Programme and Desert Development Programme during the last three years is given in the statement given below.

Statement

	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	Total
1	2	3	4	5

A—DPAP

1. Soil and moisture conservation (00 ha.)	544.72	437.77 (P)	808.29 (P)	1,790.78
2. Forestry and Pasture development (00 ha.)	761.28	435.15 (P)	522.98 (P)	1,719.41

1	2	3	4	5
B—DDP				
1. Afforestation				
(i) Plantation (including road side plantation, pasture development, fuel and fodder plantation) (Ha)	13084	10745 (P)	18656 (P)	42,485.00
(ii) Shelter Belts (Kms)	9399	5431 (P)	—	14,830.00
(iii) Sand dune stabilisation (ha.)	2210	1978 (P)	—	4,188.00
2. Area treated under soil conservation scheme (hect.)	975	1124 (P)	5115 (P)	7,214.00

P = Provisional.

Realization of EPF and ESI Dues from Jute Mills in West Bengal

2508. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether any scheme has been worked out for continuous payment of provident fund and ESI dues to workers by the exempted jute establishments; if so, its broad outlines;

(b) whether the jute mills presently closed would also pay the current Provident Fund and ESI dues along with the instalments they were already paying under Court orders;

(c) the total arrears outstanding against the jute mills in West Bengal and how long will it take to realise them; and

(d) the details of jute mills involved ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA) : (a) The question of recovery of the arrears of EPF/ESI dues from the jute

mills was discussed at a meeting with the representatives of some of the defaulting jute mills and following arrangement was agreed to :

(i) the jute mills will be regularly in payment of current dues from the month of July, 1986;

(ii) a deduction of 8 per cent will be made from the amount payable to jute mills on all purchases on the Government account and the amount so realised will be adjusted against outstanding dues for the period prior to July, 1986;

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The total arrears is about Rs. 66 crores (EPF Rs. 54 crores and ESI Rs. 12 crores). It is difficult to indicate the time by which the arrears may be realised.

(d) The particulars of major defaulting jute mills are as given in the attached statement (Annexure).