

(c) if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER): (a) The measures taken over a period of time for expediting disposal of cases in High Courts are listed in the attached statement.

Regarding accessibility of the courts to the poor and urban populace in the country, information is being collected from the States and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) and (c). On a large number of recommendations contained in the 79th Report of the Law Commission regarding Delay and Arrears in High Courts and other Appellate Courts action has to be taken by the High Courts themselves. Copies of the 79th Report have been sent to all the High Courts and State Governments for appropriate action. Those recommendations on which decisions have to be taken by the Central Government are under consideration of the Government.

Statement

The following measures for speedy disposal of cases have been taken:—

(i) The Code of Civil Procedure was amended in 1976 with a view to abolishing the Revisional and Letters Patent jurisdiction of the High Courts and to restrict Second Appeals to cases where the High Court certifies that the case involves a substantial question of law.

(ii) A new Code of Criminal Procedure based on the recommendations of the Law Commission was enacted in 1973 and amended in 1978.

(iii) The sanctioned strength of Judges has been increased in the High Courts from which proposals were received for increase in strength.

(iv) Efforts have been and are being made to fill vacancies. The result is that on 14-3-1980 the total number of High Court Judges had gone up to 349.

(v) Ad hoc Judges have been appointed when necessity for the same has been felt.

(vi) Cases involving a common question are being grouped together by several High Courts so that with one judgment the whole group is disposed of.

Set back to Irrigation Projects

942. **SHRI CHANDRA BHAN ATHARE PATIL:** Will the Minister of ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which Minor Irrigation Projects as well as Major, have suffered during the last year due to short supply of diesel and kerosene oil and also on account of drought; and

(b) what measures have been taken on long term basis to improve the position in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND IRRIGATION AND COAL (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURY):

(a) Kharif crops in northern and central region suffered to an extent of 10-15 per cent. However, in view of the favourable winter rainfall, the position eased to some extent and the effect of drought as well as short supply of diesel is expected to be marginal.

(b) Contingency plans are formulated to deal with similar situations. Besides, a national perspective of inter-linking rivers for transferring surplus waters to drought prone areas is under formulation.

Publishing of Newspapers by Big Industrial Houses

943. **SHRI CHANDRA BHAN ATHARE PATIL:** Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that many big industrial houses are publishing their own newspapers;