

Persons working in the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction

929. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of personnel working in the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction from the date of its formation; and

(b) the programmes that have been formulated so far by this Department?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) The details of personnel working in the Ministry are given in the statement laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-900/80].

(b) A list of schemes being implemented by the Ministry during 1980-81 is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-900/80].

Rural Banks for Small and Marginal Farmers

930. SHRI P. J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to open more rural banks in order to extend financial assistance to small and marginal farmers and artisans; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ten Regional Rural Banks, (five in Uttar Pradesh, three in Bihar and one each in Madhya Pradesh and Orissa) have been set up since January, 1980 bringing the total number of such banks to seventy covering 122 districts.

Provision has been made to set up another eleven banks during the current financial years.

Drinking Water in Villages

931. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a survey of World Health Organisation has revealed that 14.5 crores of people in 2,05,000 villages do not have safe drinking water; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken for ensuring minimum portable water supply to these villages?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) A survey was conducted in 1972 at the instance of the Government of India which revealed that there were about 1.53 lakh 'problem' villages [i.e. villages with no source of water within a distance of 1.6 km or a depth of 15 metres, or the available water is unfit for consumption] out of a total of 5.76 lakh villages in the country. The States thereafter have from time to time been intimating that the number of 'problem' villages are much more. It is estimated that as on 1-4-1980 the number of such villages still to be provided with protected drinking water would be about 2 lakhs with a population of approximately 12.25 crores.

(b) Coverage of all the remaining problem villages in contemplated within the period 1980-85 with the resources of the State and Central Governments.

Lifting of West Bengal's Quota Levy Suugar

932. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether West Bengal quota of levy sugar has to be lifted from mills in Maharashtra;