

### Study Report on Agricultural Land

5482. SHRI RAMPRASAD AHIR-  
WAR :  
SHRI SURAJ BHAN :  
SHRI ATAL BIHARI  
VAJPAYEE :  
SHRI MADHAVRAO  
SCINDIA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to lay a statement showing :

(a) whether Government are aware of a study report of the Delhi Centre for Science and Environment that more than 50 per cent of Indian agricultural land is threatened by severe erosion and salinity, water-logging and desertification and also as a result thereof, the area prone to floods has increased much in the past decade;

(b) the facts in this regard and remedial measures being taken;

(c) how much area has been thus affected in the past decade by soil erosion, salinity, water logging and desertification; and

(d) the exact impact of water logging and silting on increase of floods in the past decade ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) and (b) It is estimated that about 175 million ha., comprising 53.3% of the country's geographical area of 328 million ha. is subject to soil erosion and land degradation. This includes about 105 million ha. of cultivable land, 20 million ha. of forest land and 8 million ha. of non-forest land, besides about 43 million ha. of various types of land subject to degradation through special problems such as water logging, alkalinity & salinity, ravines & gullies, shifting cultivation, desertification, etc.

The Government has been conscious of these problems and the need for action to tackle them. Hence, multi-

directional soil and water conservation programmes have been initiated from the First Five Year Plan and implemented through the Central and State Sectors. The resources include control of erosion, harvesting and reuse of rain-water, afforestation, plantation and grass-land development. Central assistance is being provided to the States for land-use surveys, priority delineation of watersheds as well as execution of programmes in the catchments of river valley projects and floods prone rivers under which about 574 priority watersheds spread over 37 catchments are being treated. Programmes for the conservation of the Himalayan ecosystem, reclamation of ravines as well as areas affected by alkalinity and for control of shifting cultivation have also been undertaken. A National Land Board and a National Land Resources & Conservation and Development Commission have been set up to take care of the problems and policy issues relating to health and care of the soil and its scientific management. Till 1981-82 an area of 32.1 million ha. had been treated at a cost of Rs. 1372.93 crores in the Central and State Sectors.

(c) and (d) In absence of repeat surveys covering the entire country at intervals the variations in the areas affected by different soil erosion and land degradation problems and their effect on floods in the past decade, are not available. The estimates of the total problem areas prepared from the available information indicate that about 150 million ha. is subject to erosion by water and wind, 7 million ha. degraded through alkalinity & salinity and 6 million ha. through water logging.

### Approval of Major Irrigation Projects for Orissa

5483. SHRI HARIHAR SOREN : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the major irrigation projects of the State of Orissa