

[Hathi]

should not be any significant addition to the number of unemployed engineering graduates.

BLOCK DEVELOPMENT STAFF

382. SHRI LOBO PRABHU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the progressive reduction of the functions and finance of the Block Development staff is rendering it idle;

(b) whether Government propose to entrust the Block Development staff with the task of reviewing and reporting the work of all other officials engaged in the rural uplift; and

(c) if not, whether Government have any other staff in the villages which serves this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY) : (a) The workload of the Block staff is to be viewed not only in terms of the Community Development schematic funds, which are progressively tapering off as the Blocks are passing from Stage I to Stage II and on to post stage II, but also in terms of the other departmental funds, and the corresponding schemes increasingly to be channelled for implementation through the Block agency. The need for correlating the staff pattern to the overall workload in the Blocks is constantly kept in view.

(b) and (c). No, Sir. The departments concerned already have their arrangements.

LAND AND WATER UTILISATION

383. SHRI LOBO PRABHU : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an assessment of land and water utilisation in the country has been made;

(b) whether the services of the Block Development Staff are being utilised for planning and preparing estimates for minor irrigation works and road construction; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) It has been estimated that the total water resources of the country are about 675 million cubic meters (1360 million acre feet), out of which 555 M.C.M. (450 m.a.f.) can be utilised for purposes of irrigation. In addition to this, it has been estimated that about 350 M.C.M. (285 m.a.f.) percolate into the soil and would be available as underground water for exploitation. Prior to the commencement of Planning, the area irrigated from all sources in the country was about 22.66 m.ha. (56 m. acres), of which major and medium irrigation projects contributed about 8 m.ha. (20 m. acres). During the three Plans, the major and medium projects added to the development of irrigation as indicated in the table below :

TABLE

At the end of	Million hectares (Million acres)	
	Potential created	Utilisation
I Plan	2.63 (6.5)	1.25 (3.1)
II Plan	4.73 (11.7)	3.36 (8.3)
III Plan	6.88 (17.0)	5.5 (13.6)

The rate of utilisation, which was less than 50 per cent in the First Plan increased to about 75 per cent during the Second Plan and 86 per cent at the end of the Third Five Year Plan, which shows that the pace of utilisation has been quite satisfactory. (The utilisation in a year is to be compared with the potential created in the previous year). With a view to ensuring speedy and full agricultural benefits from the irrigation projects, a programme designated as "Ayacut Development Programme" has been formulated for implementation during the fourth Plan period.

The area irrigated by minor irrigation works in the country at the beginning of the First Five Year Plan was of the order of 36 million acres. The area increased from Plan to Plan and at the end of Third Five Year Plan, it was of the order of 49.60 million acres. By and large, on minor irrigation works, the time lag between creation of the potential and its

utilisation is short. In most cases the irrigation potential is utilised within a year or so after their completion.

As to the assessment of land it may be stated that the total cultivable land in India during 1964-65, the latest year for which figures are available, is provisionally estimated at 444.3 million acres. The land under actual cultivation during that year is estimated at 368.4 million acres.

(b) and (c). The State Governments have been advised to make use of the services of the Block Overseer for survey of minor irrigation and other items of work connected with it. He is also to be made use of for departmental construction, such of masonry works on roads. He has also to handle the entire execution of work from initial survey and alignment to completion and measurement. In this connection, a copy of a model job chart circulated to States for adoption is placed on the Table of the House. [Placed in library See. No. LT—1532/67].

DESERT DEVELOPMENT BOARD

384. SHRI AMRIT NAHATA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) the composition and functions of the Desert Development Board;
- (b) whether it has started functioning;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether there are any non-official members on this Board;
- (e) if so, the names thereof;
- (f) how many of them belong to or represent the desert areas; and
- (g) whether Government propose to appoint a non-official Chairman of the Board ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) The Board consists of 17 members—13 official and 4 non-official. Its Chairman is the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Agriculture. The other official members are the representatives of the Governments of Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat

and of the Central Ministries of Finance, Irrigation & Power, Health & Family Planning, Education, Social Welfare, Communications and the Planning Commission, the Director of the Desert Development Board (who is also the Secretary of the Board) and the Director of the Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur. The functions of the Board are—

- (i) to keep under constant review the preparation of schemes for the development of the desert areas;
- (ii) to arrange for the execution of these schemes through the agencies of the State Governments.
- (iii) to remove administrative bottlenecks hindering the progress of the schemes;
- (iv) to arrange for training of personnel required for these schemes, and in general;
- (v) to ensure that the desert areas of the country receive the attention they deserve.

(b) and (c). The Desert Development Board has not yet started functioning due to difficulties in finding experienced and technically suitable officers. An officer from the Rajasthan Government has now been selected for appointment to the post of the Director. Desert Development Board and he is expected to join on the 14th November, 1967. The first meeting of the Board is proposed to be convened soon after the Director has joined.

(d) and (e). The following are the four non-official members of the Board :—

- (1) Shri V. C. J. Patel, Patel Farm, Akol Chhoti, Post Deesa, Distt. Banaskantha, Gujarat.
- (2) Shri Poonam Chand Bishnoi, Vill. Bacharana, P.O. Dhundara, P. S. Luni, Distt. Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- (3) Col. Rattan Singh, Vill. & P.O. Gochhi, Teh. Jhajjar, Distt. Rohtak, Haryana.
- (4) Shri W. R. Ghorpade, Raja of Sandur, Sandur Palace, Mysore, South India.