

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto particularly when 70 blocks have been found to have arsenic content above the permissible limit of 0.05 milligram per litre while the scourge of silicosis has also aroused an alarm ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, as per information received from Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, several research and development projects have been sanctioned under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Mission by the Government. These are as follows:-

I. R&D Projects (concluded):

(i) Sub-Mission Project on Arsenic Pollution in Ground Water in West Bengal at a project cost of Rs. 10.82 lakhs by School of Tropical. Medicines and AIIH & PH in January, 1988.

(ii) Study of arsenic contamination in six districts of West Bengal at a project cost of Rs. 4.125 lakhs in March, 1994. The first phase of study has been completed by Jadavpur University, Calcutta.

(iii) R&D Project on Epidemiological study for assessing toxicity in chronic arsenic affected areas at a project cost of Rs. 4.93 lakhs approved in December, 1994. The study has been concluded by Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education & Research, Calcutta.

II. R&D Projects (ongoing):

(i) R&D Projects on control of arsenic and other chemical pollutants approved at a project cost of Rs. 2.74 lakhs. The study has been entrusted to Presidency College, Calcutta.

(ii) Development of low cost filtering medium for removal of arsenic from ground water approved by Govt. of India in 1995-96 at a project cost of Rs. 3.304 lakhs. The study has been entrusted to National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur.

(iii) Geology and geochemistry of arsenic occurrences in ground water of six districts in West Bengal approved by Government of India in March, 1996 at the project cost of Rs. 4.78 lakhs. The study has been entrusted to the Centre for Study of Man and Environment, Calcutta.

**Agriculture Development Finance Companies**

6019. DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State level agriculture development finance companies are likely to be set up in Assam; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI. M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) As reported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural

Development (NABARD), all State Governments have been requested by them to indicate their willingness to have agriculture Development Finance Companies (ADFCs) set up in their respective States having due regard to, inter-alia, available business potential in the States. However, Government of Assam has so far not responded to NABARD in the matter.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

**NABARD**

6020. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted in any State by the National Agriculture and Rural Development Bank for setting up of agriculture based industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the amount likely to be mobilised by the National Agriculture Rural Development Bank for these units ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that it has conducted one potential survey on agro-processing sector in Gujarat covering six districts of the State as well as a product study on packaging material based on agro-waste in six States.

The final reports on the survey in Gujarat contain, inter-alia, project profiles for 38 activities which have potential in the districts covered. The findings are being widely publicised among banks and concerned agencies. While the State Government is required to take necessary steps to provide infrastructure and other facilities for the identified potential in the report, the banks have been advised to incorporate the potential identified in their service area plans and make adequate provisions for assisting the entrepreneurs with loans.

The product study on packaging material based on agro-waste covered the States of Kerala, Assam, Maharashtra, Karnataka, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. The study focusses on development of packaging material using locally available resources in rural areas, especially biomass and agricultural wastes, and establishment of production units in the decentralised sector. The study also identified potential for viable projects such as particle board and JRP sheets from jute sticks and craft paper and COPB boxes from cotton stalks. They would need to provide adequate credit support where necessary with refinance support from NABARD and the concerned State Governments will have to ensure infrastructural and other linkages support.

(c) NABARD has reported that no specific amount is proposed to be mobilised for the above purpose. For the identified potential in the above studies, the banks will have to provide credit support after satisfying themselves with technical feasibility and financial viability of the specific projects submitted to them. NABARD had, however, allo-

cated Rs. 3317 lakh for 1996-97 in 13 States for agro-processing business.

#### Child Labour engaged in Tea Garden

6021. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether huge number of child labourers are engaged in the tea garden of Assam;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps being taken to ensure that the child labourers are not engaged in such gardens ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) According to the information furnished by the Tea Board, the estimated average daily number of child labourer employed in tea plantation industry of Assam during 1994 was around 18,000 constituting 3.18% of the total Labour employed in Assam tea plantation industry. The number of child labourers, however, have been coming down steeply in recent times and according to tea industry, there may be no significant employment of child labour in tea plantation industry from 1995 onwards. The Consultative Committee of Plantation Association have advised its constituent members not to employ any person below 14 years of age in plantation industry.

#### Draft facilities in RRBs

6022. SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN:

DR. ASIM BALA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Regional Rural Banks are allowed to introduce bank drafts;
- (b) if so, in which year this facility was introduced; and
- (c) which are the Regional Rural Banks assisted by sponsor banks to introduce such facilities ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) have been allowed to issue bank drafts since the year 1980.

(c) National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that as per information available with them, there are 56 RRBs sponsored by 19 banks, who have so far introduced this facility. State-wise details of such RRBs alongwith names of sponsor banks is given in the attached Statement.

#### Statement

*State-wise details of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) alongwith names of respective sponsor banks who are operating draft facility as on 31.3.1996.*

Name of RRB	Sponsor Bank
1	2
<b>ANDHRA PRADESH</b>	
1. Rayalaseema Grameena Bank	Syndicate Bank
2. Sri Visakha Grameena Bank	State Bank of India
3. Sree Anantha Grameena Bank	Syndicate Bank
4. Shri Venkateshwara Grameena Bank	Indian Bank
5. Sri Saraswathi Grameena Bank	State Bank of Hyderabad
6. Golconda Grameena Bank	State Bank of Hyderabad
7. Kanakdurga Grameena Bank	Indian Bank
<b>BIHAR</b>	
8. Kosi Kshtriya Gramin Bank	Central Bank of India
9. Monghyr Kshetriya Gramin Bank	UCO Bank
10. Santhal Parganas Gramin Bank	State Bank of India
<b>GUJARAT</b>	
11. Banaskantha-Mehsana Gramin Bank	Dena Bank
<b>HARYANA</b>	
12. Hissar-Sirsa Kshetriya Gramin Bank	Punjab National Bank