

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2606
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2000
DEVELOPMENT OF WATERSHED
UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to form a Mission to encourage the development of Watersheds across the country;
- (a) if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government are giving adequate importance to the Watershed Development;
- (c) if so, the reasons for the slow Development of Watersheds across the country; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to encourage faster Development of Watersheds in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) & (b) At present, there is no plan to set up a Mission for the development of Watersheds in the country. The work of Watershed Development in the rural areas is undertaken through Zilla Parishads (ZPs)/District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) under the three main programmes namely Drought Prone Areas Programmes (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), on project basis in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Watershed Development'.

(c) The 'Watershed Development' is accorded high priority by the Government of India as is evident from the fact that the budget for this purpose has been enhanced from Rs.281.00 crore in 1999-2000 to Rs.824.00 crore during the current financial year.

(d) & (e) The Guidelines for Watershed Development, which have come into force on 1.4.1995, provide for an emphasis on social mobilization and community empowerments, besides technological interventions. A Watershed Project, according to these guidelines is expected to be completed during a period of five years. Any assessment of the progress in this regard can be made only after completion of the first set of projects sanctioned in the year 1995-96. However, a number of steps such as modification of the provisions of the Guidelines, increased involvement of State Governments, consultations with NGOs and experts involved in Watershed Development etc. have been taken to streamline the process of implementation.