

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1465
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2000
ASSISTANCE TO DROUGHT PRONE AREAS
S.P. LEPCHA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the total drought prone area in the country during 1950s, 60s, 80s and 1990s;
- (b) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to solve this problem; and
- (c) the amount spent to contain droughts in the country so far?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA)

- (a) Drought Prone Areas in the country were first identified with the launching of the Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) in 1973-74. The coverage of the Programme changed in 1995-96 due to changes in criteria adopted to identify drought prone areas. The criteria under the old DPAP guidelines identified only 55.3 m. ha for coverage under the programme. Subsequently, a High-level Technical Committee (Hanumantha Rao committee, 1994), identified some new areas for inclusion under the Programme at the same time identifying some existing Programme areas for exclusion from its coverage. However, a policy decision was taken by the Government to add the newly identified areas for coverage under the Programme as also not to delete any of the already covered areas under the Programme as these areas had not been completely treated for drought proofing. Consequently, the total Programme coverage increased to 74.6 m. ha with the adoption of the new Guidelines for Watershed development with effect from 1.4.1995.
- (b) Since inception till 1994-95, DPAP was implemented on sectoral basis. During this period, an area of 57.14 lakh hectares was estimated to have been treated under the core sectors of development namely land resource development, water resource development and afforestation/pasture development. Since 1995-96, the programme is being implemented under the Guidelines for Watershed Development exclusively on watershed project basis through people' s own organizations at the village level. During 1995-96 to 1999-2000, 8335 watershed projects have been sanctioned under the programme for development of 41.68 lakh hectares of area.
- (c) From 1973-74 to 1999-2000, an amount of Rs.2715.65 crore is estimated to have been spent under DPAP which included Central assistance of Rs.1368.69 crore and State share of Rs.1346.96 crore.