

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4810
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2000
DEVELOPMENT OF HIMALAYAN REGION
SAHIB SINGH VERMA

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) The proposals in Ninth Five Year Plans regarding development of Himalayan Region in terms of physical & financial dimensions of each component like water, energy, biological diversity, minerals, tourism, forest products, recreation etc.;
- (b) whether the gap between desired & available development is like to continue even after the implementation of the Ninth Five Year Plan ;
- (c) whether in order to fill up the gaps, the Government propose to constitute a `Task Force` or ` High Powered Committee` to make a comprehensive & integrated policy on the subject; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS

(SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a) The Ninth Five Year Plan document of the country does not contain state-wise, sector-wise, break-up of allocations for any region including the Himalayan Region. Planning and development of an area and allocation of funds for the purpose are primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. Hence each state, including those in the Himalayan region, prepares its own plan sectorwise. However, in order to supplement the efforts of the states of the Himalayan region the following initiatives have been taken: Firstly, hill areas which are co-extensive with the boundaries of the States are treated as Special Category States. These states derive two direct advantages from the formula used for distribution of central assistance: (a) after setting apart funds required for externally aided projects and reasonable amounts for Special Area Programmes, 30% of the balance is provided to these states even though their share of population is much lower; and (b) central assistance is provided to these states on liberal basis in terms of grant and loan composition i.e. the ratio of grant to loan is 90:10 while the ratio in the case of non special category states is 30:70. Further, the states' contribution of 15% which is mandatory for the Basic Minimum Services schemes is not applicable to the Special Category States. Secondly, designated hill areas which form part of a state are provided Special Central Assistance under the Hill Areas Development Programme.

Special Central Assistance is also provided to parts of some of these states under the Border Area Development Programme and the Tribal Sub-Plan.

(b) The Central Government and State Governments make their best efforts to develop these areas through their Five Year Plans and Annual Plans. While it can be hoped that a reasonable level of development will be achieved in these areas after the implementation of the Ninth Five Year Plan, such shortfalls as remain, will be known only after the plan programmes are fully implemented.

(c) & (d) Planning Commission had set up an Expert Group on `National Policy for Integrated Development in the Himalayas`. This group submitted its report in October, 1993. The recommendations of this group cover the whole spectrum of socio-economic development of the Himalayan Region. A Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Member (Environment & Forests), Planning Commission to examine and to take steps to get these recommendations implemented. It is, therefore, felt that there is no need to set up another `Task Force` or `High Powered Committee` on the subject.