

**COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE  
OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND  
SCHEDULED TRIBES  
(1986-87)**

**(EIGHTH LOK SABHA)**

**TWENTIETH REPORT**

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE  
(DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT)**

**Action taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Ninth Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Eighth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Rural Development)—Problem of Drinking Water Supply for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in States and Union Territories.**



*Presented to Lok Sabha on* \_\_\_\_\_

16 APR 1987

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on* \_\_\_\_\_

16 APR 1987

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
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**COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF  
SCHEDULED CASTES AND  
SCHEDULED TRIBES  
(1986-87)**

**Shri K.D Sultanpuri—*Chairman***

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2. Shri M.G. Agrawal—*Chief Legislative Committee Officer*
3. Shri Kuldip Sahai —*Senior Legislative Committee Officer*

## INTRODUCTION

1, the Chairman, Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Twentieth Report (Eighth Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Ninth Report on the Ministry of Agriculture (Deptt. of Rural Development)—Problem of drinking water supply for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in States and Union Territories.

2. The draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at their sitting held on 22nd December, 1986.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters :—

- I. Report
- II. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government.
- III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies.
- IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Ninth Report (Eighth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix. It would be observed therefrom that out of 33 recommendations made in the Report, 20 recommendations i.e. 60.6 per cent have been accepted by the Government ; The Committee do not desire to pursue 12 recommendations i.e. 36.37 per cent of their recommendations in view of Government's replies, 1 recommendation 3.03 per cent, in respect of which reply of Government has not been accepted by the Committee, and has been reiterated.

**KRISHAN DATT SULTANPURI,**

*Chairman,*

*Committee on the Welfare of  
Scheduled Castes and  
Scheduled Tribes.*

**NEW DELHI ;**

**February 23, 1987**

**Phalgun 4, 1908 (Saka)**

## CHAPTER I

### REPORT

**This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 9th Report of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the Ministry of Agriculture (Deptt. of Rural Development)—Problem of Drinking Water for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in States and Union Territories.**

**1.2. In para 2.54 of the Report, the Committee had recommended that the Central Government must take full responsibility to ensure that a reasonable share of the central funds given to the States and Union Territories was actually spent for providing safe drinking water to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Even in accordance with principle of financial accountability, it was the duty of Central Government to monitor the programmes financed by central funds. The Committee had expressed concern that the recommendations made by the Working Group of Planning Commission on the Development of Scheduled Castes in its report (1980) had not been implemented so far and the Department of Rural Development was still not having a clear picture about the actual coverage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe villages in various parts of the country.**

**1.3. In their reply dated 22 September, 1986, the Ministry of Agriculture have stated that as regards earmarking of funds for SC/ST programmes and ensuring that a reasonable share of Central funds given to the States and Union Territories is actually spent on Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, instructions have been issued to States/UTs to earmark funds under ARWSP for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the same proportion as is being earmarked under State MNP for Scheduled Castes under the Special Component Plan and Scheduled Tribes under the Tribal Sub-Plan. The Ministry have further stated that diversion of resources earmarked for SC/ST sector to other sectors will not be permitted. The Guidelines on implementation of the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme issued recently reiterate the special emphasis to be given to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in terms of planning of R.W.S. schemes, location of sources, ensuring accessibility and in terms of minimum exclusive financial provision for providing drinking water to these communities.**

**1.4. The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Government which is evasive in nature. The Committee desire that the Union Government should collect data regarding the number of problematic villages and the coverage of SC/ST population separately and the allotment of funds for**

coverage of SC/ST population in problematic villages as in Committee's opinion there has been a neglect in the matter of allotment of funds for this purpose. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Central Government must take full responsibility to ensure that a reasonable share of the Central funds given to the States and Union Territories is actually spent for providing safe drinking water to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Committee would like to emphasise once again that in accordance with the principle of financial accountability, it is the duty of Central Government to monitor the programmes financed by central funds and to fix up physical and financial targets.

## CHAPTER II

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

#### **Recommendation No. 1 (Para No. 1.16)**

The Committee note that the total investment made by Central and State Governments on Water Supply and sanitation during first to Fourth Plans was of the order of 855 crores, over 65 percent of which was spent in urban areas. During this period, the water supply programme was not given high enough priority in the national planning process. During the Fifth Plan the expenditure on water supply and sanitation sector rose to 1020 crores and during the Sixth Plan the total investment in this sector further increased to 3972.33 crores which is almost four times the total investment during the Fifth Plan.

#### **[Reply of Government**

This being a statement the Department has no comments to offer.

[Ministry of Agriculture (Deptt. of Rural Development) O.M.  
No. 11013/1/86 RWS dated 22.9.1986]

#### **Recommendation No. 2 (Para No. 1.17)**

The Committee regret to point out that the Central Government have no information regarding the specific schemes implemented by States/Union Territories in this sector during First to Fourth Five Year Plan periods since the subject matter is the responsibility of the State Government. As regards achievements made in this sector during this period, the Ministry have stated that no data at national level is available with them.

#### **Reply of Government**

This Department has no further submissions to make.

#### **Recommendation No. 4 (Para No. 1.19)**

When large amounts of Central funds are invested in States and Union Territories, it is incumbent upon the Central Government to oversee the spending of these funds in the best interest of the public at large and watch progress and achievements under the various schemes and programmes,



especially those which are sponsored by the Central Government. This is a fundamental principle of financial accountability. Accordingly, the basic information and data should be obtained from the State/Union Territory Governments by the concerned Department of the Central Government. The Committee, therefore, recommend that there should be an effective monitoring cell at the Central level which should keep a close watch on the implementation of water supply schemes in all States/Union Territories. The Cell should also maintain important statistical data regarding the targets fixed and actual achievements made in this sector in States/Union Territories).

### **Reply of Government**

The observation of the Committee has been noted. The existing monitoring cell in the Department monitors the progress in the implementation of the programme on the basis of the monthly, quarterly and annual reports being received from the States/UTs. The format for submission of reports have recently been revised to make monitoring more effective. Periodic field visits by officers of the Department provide strong monitoring input to the existing set up. Efforts would be made to strengthen the monitoring Cell and Streamline the management information system including computerisation.

The release of second instalment of funds to the States/UTs Governments has been linked up with the receipt of detailed implementation reports and certificates from the States/UTs. This is expected to make the monitoring more efficient and time bound. Monitoring Investigation units in different States are being funded under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme. These are responsible for effective monitoring at the State level and for furnishing necessary information inputs to the Central Govt.

### **Recommendation No. 5 (Para No. 1.20)**

The total investment in this sector both of States and Central Plan during the Seventh Plan period would be of the order of Rupees 6522.47 crores.

### **Reply of Government**

The outlay in the Seventh Plan for Rural Water Supply Sanitation is as under :—

#### **1. States/UTs Plans**

Rural Water Supply under MNP	Rs. 2253.25 crores
Sanitation	Rs. 96.75 crores

## 2. Central Plan

Centrally sponsored ARWSP

Rs. 1201.22 crores

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Total : Rs. 3551.22 crores  
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Note : The total outlay under the Rural Water Supply Sector alone is Rs. 3454.47 crores.

### **Recommendation No. 8 (Para No. 2.43)**

During the Fourth Plan the Central Government came to the conclusion that Rural Water Supply Schemes were not being implemented properly by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and as such the Central Government decided to ask the various State Governments to identify the villages which had difficulty in meeting their water supply needs. The Central Government provided assistance to the States for the special investigation divisions to carry out the survey during the Fourth Plan. As a result of this survey the various State Governments had identified about 1.53 lakh villages as problem villages in 1972. Subsequently, many State Governments stated that the identification done in 1972 was not complete and therefore, more problem villages had been identified. At the beginning of the Sixth Plan, in 1980, the various State Governments had indicated that the total identified problem villages as 3, 24, 770 of which they had shown a coverage of 93, 986 thus leaving a balance of 2, 30, 784 problem villages at the commencement of the Sixth Plan.

#### **Reply of Government**

This being a statement, this Departments has no comments to offer.

### **Recommendation No. 10 (Para No. 2.45)**

The Committee note that the concept of minimum needs programme was introduced in the Fifth Plan (1974-79). The basic idea was to provide minimum basic facilities to the rural population including safe drinking water. The States were given guidelines for implementing rural water supply programme and were requested to extend the water supply facilities under the MNP to the already identified problem villages.

#### **Reply of Government**

This being only a statement this Department has no comments to offer.

### **Recommendation No. 11 (Para No. 2.46)**

In order to accelerate the progress of provision of water supply in problem villages the Central Government had introduced a scheme called Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme in 1972-73 under which 100% grant was given to the States/U.Ts. This scheme, however was discontinued in the Fifth Plan in view of the fact that Rural Water Supply was one of the items under the minimum needs programme to be implemented by the States in the States Sector.

However, the Central Government realised later during the Fifth Plan itself that the States were not following the guidelines strictly and were not concentrating on Rural Water Supply Schemes under MNP. Government of India, therefore, reintroduced Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme in the year 1977-78 and detailed guidelines were issued to the States.

#### **Reply of Government**

This also is a statement. The Department of Rural Development has no comments to offer.

### **Recommendation No. 13 (Para 2.48)**

The Committee have been informed that in order to give necessary priority in the implementation of Rural Water Supply Programme, in the conference of the Ministers held in 1982 and again in 1983 it was resolved that in covering problem villages priority should be given to the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes population. It was also resolved that whenever a water source is provided in a village it should be located in the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes areas provided it is technically and logistically not impossible to do so.

The Committee have been further informed that because of the priority given to the Rural Water Supply under 20-Point Programme the Central Government had provided additional grant under ARP to the State/Union Territories during the Sixth Plan period. In order to improve the implementation of the Rural Water Supply Scheme in 1983-84 additional grants were given to the States under ARP and MNP to the extent of Rs. 116.11 crores. Though initially Rs. 60 crores had been provided under the ARP for the Sixth Plan, the releases to the States/Union Territories under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and the new incentive programme had been of the order of Rs. 919 crores.

#### **Reply of Government**

This is only a statement and no comment is offered.

### **Recommendation No. 14 (Para 2.49)**

The data furnished to the Committee regarding coverage of rural population during the year 1980-81 to 1983-84 reveals that the coverage of Scheduled Caste population during these three years ranged between 15 to 16.5 percent of the total rural population. As regards coverage of Scheduled Tribes population the Committee note that the percentage was 10.55 in 1981-82 which came down to 8.31 in 1982-83 and was further reduced to 7.46 in 1983-84. These figures clearly indicate that as far as the coverage of Scheduled Tribe population is concerned, the progress has not been encouraging. Instead of the percentage going up, it has been going down. The Committee would like the Central Government to examine this matter as to why the coverage of tribal population has a downward trend and they should take up the matter for detailed examination with the tribal majority States.

### **Reply of Government**

The recommendation has been noted. The States which have shown a downward trend in the matter of coverage of scheduled tribe population from 1981-82 to 1983-84 would be asked to examine the matter, and take appropriate remedial measures. The priority to be given to Scheduled Tribes has been already indicated in the Guidelines issued to the States and Union Territories. The States/U.Ts. shall remark minimum outlays under ARWSP equivalent to the Percentage outlays remarked out of MNP under the Tribal Sub-Plan for taking up rural water supply schemes exclusively for Scheduled Tribes. No diversion of funds will be permitted.

### **Recommendation No. 17 (Para No. 2.52)**

The Committee note that no assessment regarding Scheduled Caste villages where problem of drinking water is acute on account of the practice of untouchability even though water sources are physically available has been made and the Ministry have no information on the subject. The Committee find that a working Group for the formulation of the strategy and priorities for the development of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and weaker sections of Society for the period 1980-85 was constituted by the Planning Commission in July, 1980. The working Group Report submitted in September, 1980 dealt with various problems relating to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The working group made specific recommendations regarding collection of basic data regarding number of villages in the State, number of villages having facilities of drinking water, number of Scheduled Caste localities with drinking water facilities and details of villages which have a drinking water source but where the harijan locality is without drink-water facilities. The working group felt that after the collection of such data

the precise programme for providing drinking water to the Scheduled Castes immediately be drawn up.

### **Reply of Government**

The observation has been noted. Action is being taken to cover Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste localities with safe drinking water facilities.

### **Comments of the Committee**

The Committee may be apprised of the precise steps taken to cover Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe localities with safe drinking water facilities.

### **Recommendation No. 20 (Para No. 2.55)**

The Committee trust that the Central Government will take up this matter more seriously and obtain complete data regarding coverage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe villages from all the States/Union Territories so that the implementation of water supply schemes during the Seventh Plan period can be done more realistically.

### **Reply of Government**

The recommendation has been noted. As already mentioned earlier, the coverage of SC/ST population and the benefits accruing to them under Rural Water Supply Programme are being monitored separately through the revised proforma of monthly, quarterly and annual progress reports. The system of concurrent evaluation is going to provide information on a continuing basis on the actual coverage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and problems encountered, if any, on providing these facilities.

### **Recommendation No. 22 (Para No. 3.14)**

The Committee note that the outlay provided in the Sixth Plan for rural water supply was Rs.2007.11 crores comprising of Rs. 1407.11 crores under the State Sector Minimum Needs Programme and Rs. 600 crores under the centrally sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme. The Central Government also announced a new programme under Rural Water Supply in 1983-84 under which additional grants were given to the states based on performance under the normal rural water supply programme to the extent of Rs. 116.11 crores. Though initially only Rs. 600 crores has been provided by the Central Government under the ARP for the Sixth Plan, the actual releases to States/Union Territories under Accelerated Rural Water supply Programme and new incentive programme has been of the order of Rs. 919 crores,

### **Reply of Government**

This being a statement the Department has no comments to offer.

### **Recommendation No. 26 (Para No. 3.18)**

The Committee are happy to note that the assistance rendered by World Bank bilateral agencies and UNICEF has provided additional resources to the State for implementing the projects of Drinking Water Supply in rural areas. The Committee were informed during evidence that appraisal machinery in the case of external agencies is better and the utilisation of equipments like drills and handpumps is not only monitored by the Government of India but also by the donor agencies. In many instances the donor agencies also engage additional experts who are stationed in the project areas to oversee the implementation of the programmes. The Committee hope all this will bring about the desired results.

### **Reply of Government**

The observation is noted.

### **Recommendation No.27 (Para No. 3.19)**

The Committee need hardly stress that the primary responsibility of monitoring the implementation of these programmes should rest on the Central Government and there should be a system of regular and frequent visits of technical experts to the States and Union Territories for carrying out field inspections to assess the progress of water supply programmes. The Committee feel that by introducing the system of regular field inspections by technical experts better results could be achieved in the implementation of Rural Water Supply Scheme.

### **Reply of Government**

The recommendation has been noted. Field visits by officers of this Department and its technical wing which already serve an important monitoring objective are expected to become more systematic and regular in the near future.

### **Comments of the Committee**

The Committee would like to be informed in clear and specific terms whether field visits/inspections by technical experts to assess the progress of rural water supply programmes have actually become more systematic and regular,

**Recommendation No. 28 (Para No. 3.20)**

The Committee also recommend that while preparing new water supply Scheme for which assistance is sought from World Bank, Bilateral agencies and UNICEF highest priority should be accorded to the backward areas with a view to improve water supply facilities for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections. The Committee trust that the Central Government will issue suitable instructions in this regard.

**Reply of Government**

The States/UTs would be suitably instructed to keep in view the needs of the backward areas while preparing projects for bilateral World Bank and UNICEF Assistance. However, it may be pointed out here that Bilateral aided projects are generally taken up in areas where special problems in the rural drinking water sector exist. Benefits from these projects which are generally fairly comprehensive in nature accrue invariably to the Scheduled Caste populations of that area also.

**Recommendation No. 29 (Para No. 4.14)**

The Committee note that the total availability of drilling rigs in the country as on 10. 9. 85 was 886 out of which 550 had been purchased by the State Governments themselves and the rest were made available either by International Agencies like UNICEF etc. or by Government of India. The Committee further note that 134 rigs received from UNICEF prior to 1978 are known as 'First general rigs' and most of them have outlived their operational life. 87 rigs received subsequently which are known as 'New Generation rigs' are being continuously operated by the State Governments.

**Reply of Government**

This being a statement, no comment is offered.

**Recommendation No. 30 (Para No. 4.15)**

A Committee was set up in 1982 to assess the total demand of various types of rigs in the country during the period 1983-90 to achieve the targets of International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation decade. That Committee, after taking into account the availability of rigs in the country, had assessed that 648 additional rigs would be needed for the period 1983-90. It also came to the conclusion that the country's requirements could be met mostly from indigenous sources but some special rigs would still require to be imported.

**Reply of Government**

This is a statement. Hence no comments.

**Recommendation No. 31 (Para No 4.16)**

The Committee recommend that timely action should be taken for the import of rigs which are presently not being manufactured in India with the help of UNICEF and other foreign agencies.

**Reply of Government**

The recommendation has been noted.

**Recommendation No. 32 (Para No. 4.17)**

While the Committee do appreciate the role of UNICEF and their experts in providing necessary assistance in the procurement of rigs, their spare parts and for keeping the rigs operational, the Committee cannot help sounding a note of caution that total dependence on outside agencies cannot continue indefinitely. This might also affect the morale and capability of Indian experts and technicians in the long run.

**Reply of Government**

The observations have been noted. Some of the States have established separate Mechanical divisions for the operation and maintenance of rigs.

The Government of India is also running training programmes with UNICEF involvement for drillers on the operation and maintenance of rigs.

Ministry of Industry has been requested to take suitable policy decisions regarding indigenous production of rigs and spares in the industrial sector so that self sufficiency in this field could be achieved and dependence on external agencies avoided.

**Comments of the Committee**

The Committee should be apprised of the policy decision taken by the Ministry of Industry regarding indigenous production of rigs and spares in the industrial sector and specific efforts made to achieve the self-sufficiency in the field.

**Recommendation No. 33 (Para No. 4.18)**

The Committee are on the firm view that it is high time that the Central Government provides necessary infrastructure in the country and encouragement for the indigenous production of all types of rigs in India indulging highly sophisticated rigs. If necessary, local technicians and engineers in this field should be sent for training abroad. Simultaneously, a training programme should be devised and implemented forthwith with the help of



foreign experts to train our own technicians and experts for the proper handling and maintenance of drilling rigs. The Committee would like to be apprised of the positive steps taken by the Central Government in this regard.

### **Reply of Government**

The Committee's observation has been noted. As mentioned under recommendation No. 32, Ministry of Industry has been requested to make suitable policy decisions in the matter. There are at present manufacturers who manufacture low and medium capacity rigs, in some cases with foreign collaboration. Deep well handpumps have been developed over the years and presently there are about 35-40 manufacturers in the country. States have been advised to procure standard India Mark-II handpumps manufactured indigenously, particularly those developed by Richardsons & Cruddas Limited which is a Public Sector undertaking under the Ministry of Industry.

As mentioned earlier, the Government of India runs training programmes for drillers in the operation and maintenance of rigs, wherever, foreign experts are engaged, the bilateral agencies have also been advised to give sufficient training to the Indian technicians assisting them so as to enable them to handle the programme independently.

## CHAPTER III

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT REPLIES

#### Recommendation No. 3 (Para No. 1.18)

The Committee feel surprised that inspite of the fact that the Central investment in water supply and sanitation sector has been increasing tremendously plan after plan, the Central Government are still taking shelter under the plea that implementation of schemes in this sector is the responsibility of the State Government.

#### Reply of Government

It is submitted again that water supply and sanitation is a State subject executed under the State Sector Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). The Central Government is operating the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) with a view to supplementing the efforts of the States/ Union Territories in providing drinking water facilities to the rural areas. The quarterly, half yearly and annual targets fixed under this programme would now ensure that the available funds are properly utilised and physical targets achieved.

Detailed guidelines for implementation of the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme have been issued to the States and UTs. These lay down the parameters within which Rural Water Supply Programmes are to be planned, implemented and monitored, as expected by the Central Govt. .

To help the process of providing safe drinking water facilities to the entire rural population the Technology Mission on "Drinking water in villages and Related Water management" has been set up. (A copy of the Project Document is enclosed).

#### Recommendation No. 6 (Para No. 1.21)

The Committee trust that the Central Government will closely watch the progress in this sector in the coming years particularly in the rural areas where majority of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections reside and would refrain from putting forward the excuse that "full

responsibility for implementation of drinking water supply schemes entirely rests with the States and the Union Territories.

### **Reply of Government**

Efforts would be made to ensure proper monitoring of this Sector. The monitoring formats have been revised recently to elicit complete information pertaining to progress in this sector. The formats ensure monitoring of progress/benefits accruing to SCs/STs out of these programmes. The guidelines for the implementation of the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme lay down on the States/UTs the requirements of exclusive and special emphasis on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes populations while formulating and implementing Rural Water Supply Schemes.

### **Recommendation No. 7 (Para No 1.22)**

The Committee feel that the Central Government is definitely answerable to the people as to why safe drinking water is not available in all towns and villages even 38 years after independence.

### **Reply of Government**

In line with the objective of International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-91) the Seventh Plan, aims at providing adequate safe drinking water to the entire rural population.

### **Recommendation No. 9 (Para No. 2.44)**

The Committee were informed during evidence that the criterion for identification of problem villages fixed initially during the Fourth Plan has since been changed and under the new criterion more villages come within the definition of the 'Problem Village' as the distance of 1.6 K.M. fixed originally for the water supply source has been brought down to 0.5 kilometres at present. In view of this shift in the criterion of identifying problem villages, some of the non-problem villages as on 1.4.1985 would indicate the number of problem villages in accordance with the definition. The fresh data according to the new criterion would be available to the Ministry by the end of March, 1986. The survey as on 1.4.1985 would also indicate the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe hamlets separately.

### **Reply of Government**

Identification of new problem villages according to the old criteria is still in progress. The surveys being detailed exercises would indicate the SC/ST populations in identified villages. Coverage of villages where no safe source of water is located within 0.5 KM radius, would begin only

after the drinking water problem has been solved in villages identified as problem villages according to the old criteria.

**Recommendation No. 12 (Para No. 2.47)**

The Committee are at a loss to understand why the Central Government suddenly discontinued the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme after introducing it in 1972-73. The Central Government should have watched the progress of the scheme for the full duration of a Plan period before taking any hasty step to discontinue the scheme on the ground that Rural Water Supply was to be implemented under MNP in the State Sector.

**Reply of Government**

The Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme was introduced in the Fourth Year (1972-73) of the IVth Five Year Plan (1969-74), and was in operation till the end of that Plan period. During the Fifth Plan (1974-79) the Minimum Needs Programme was introduced with its focus on the provision of basic human needs. Rural Water Supply was one of the Sectors which was included under the MNP. It was expected that the State Governments would devote full priority and resources on provision of drinking water facilities to the identified problem villages under the MNP. Therefore, on the recommendations of the National Development Council the Centrally Sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme was withdrawn.

**Recommendation No. 15 (Para No. 2.50)**

The Committee have been informed that the coverage of rural population at the beginning of the Seventh Plan is estimated at 53.2 per cent. Department of Rural Development have stated that 100% of the rural population is also expected to be covered with water supply facilities by March 1991, according to the target fixed under the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade which commenced in India on 1.4.1981. The representative of the Ministry, however, admitted during evidence that with the present resources available it may not be possible to achieve 100% coverage of the rural population by 1990-91, because of the constraints of resources. Within the para-metres of the financial constraints only 73% of the rural population is expected to be covered by the end of 1990-91.

**Reply of Government**

The Working Group for the Seventh Plan had estimated a requirement of Rs. 7700 crores for 100% coverage of the rural population. However, the Seventh Plan outlay for rural water supply is only Rs. 3454.47 crores. No doubt there is wide resources gap. However, attempt would be made to

bridge this gap to the extent possible by developing low cost options as an alternative to the cost intensive piped-water supply schemes. With this objective in view, the Technology Mission on Drinking Water in villages and Related Water Management has been launched recently. The mission would aim at improving the performance and cost effectiveness of the on-going water supply programmes. This will be done by providing low-cost solutions to identified problems associated with the supply of safe drinking water through application of scientific and technological inputs available in the various national laboratories.

#### **Recommendation No. 16 (Para No. 2.51)**

The Committee are at a loss to understand why the Central Government have fixed unrealistic targets under the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade as the constraint of resources for the Water Supply Sector is not a new phenomenon and Government of India should have made a realistic assessment of the availability of funds for the water supply sector for the period of the decade. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the achievements of the International Drinking water Supply and Sanitation Decade should be assessed immediately and realistic targets should be fixed which can be achieved according to the present availability of funds. It is unfair to mislead the people by fixing inflated targets which are incapable of being achieved.

#### **Reply of Government**

As already indicated under recommendation No. 15 (Para 2.50), in line with the objective of International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1991), the aim is to provide adequate drinking water supply facilities to the entire rural population. During the Mid-term review of the Seventh Plan, the progress of provision of drinking water facilities can be further reviewed and on the basis of achievements made, the question of refixing the targets can be considered. The fact that a resource constraint exists has led to a policy emphasis on formulating and implementing low cost water supply schemes. The guidelines issued recently clearly indicate that piped water supply scheme which are capital intensive are to be taken up only where there are no sources of potable water and no cost effective alternatives are available. Spot sources i. e. tubewells with hand pumps which are relatively of low cost, should be taken up wherever feasible, emphasis is also to be given on providing water through development of traditional sources and improving water collection structures through use of appropriate technology. With the objective of introducing low cost solutions to the vast drinking water problem, a Technology Mission on Drinking Water in Villages and Related Water Management has been recently launched. The Mission would aim at improving the performance and cost

effectiveness of the on going and future water supply programmes by providing low cost solutions to identified problems associated with the supply of safe drinking water on a sustained and long term basis. This would be done through application of suitable Scientific and Technological inputs available and to be developed in various applied research institution, national laboratories etc., in an interdisciplinary and integrated way. It is expected that the Technology Mission activities and the special policy emphasis on low cost solutions would contribute substantially to the achievement of the target as envisaged in the Seventh Plan.

### **Comments of the Committee**

The Committee may be apprised of as to what extent the Technology Mission activities and the special policy emphasis on low cost solutions have contributed to the achievement of the target as envisaged in the Seventh Plan.

### **Recommendation No. 18 (Para No. 2.53)**

The Committee are surprised to note that no serious action was taken on the recommendations of the working Group and till today complete data as suggested by the working Group is not available with the Ministry. During evidence, the representative of the Department of Rural Development stated that they had issued a circular in 1981 in response to the suggestions made in the report of the working group but further action could only be taken when complete information was received from the States/ Union Territories.

As regards water supply programme in tribal areas, the Committee were informed that in all States where tribal sub-plan is applicable the State Governments are implementing the Water Supply Programme under the minimum needs programme Funds under MNP are earmarked to be spent in such areas. Since such earmarking of funds has been done only in the State sector full details of the schemes implemented to benefit the tribal population are not available with the Ministry.

### **Reply of Government**

A System of concurrent evaluation involving preparation of monthly status reports on rural water supply in villages is being introduced shortly. Detailed surveys with regard to all aspects of on going R.W.S. programmes would be conducted by independent academic and research institutions to cover all the districts in the country. These surveys would focus on the physical and social accessibility of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes populations to water sources provided under the Rural Water Supply Pro-

grammes and status regarding this aspect would be available on a monthly basis. Schemes under ARWSP are examined from the point of view of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes coverage. States/Union Territories are required to furnish information regarding hamlets/habitations with Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population in the proforma for scrutiny and approval of schemes under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programmes. Guidelines issued recently also provide that the needs of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be given highest priority so as to ensure that they have equal access to water supply facilities. Accordingly Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes habitations are to be given first preference at the time of formulating schemes. Sources/Water collection points meant to benefit the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe population should be located within the SC/ST habitations so that there is easy access.

#### **Recommendation No. 21 (Para No. 2.56)**

The Committee would also like to point out that the incidence of water-borne disease is higher in rural areas because of the non-availability of protected water supply. Especially vulnerable are the weaker sections of the society such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who live in unhygienic conditions. In view of this it is all the more important that exact data on the extent of this problem in Scheduled Caste localities and tribal areas is collected at the earliest for taking necessary remedial measures.

#### **Reply of Government**

The recommendation has been noted. The Technology Mission on Drinking Water in Villages and Related Water Management will look into area specific problems like water-borne diseases, salinity and brackishness etc. and work out low cost solutions. During the period 1986-90, 50 pilot projects would be taken up in different parts of the country. The experience and insight gathered from these projects would be replicated in other parts of the country. The States/UTs would be requested to collect necessary information regarding incidence of water borne diseases in SC/ST localities. Before tackling a particular problem such as incidence of water borne diseases, the Technology Mission would identify the extent of the problem. This would normally involve identifying the vulnerable sections of the community including the Scheduled Caste population.

#### **Comments of the Committee**

The Committee hope that the Ministry will pursue the matter vigorously and keep a close watch so that 50 pilot projects could be taken up in different parts of the country, as early as possible and incidence of water borne diseases among Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in rural areas is tackled at a brisk pace.

### **Recommendation No. 25 (Para No. 3.15)**

Till 1977-78 most of the monitoring of the implementation of the water supply schemes was carried out by the States and the physical and financial progress achieved were only reflected in the Annual Plan/Five Year Plan Documents which the States submitted to the Planning Commission. These documents used to be the only source for information on the physical and financial progress. With the reintroduction of the Accelerated Rural Project in 1977-78, the Central Government started releasing funds for schemes to be implemented in the identified problem villages. In order to gear up the monitoring system the States were requested to furnish information on the progress both in physical and financial terms on a quarterly basis. In order to evaluate and analyse these quarterly reports the Central Public Health and Environment Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) was strengthened with a small monitoring cell having a staff of about seven including a Deputy Adviser. The Central Public Health and Environment Engineering Organisation is the technical Wing of the Ministry of urban Development responsible for scrutiny and clearing of schemes under Accelerated Rural Project. The Committee find that it is a small organisation with only 23 technical officers and it can hardly do justice to monitor the entire programme under the Water Supply and Sanitation sector in the country. As a matter of fact the entire monitoring of the implementation of the Rural Water Supply Scheme is done at the Central level in Delhi by obtaining reports from the State Governments as well as on the basis of utilisation certificates received from the Accountant Generals or other financial authorities of the States and Union Territories.

#### **Reply of Government**

With the bifurcation of the subject of urban and rural water supply the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation—(Rural Water Supply) under the Department of Rural Development is now responsible for scrutiny and technical clearance of schemes submitted by States/UTs under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme.

### **Recommendation No. 24 (Para No. 3.16)**

In view of the fact that the Central Government is providing large sums of money to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for the Rural Water Supply Programme it is incumbent on the Central Government to exercise effective control on spending of funds. For this purpose, a strong monitoring agency is required. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Government to strengthen the Central Public Health and Environment Engineering Organisation so that officers from this organisation can undertake field inspections to properly assess the implementation of the various programmes and evaluate the actual benefits



accrued to the people living in the rural areas. It is needless to point out that majority of the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections are living in the rural areas and it is necessary to strengthen the monitoring system in order to ensure that the Rural Water Supply schemes are properly implemented in the rural areas. The present system of evaluating and analysing the quarterly reports submitted by the State Governments as well as the utilisation of certificates received from the financial authorities [while sitting in Delhi does not appear to be adequate and satisfactory.

### **Reply of Government**

The officers of the Department invariably undertake field tours whenever they visit states in an official connection. This field visits provide a strong monitoring input to the programme.

It has also been decided to undertake concurrent evaluation of rural water supply programme through independent institutions which will give necessary feed back for further improving the programme. Monthly status reports with regard to selected districts all over the country covering important aspects like the provisions, accessibility and maintenance and operation of water sources/distribution points for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes would be obtained for analysis and immediate corrective action, if required.

Central assistance is already being provided for monitoring and investigation units set up in different states. In the guidelines issued (para 28), the necessity of physical monitoring through field inspections by officers from the State Headquarters has been emphasised together with bringing out the necessity of maintaining an inspection schedule for each supervisory level. The State Monitoring Cells, headed by a senior engineer and with adequate staff are to be responsible for collecting information from executing agencies through prescribed reports and returns, maintenance of the data and timely submission of returns to Government of India.

### **Recommendation No. 25 (Para 3.17)**

The Committee fully agree with the observations made in the Seventh Plan Documents that it is important that the State Governments who are the implementing agencies for water supply and sanitation programme should pay attention to the organisation and administrative structures at various levels, in order to utilise the funds more efficiently and productively. The monitoring and evaluation systems need to be made more efficient and effective at the Central, State and District levels,

The Committee trust that the Government of India will also take suitable steps in this direction.

#### **Reply of Government**

In the guidelines on ARWSP recently issued, detailed functions of the Monitoring and Investigation Units set up with Central Funds have been specified. Maintenance of schedule of Inspections by officers of the State Government from the Headquarter to the Block level, visits to work sites and involvement of agencies other than the executing agency in inspections have been recommended. In order to further strengthen the Monitoring and Evaluation network at the State Level, the Government of India has recently released a sum of Rs. 22 lakh to the States for the purchase of a micro computer each.

## CHAPTER IV

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLY OF GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

#### Recommendation No. 19 (Para No. 2.54)

The Committee are not able to reconcile with the attitude of the Central Government in dealing with the Water supply Problems of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. It is needless to point out that there is heavy investment of central funds for water supply programme and during the Sixth Plan itself the releases to the States/Union Territories under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme and the new incentive programme had been of the order of Rs. 919 crores. The Committee need hardly stress that the responsibility of the Central Government does not end simply by releasing funds to the States/Union Territories. The Central Government must take full responsibility to ensure that a reasonable share of the central funds given to the States and Union Territories is actually spent for providing safe drinking water to Scheduled Casts and Scheduled Tribes. Even in accordance with principle of financial accountability, it is the duty of Central Govt. to monitor the programmes financed by central funds. It is a matter of great concern that the recommendations made by the Working Group in its report (1980) have not been implemented so far and the Department of Rural Development is still not having a clear picture about the actual coverage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe villages in various parts of the country.

#### Reply of Government

As regards collection of data regarding coverage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe Population, the revised progress report format would help monitor coverage of SC/ST population separately and in detail.

As regards earmarking of funds for SC/ST programmes and ensuring that a reasonable share of Central funds given to the States and Union Territories is actually spent of SCs/STs, instructions have been issued to States/UTs to earmark funds under ARWSP for SCs and STs in the same proportion as is being earmarked under State MNP for SCs under the Spacial Component Plan and STs under the Tribal sub-plan. Diversion of resources earmarked for SC/ST sector to other sectors will not be permitted.

The Guidelines on implementation of the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme issued recently reiterate the special emphasis to be given to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in terms of planning of R.W.S. schemes, location of sources, ensuring accessibility and in terms of minimum exclusive financial provisions for providing drinking water to these communities.

**Comments of the Committee**

(Please see Chapter I Para 1.4)

NEW DELHI;

February, 23, 1987

Phalguna 4, 1908(S)

**KRISHAN DATT SULTANPURI,**  
*Chairman,*  
*Committee on the Welfare of*  
*Scheduled Castes and*  
*Scheduled Tribes.*

## APPENDIX

(Vide Para 4 of Introduction)

*Analysis of the Action Taken by Government of the Recommendations  
Contained in the Ninth Report of the Committee  
(Eighth Lok Sabha)*

I.	Total number of Recommendations	33
II.	Recommendations which have been accepted by Government. (Vide recommendations Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.)	
	Number	20
	Percentage of total	60.6
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies (Vide recommendations Sl. Nos. 3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 18, 21, 23, 24 and 25.)	
	Number	12
	Percentage of total	36.37
IV.	Recommendation in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted and which require reiteration.	
	Number	1
	Percentage of total	3.63