

(14) The Indian Copper Corporation (Acquisition of Undertaking) Bill, 1972.

(15) The Former Secretary of State Service Officers (Conditions of Service) Bill, 1972.

14.38 hrs.

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
SEVENTEENTH REPORT

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-  
TARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING  
AND TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJ  
BAHADUR): I beg to present the  
Seventeenth Report of the Business  
Advisory Committee.

STATEMENT RE. DROUGHT SITUA-  
TION IN THE COUNTRY

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND  
AGRICULTURE (SHRI F. A. AHMED):  
I beg to lay on the Table a statement on  
drought situation in the country.

Statement

Hon'ble Members are aware that due to inadequacy of rains and erratic behaviour of the monsoons till the end of July over large parts of the country and in some parts even during August and September, this year's Kharif crop has suffered considerable damage and scarcity conditions have occurred in varying degrees in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Maharashtra, Mysore, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, U.P. and West Bengal. The worst affected States are Maharashtra, Gujrat, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. In Bihar, U.P., Mysore, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, where the prospects of the Kharif crops appeared bleak at one time, the position has improv-

ed considerably as a result of rains received later in the season.

2. In order to relieve the distress caused by the drought, adequate relief measures have been organised. All-out effort has been made in starting relief works, providing gratuitous relief and making arrangements for the supply of drinking water, fodder and for preventing the outbreak of epidemics in the affected areas. At present 69,594 relief works employing 35.38 lakh persons are in operation in various parts in the country. The relief works started are such as would result in the creation of durable assets and mainly consist of soil conservation, afforestation, minor and medium irrigation, deepening and construction of wells, tanks and other similar projects. Besides, full advantage has been taken of the approved Plan and non-Plan schemes for creating employment opportunities in the affected areas.

3. Although the main emphasis has been on starting the relief works to provide necessary purchasing power to the affected population, yet to provide relief to the old, the infirm and those who are unable to work for some reason or the other, gratuitous relief has been provided. At present, nearly 17 lakh persons are in receipt of gratuitous relief in various parts of the country. Besides, over 30 lakh persons, including children and nursing mothers are benefitted by the free-feeding and milk distribution programmes.

4. In accordance with the prescribed procedure for giving central assistance, central teams have by now visited almost all the drought-affected States. The total ceiling of expenditure for 1972-73 fixed by Government on the recommendations of the Central Teams for the States visited so far aggregates to about Rs. 102 crores. Besides, *ad-hoc* assistance of about Rs. 30 crores has also been released according to the requirements of the State Governments concerned.

5. Special mention may be made of the Emergency Production Programme initiated by my Ministry to retrieve the loss in Kharif production and increase the produc-