

**Conference on Safe Drinking water
to Rural Population**

*453. SHRI AMARSINH RATHAWA:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be
pleased to state :

(a) whether a Conference was held to consider ways and means to provide safe and adequate drinking water facilities to the entire rural population including adivasis ;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the subjects discussed and the suggestions made at the said Conference ; and

(c) the steps taken to implement those suggestions ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c) A Conference of State Ministers' Secretaries and Chief Engineers in-charge of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation was held on 11th and 12th February, 1987 in New Delhi to provide safe drinking water facilities to all rural population including Adivasis during the Seventh Plan. The consensus arrived at the Conference is given in the statement below. These were sent to the State Governments for necessary adoption. The Central Government is also taking action wherever necessary.

Statement

1. Drinking Water Supply Programme in the rural areas should be kept in the core sector of the Plan and should be given highest priority among all other Plan schemes. It is necessary to do so to immunize this programme from the vicissitude of budgetary fluctuations. Allocation of further financial resources was considered essential to achieve the mission objective of supplying adequate drinking water to 2.27 lakh problem villages within the next 3 years.

2. The document of Technology Mission dated 15th January, 1987 and also all the submission documents of the Technology Mission were accepted.

3. A National Commission of Drinking Water and Sanitation with adequate management flexibility and adequate financial power may be set up. The proposed body should act as the forum for all like minded people in the field of drinking water management and help to develop proper technology mix and policies in the field of water supply and sanitation.

4. Similarly for more autonomy, management flexibility and ability to draw institutional finances the State Government may consider to constitute Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Authority or Boards or Corporation at the state level.

5. Top most priority should be given to achieve the Technology Mission objective of covering 2.27 lakh Problem villages, already identified, under ARWSP, MNP and Technology Mission.

6. Spill-over villages of Sixth Plan, if any, should be tackled within 1987-88 itself and thereafter the remaining problem villages should be taken up.

7. All State Governments agreed to submit within the 28th February, 1987 an action plan for achieving specific targets in the next six months and the year ending March, 1988.

8. All State Governments would prepare a document on the line of the Technology Mission Document. January, 1987 for the State, covering the component of the Technology Mission to be implemented in the State.

9. There would be a fifth submission in Technology Mission, on SOURCE FINDING, CONSERVATION AND RECHARGING OF THE GROUND-WATER. As a preliminary step, State Governments would constitute a Committee for source finding immediately, under the Chairmanship of Secretary (RWS) and with the local officer incharge of Central Groundwater Board as Member Secretary. Other members of this Committee would include:

a). Chief Engineer of PHED.

- b) Representative of State Ground-water Board/Corporation (preferably the Chief Hydrologist)
- c) Representative of Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad or National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad.
- d) Representative of National Geophysical Research Institute CSIR at Hyderabad.
- e) State Remote Sensing Agencies and any other agency connected with remote sensing work or any other agency as deemed fit by the Chairman.
- f) Any professional non-governmental organisation associated with the source finding work.
- g) In case of north-eastern region States, Deputy Director General of Geological Survey of India, North-Eastern Region, Shillong or his representative should also be a Member.
- h) Any other member may be Co-opted as desired by the Chairman of the Committee.

10. Voluntary agencies and non-governmental organisations would be involved in location, selection of source, implementation, operation, maintenance of water systems and quality control. The special focus would be on :

- a) Women for propagating messages regarding safe water and health linkage, necessity for preventive maintenance and correct usage.
- b) Village youth for training as Handpump mechanics under the TRYSEM (Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment Programme).
- c) Certification from women would be taken as conclusive proof about the good quality and proper functioning of a water source.

11. States will develop mass awareness and education campaigns for informing the community about on-going and new rural water supply projects and also involving them to create a public awareness of hygiene, scarcity of water as national resource, need for purification, using school and college networks, the traditional media (folk theatre, puppet show etc.) and national media, field level audiovisual shows, awareness camps etc. with special role to be played by voluntary agencies and non-governmental organisations.

12. Location of first source of drinking water would be well within SC/ST habitations-towards social integration among all communities. Earmarking of funds specially for SC/STs in every project. Separate monitoring and evaluation is also necessary for benefits being received by SC/ST from Rural Water Supply Project.

13. It should be mandatory to provide permanent and extendable drinking water supply components in all major and minor irrigation projects. This would also involve joint pre-planning, coordination and monitoring by PHED and Irrigation departments scope for introduction and implementation of suitable Legislation to prevent over exploitation of ground-water resources was recognized.

14. There is need for adopting a comprehensive and holistic approach to the Rural Water Supply Programme. This can be ensured by obtaining cooperation from other State Departments. Modalities of involving various departments and activities has to be worked out in each state. Mass awareness about preventive aspects of health, transmission of suitable messages and training through PHCs, net work of schools, non-formal adult education and ICDS Programmes, development of suitable software for radication of Gmineaworm and fluorosis etc. Feeding Rural Water Supply systems through irrigation network, development of microlevel ecological and water-shed management projects, integrated steps for soil conservation, provision of information on total water resources, cropping patterns in arid and water scarcity areas. The State Government would consider evolving a

suitable mechanism for development of such integrated approaches.

15. Funds under various schemes of NREP/RLEGP, DDP, DPAP, Tribal sub Plans various health programmes, education programmes afforestation programmes, hill area sub-plans and advance border area plans may be dovetailed to Technology Mission in order to achieve the objective.

16. Resource gap may also be bridged with cost effective technologies and methodologies.

17. A need for Legislation for conservation of ground water and preventing overdrawal was felt. The State Governments may enact such Legislation at the earliest.

18. As in the case of MNP upto 10 per cent of funds under ARWSP may be earmarked for maintenance on a matching basis.

19. To improve operational efficiency it was agreed that the State Governments should streamline systems and procedure. The following steps were considered necessary :

- a) All the rigs and other equipments should be optimally utilised with the reduction in their operational cost, maintenance and downtime ;
- b) Proper training and introduction of material management and inventory control ; and
- c) By placement of suitable qualified professional material managers for materials management and inventory control.

20. State Governments will depute personnel for the training in various CSIR and other organisations and also try to establish suitable training institutes and utilise respective State Government's administrative/management training institutes for training of Technical and other personnel.

21. The quality testing of the source development should be conducted and ensured for the provision of safe drinking water. The required water testing laboratory kits should be made available at the district level for conducting such tests. Secondary schools and colleges in rural areas should be mobilised for this purpose. Testing kits developed by S&T organisations should be widely distributed for spot checking for water quality on regular frequency.

22. A national Seminar and four Regional Seminars would be held this year on Technology Mission for formulation of a National Drinking Water Policy.

[*Translation*]

**Chief Secretaries Conference on
Panchayati Raj**

*454 SHRI NARSINH MAKWANA:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the decision taken in regard to Panchayati Raj in the recent Chief Secretaries Conference and the time by which this decision is likely to be implemented ;

(b) the arrangements being made to safeguard the interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at all the three levels of Panchayat viz. Village, Taluka and district ; and

(c) whether Government propose to make arrangements in all the States on the lines of the provision of 'Samajik Nyay Samiti' as existing in the Panchayat Act of Gujarat ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c) The Conference of Chief Secretaries felt that it was necessary and desirable to revive Panchayati Raj institutions and stressed the importance of bottom up planning. The