

dry lands is materially linked with variable rainfall and its intensity and distribution.

(b) Yes, Sir. An area based pilot crop insurance scheme covering important rainfed crops like paddy, jowar, groundnut, barley, wheat, gram, maize, cotton, etc. is already in operation in twelve States through the General Insurance Corporation of India in collaboration with the State Governments.

[Translation]

(c) Both area and commodity development schemes have been launched to reduce the risk and enhance the production in rainfed areas.

Talks with Nepal Regarding Water Resources

*34. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of official talks held with Nepal so far on the issue of utilisation and distribution of water resources including Pancheshwar Project and the outcome thereof; and

(b) whether Government are considering holding of high political level talks on Pancheshwar Project as there are reports that Nepal has not shown requisite interest in its construction ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) Since the Prime Minister's visit to Nepal in 1977, six Secretary's Level meetings have been held with His Majesty's Government of Nepal. These talks have helped in understanding the positions taken by each of the Governments, on various complex issues, more fully. So far agreement has been reached on the question of entrustment of the preparation of feasibility report on Karnali Project to an International Firm of Consultants with loan Assistance from the World Bank. In the case of Pancheshwar Project, it has been agreed to locate two power houses of equal capacity on each side. Further talks are contemplated.

(b) At this stage there is no proposal to hold high level political talks.

[English]

Provision of Dry Land Farming Technology to Farmers in Drought Prone Areas

*35. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the major drought prone areas in the country;

(b) whether there are any plans to provide extensively dry land farming technology to farmers in these areas; and

(c) if so, the investments on this technology in the drought prone areas in the year 1983-84 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : (a) A list of the states and districts covered under the Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and the Desert Development Programme (DDP) is given in the attached statement. These are the major drought prone areas in the country.

(b) One of the major objectives of the DPAP and the DDP is improvement in the productivity of dryland agriculture through restructuring of the traditional cropping patterns, adoption of suitable agronomic practices and techniques of soil and water conservation. These programmes lay emphasis, among other things, on the development of dryland farming on watershed basis by taking up schemes of soil and water conservation and improved dryland farming practices. Improved agronomic practices, new crops and crops rotations are introduced in these areas through crop demonstrations and application of desired quantities of inputs. Training programmes, seminars and field visits are organised for officers dealing with these schemes to update their knowledge about the latest dryland farming techniques. Field days and visit to the nearest dryland centres are also organised for the benefit of the