

have the information. If another question is separately put I will be able to give the information on that.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I would like to know whether the Government is prepared to set up a Commission to find out the total amount of rural indebtedness.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: The information about the amount of rural indebtedness must to with the State Governments. On the basis of a specific question we can get all that information and if it is found necessary, then it is far better to take certain steps.

SHRI T. BALAKRISHNIAH: Whether the Minister admits or not, it is a fact published in all important newspapers—let the Minister refer to the editorial of the Sunday Standard of yesterday—that atrocities have been committed on Harijans in various States. If the Government is really interested in the Harijans and the poor people, let the Government go through that editorial and appoint a committee. Sir, I am submitting the question now. Whatever it may be it is a fact that atrocities have been committed on the Harijans in a number of places after the advent of the Janata Government. Will the Government examine the matter and call for a report from the State Governments?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: The law and order matter should be referred to the Home Ministry and not to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

SHRI T. BALAKRISHNIAH: In that case you need not answer. Let the Home Minister answer that. The Home Minister is present in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: No, I don't think so.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: He is very excited. But I can't help it.

MR. SPEAKER: Now I call Mr. Kanwar Lal Gupta.

श्री कंवर लाल गुप्ता : पहली सरकार के जमाने में बेदखल किए गए हों या इस सरकार

के आने के बाद बेदखल किए गए हों, क्या मंत्री महोदय राज्य सरकारों को ऐसे आदेश देंगे कि इस तरह के जो लैंडलेस लोग निकाले गए हैं उनका सर्वे करवा करके जो डिस्ट्रिक्ट मैजिस्ट्रेट है वे उनको दुबारा उस जमीन को दिलाएं ? जो जमीन फालतू है सरकार के पास और जो बांटी नहीं गई है उसको भी बांटने का आप जल्दी प्रयास करेंगे ?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: The hon. Member desires that the Central Government should order the State Government, which it cannot do. It can only advise; but there is no doubt that if during the days of the previous government, or in the course of the last 60 days some such things have been done, i.e., where 'bedakha' has been committed, the entire power of the Central Government and of the new State government to be formed will be applied, to restore the rights of the poor people.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Drought in States

*6. **SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN:**
SHRI NIHAR LASKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the States are facing acute drought;

(b) steps being taken to help these States; and

(c) quantum of aid given so far to these States ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI PARKASH SINGH BADAL): (a) Drought conditions were reported by the Government of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa during 1976-77 and by the Governments of Karnataka and Orissa during 1977-78. Besides, some representations have been received recently about drought conditions in certain areas of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(b) Consequent upon the recommendations of the Sixth Finance Commission, the State Governments themselves are required to finance the drought relief expenditure from their own resources and the margin money provided to them annually by the Centre under the recommendations of the Commission. The Central Government assesses the situation for advance Plan assistance as requested for by the State Governments. No request for advance Plan assistance has been received from any State except Karnataka and Orissa during the current financial year.

(c) The following advance Plan assistance was sanctioned to the affected States during 1976-77 for meeting drought conditions:

	Rs. crores
Tamil Nadu	15.70
Karnataka	7.60
Kerala	1.50
Madhya Pradesh	6.15
Orissa	5.10

During the year 1977-78 advance Plan assistance of Rs. 4.75 crores has been sanctioned only to Karnataka so far. Request of Orissa Government for additional advance Plan assistance is receiving the attention of the Central Government.

Scarcity of Water in Tamil Nadu

*7. SHRI S. D. SOMASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of conditions of scarcity in Tamil Nadu due to inadequacy of water for irrigation purposes;

(b) whether efforts to secure release of more water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu have not fructified; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken for ensuring a balanced release of water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu to overcome scarcity conditions?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI PRAKASH SINGH BADAL): (a) and (b). Cauvery basin experience very lean monsoon during 1976. The Government of Karnataka had released 15 TMC of waters from their reservoirs on the Cauvery for use in Tamil Nadu during September-October, 1976.

(c) According to the understanding reached amongst the concerned States, in August, 1976, the manner of sharing the Cauvery water in lean years is to be worked out by a Committee of representatives of the Central Government and the State Governments and recommendations made for consideration at the next meeting of Chief Ministers. The Report of the Committee is expected by the end of July, 1977.

Status of Women in Rural Areas

*8. SHRIMATI AHILYA P. RANGNEKAR: Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the status of village women in India was deteriorating in an alarming manner as stated by the Chairman of the Advisory Body of Women's Study; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to raise the status of women in the rural areas economically and socially?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): (a) Action to raise the status of women economically and socially, is a continuous process. As a first step, Government constituted a committee in 1971 to make an assessment of the status of women in India and to suggest remedial measures. The Committee presented its Report to Government on 1 January 1975. This Report pointed out the deteriorating trend in the Status of Women, particularly in the rural areas. The