

(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

Indian Council of Social Science Research has constituted an Advisory Committee on Women's Studies, under whose auspices, studies about various aspects relating to women are made and promoted. These studies are designed to enable policy making and initiation of remedial action. Government have seen the observations made to the Press in April 1977, by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Women's Studies. The studies, on which his statement is based, are still in progress. As such, at this stage, it can neither be accepted nor denied that there is alarming deterioration of the status of village women.

(b) Of the 52 recommendations made by the Committee on the Status of Women in India for urban and rural women, many are of long term duration and are in essence, continual programmes. The recommendations which are being implemented or have been implemented are as under:—

Mobilising public opinion and strengthening social effort against polygamy, dowry, ostentatious expenditure etc. (Recommendation No. 1); the Hindu Marriage Act has been extended to the Union Territory of Pondicherry (Recommendation No. 4); steps for amending the dowry law—six States have taken action and the Central Government is to review the Central law; in addition Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 have been amended for making the giving and taking of dowry an offence (Recommendation No. 7); Marriage Law (Amendment) Act, 1976 has added "cruelty" and "desertion" as grounds for divorce; mutual consent for divorce has also been included in this Amendment; in addition repudiation by girl before attaining majority, of a child marriage, whether the marriage was consummated or not, has also been provided in the Amendment for (Recommendation No. 8); a sell has been set up in the Ministry of Labour to deal with implementation of Equal Remuneration Act 1976 (Recommen-

tion No. 19); the Ministry of Labour have suggested to State Governments/Union Territories to consider the Committee's recommendation for extending the Maternity Benefits' Act, 1961 to all the industries not covered by the Act at present, including agricultural labourers and home workers (Recommendation No. 20); The Factories Act has been amended to provide for provision of creches for a minimum of 30 women workers employed (Recommendation No. 21); The Equal Remuneration Act was passed in 1976 and notifications are being issued from time to time about the industries to be covered by the Act (Recommendation No. 24); co-education to be followed as a general policy at the primary level (Recommendation No. 33); common courses for general education for both sexes till class 10 (Recommendation No. 34); provision of primary schools within walking distance from the home of every child; provision of incentives to prevent drop outs (Recommendation No. 36); part-time education for girls who cannot attend schools (Recommendation No. 36); non-formal education for women in the 15—25 age-group (Recommendation No. 41), equality of sexes as a major value to be inculcated through the educational process (Recommendation No. 42); promotion of research in the field of female disorders (Recommendation No. 47); and changes needed in the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971 (Recommendation No. 48).

N.C.E.R.T. Scholarship Scheme

*9. SHRI SHEO SAMPAT: Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the N.C.E.R.T. awards scholarships to talented science students every year at the national level; if so, the particulars of the scheme;