

for the years 1984-85, 1985-86, and 1986-87. So far as 1986-87 is concerned—I need not go into other years—the opening balance was Rs. 7,61,79,218. Out of that, the receipts were Rs. 4,16,98,304, payments were Rs. 3,24,00,000 and the closing balance was Rs. 8,54,00,000. In the year 1987, we have started with that opening balance. So far as education is concerned, marked improvement has been noticed because more income is there. In 1984-85, the total amount spent in lakhs was Rs. 51.61 in 1985-86, it was Rs. 63.95;

For the year 1986-87, it was Rs. 72.01 crores and for 1987-88 it will be Rs. 139.10 crores. The hon. Member has asked about the health. For 1984-85, it was Rs. 121.42 crores and this has gone to Rs. 359.80 crores in 1987-88. For housing purposes, from Rs. 0.40 crores in 1984-85, it has gone up to Rs. 125.65 crores in 1986-87.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I have asked how much money has been spent.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : That is what I am saying.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I did not ask that. You may spend so many crores. Even then there may be no houses or no dispensaries.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : I am saying that these figures are all about the payments. We have got the figures about the payments of 1986-87.

MR. SPEAKER : Listen to his question. What does he want ?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I wanted to know whether out of this fund, the expenditure on houses for beedi workers, on the construction of dispensaries, hospitals and schools, is available with him and whether he can tell us how many have been constructed out of this fund.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : I do not have the figure for how many have been constructed. That figure is not with me. But how much has been spent for construction, I have got that information.

Recovery of E.P.F. Arrears

*128. SHRI KAMAL NATH : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the energy crisis and sickness in jute and textile mills are mainly responsible for pushing up the arrears of Provident Fund contributions;

(b) the amount of contributions during 1985-86 as compared to 1986-87;

(c) the regions where the arrears registered the maximum increase; and

(d) the steps being taken to recover the arrears ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI A. K. PANJA) :

(a) to (d) A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) While the energy crisis might have contributed to some extent towards industrial sickness, Industrial sickness is definitely one of the causes for increase in the E.P.F. arrears.

(b) The amount of contributions realised is as given below :

	Exempted Establish- ments	Unexempted Establish- ments
	(Rupees in Crores)	
1985-86	860.21	687.96
1986-87	1023.68	770.83

(c) The maximum increase in arrears was reported from the following regions :

(i) *Unexempted Establishments*

Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal.

(ii) *Exempted Establishments*

West Bengal and Bihar.

(d) The E.P.F. Organisation is at present taking the following steps, for recovery of arrears :

(i) Issue of Revenue Recovery Certificates under Section 8 of the E.P.F. Act;

(ii) Filing of prosecutions case against defaulters under Section 14 of the E.P.F. Act;

- (iii) Filing of complaints under Section 406/409 IPC.
- (iv) Levying of damages under Section 14B of the E.P.F. Act;
- (v) Filing of prosecution cases against exempted establishment under Section 14(2A) of the E.P.F. Act.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : Sir, despite provident fund arrears having been discussed in this House, over many years and many times, there continues to be an increase of provident fund arrears. In the last year for which figures are available, that is for 1985-86 and also for 1986-87, there is almost 24 per cent to 25 per cent increase in the arrears itself and this has been passed off by saying that this arises because of industrial sickness. Sir, industrial sickness is very well-known and it has become a generalised statement that because of the industrial sickness this has happened. We have formulated legislation to deal with provident fund arrears but, despite all kinds of notices and all punitive measures available to the authorities, provident fund arrears continue to rise. Whether it comes cloaked in various things like industrial sickness and energy crisis is has been happening year, after year and every year there is a registered growth in arrears. So, Sir, is the Government thinking of changing the collecting laws and changing the rules on recoveries. In the cooperative movement, we have that where there are spot actions and there is no recourse left for going to the courts. In provident fund arrears the notice is issued, somebody goes to the Court and gets a stay order. Will the Government assure the House that they will amend the law and come up with regulations to the effect that these arrears do not go on increasing from year to year ?

SHRI A. K. PANJA : In regard to most of the arrears, it appears that because of certain steps being taken by defaulters Government are considering, as the hon. Member knows, besides the existing availability of infrastructure and outstanding they say, some provisions of the law are to be amended so that in both the unexempted establishments and exempted establishments, the recovery could be strengthened and proper recovery is made.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : The hon. Minister has expressed the intention that defaulters should not be there and all that. That is not my point. I want to ask him one specific point. What is the amendment he is considering and when will it be brought before this House ? That is the specific point which I want to know. That means that the present provisions are not stringent.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : There are already provisions. But they are not implementing them.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : If they are not being implemented, why are you not implementing them ? He says that they want to amend the law. They are not stringent enough.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : Besides the steps being taken, there are certain stay orders granted by the courts on account of which a lot of arrears are remaining due and we could not recover them. Various instalments were also granted. But gradually we are also recovering them.

Then, Sir, there is pendency for reconstruction of the schemes ordered by the court. The court has not only stayed some, but also some schemes have been approved by the court for the purpose of recovery and those are to be implemented by the Government for the purpose of recovery of arrears. Then, closures and lock-out of the establishments are coming in the way, and therefore, certain aspects of the law are being thought of regarding how to plug the loopholes and take care for the proper recovery of these dues.

SHRI KAMAL NATH : Why should arrears accrue at all, forget about recovery of arrears ?

KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE : Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what are the arrears of Provident Fund from the industries in West Bengal.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : Sir, it appears that West Bengal is the biggest defaulter, which was in arrears of Rs. 70.51 crores out of the total arrears of Rs. 98.51 crores of exempted establishment.

(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : What steps have been taken by the Government to recover these arrears ?

(Interruptions)

Farmers Problems

*129. **SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any committee has been set up to find out the problems of farmers; and

(b) if so, its composition, terms of reference and other details ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as President of the Bharat Krishak Samaj you know more than anybody else the problems of farmers. Some time back, on 1st February, 1987. You have stated in a rally of the farmers at Panta that you have submitted a draft to the Prime Minister regarding the real position of the agricultural sector and the requirements to improve the financial conditions of the farmers, and you also stated that the agricultural equipments should be exempted from sales tax and that the prices of agricultural commodities like wheat and other things should be linked with price index. Sir, the fact is today a farmer with 15 acres of land with assured irrigation to raise one crop is not in a position to lead his life which matches with the life that is being led by a clerk working in Government or in a bank or in LIC. That is a hard reality.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : It is as 'attendant' Sir, not as 'clerk'.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Sir, I agree with my colleague who substitutes 'clerk' with 'attendant'. But the fact is that under these circumstances the farmers are genuinely feeling that the in-

crease in prices of the agricultural inputs like G.I. pipes, H.D.P. pipes, cement and steel, diesel engines, electrical motors and pesticides etc. is much more than what they are getting in return for selling their agricultural produces because the terms of trade are against the farmers and the index is 30 points for manufacturing goods, it is 30 points higher than that for agricultural goods.

MR. SPEAKER : Please put the question.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Yes, Sir, I am putting the question. At present the CACP does not cover chillies or turmeric crops. With regard to comprehensive crop insurance scheme, cotton, sugarcane, tobacco, horticultural crops like potato or plantations like bananas are not covered. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will appoint a Committee to look into these problems and several other problems that are being faced by the farmers throughout the country and ask the Committee to give suggestions to overcome these problems that are being experienced by the Government.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Sir, the Government has no proposal at present to appoint such a Committee. But I would like to clarify at this stage that so far as the prices of agricultural commodities are concerned, the CACP is there and in their terms of reference we have introduced in March 1980 thus the terms of trade should be taken into consideration while fixing the prices of the agricultural commodities. Therefore, the point raised by the hon. Member has no strength at all.

PROF. N. G. RANGA : No strength ? What is this answer ?

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : What is this, Sir ? Mr. Makwana is not a farmer, he does not know farmers' problems.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : When some farmers are put to serious loss due to loss of crops by natural calamities, sometimes in succession,