

[3 December, 1999]

RAJYA SABHA

National Calamity

300. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated damages to human beings, cattles and other properties caused by the recent super cyclone that hit the State of Orissa;

(b) the details of the financial assistance extended by the Union Government by way of loans, advances and grant for the relief and rehabilitation of the affected people;

(c) whether there has been consistent demand from the State Government and from different quarters that this disaster be declared as a national calamity of rare severity and consider the whole assistance as grant; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) As per information received from the Government of Orissa, the Super cyclone resulted in loss of 9885 human lives and about 14000 livestock, besides damage to 18.29 lakh houses and cropped area in 18.43 lakh ha.

(b) Rs. 200 crore as ad-hoc assistance from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) and advance plan assistance of Rs. 200 crore have been released. Further ad-hoc assistance of Rs. 300 crore has been announced. An advance plan assistance of Rs. 250 crore was also sanctioned to Orissa for the cyclone of 17-18th October, 1999.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. There is no provision for declaring any calamity as a National Calamity. However, in view of the extensive destruction caused to life and property, the Super cyclone in Orissa has been deemed to be a calamity of rare severity and treated as a national calamity right from the beginning and relief and restoration measures have been taken up on a national scale.

Crop Production in Rajasthan

†301. SHRI ONKAR SINGH LAKHAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) percentage of Kharif Crops-adversely affected due to shortage of rain this year in Rajasthan alongwith the cultivation area in the State; and

(b) the total number of farmers benefited during last one year under the Crop Insurance Scheme in Rajasthan alongwith the number of farmers who were given compensation?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) There are two meteorological sub-division, namely, West Rajasthan and East Rajasthan in the state of Rajasthan. As per India meteorological Department, this year Monsoon rainfall was deficient in west Rajasthan while it was normal in East Rajasthan. Normal area under Kharif crops is about 101 lakh hectares. This year area coverage under Kharif crops is 87.4 lakh hectares which is about 87 percent of Normal area.

(b) The Government of Rajasthan did not implement the scheme Comprehensive insurance scheme (CCIS) for Kharif 1999 season.

Agriculture and Rural Development in Kutch

302. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a study report on agriculture and rural development strategies for Kutch was submitted to the Central as well as the State Governments;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the farmers of coastal areas and Kutch district are facing problem of steep decline in ground water;

(c) if so, the details of the action taken by Government on the study report;

(d) whether it is a fact that the farmers are migrating, leaving their agricultural land, to other places; and

(e) the action taken by Government on the report as well as to stop the migration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) The Government of Gujarat has reported that a report prepared by Dr. R.K. Sivanappan has been received by the State Government. No report has been received in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

(b) The coastal belt of Kutch extends over 360 Kms. along the Gulf of Kutch in the Arabian Sea. The entire Kutch district is classified as arid region from agriculture point of view. As a result of low rainfall and over-extraction of ground-water the water table is considerably lowered, causing ingress of saline water in the coastal areas of Kutch district.

(c) In order to tackle the problem of salinity ingress in Kutch district, Government of Gujarat has appointed a High Level Committee (HLC-II) under the chairmanship of Shri K. Shivraj. The Committee studied the problems in detail and accordingly suggested different remedial measures at a cost of Rs. 186 crores (Present cost Rs. 515 crores). This Committee suggested the following works for prevention of salinity.