

Further, the State Governments have identified various other schemes for investigation and planning and the estimated storage for such schemes is about 108 BCM. The National Commission for Integrated Water Resources Development in its report has considered these live storages as bare minimum needed to balance seasonal flow in an average year. The report has further observed that for making possible the carry over from years of above normal rainfall to dry years, development of more storage is needed.

(d) The storage capacity created through restoration of old, disused, neglected water bodies is relatively very less. However, such schemes help in reducing the gap between the irrigation potential created and potential utilized and provide immediate benefit.

(e) The Government of India has sanctioned a pilot scheme for "National Project for Repair, Renovation & Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture" in January, 2005 with an estimated cost of Rs. 300 crore to be shared by Centre and State in the ratio of 3:1. The water bodies having cultivated command area of more than 40 hectares and upto 2000 hectares are included under the pilot scheme. The scheme has been approved in 24 districts of 14 States at an estimated cost of Rs. 296.87 crores. These projects cover 1076 water bodies with total original cultivable command area of 2.99 lakh ha. The physical work for restoration has been completed for 232 water bodies so far and the restoration work is in progress in the remaining 844 water bodies. Some State Governments have also initiated actions for implementation of schemes for restoration of water bodies with external assistance.

Opening of Regional Office at Raipur

†3027. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Chhattisgarh has requested to open a Regional Office of the Department of Water Resources in Raipur; and

(b) if so, what is the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

request of the State Government of Chhattisgarh for opening of a Regional Office of the Central Water Commission at Raipur was considered. However, in the present set up it was not found feasible to open a Regional Office of the Central Water Commission at Raipur.

Provision of safe drinking water

3028 DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 170 million Indians do not have access to safe drinking water;

(b) if so, what are the thrust measures and serious initiatives envisaged with priority to tackle this important basic problem leading to several ailments and diseases; and

(c) whether there can be a time-frame to provide safe drinking water to every citizen of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) As informed by the Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development, Water is a State subject and as such the State Governments are primarily responsible to provide drinking water to the rural habitations. To supplement the efforts of the State Governments in this direction, financial assistance and technical support is rendered by the Central Government to the State Governments through a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission of Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development. State Governments are, however, competent to plan, sanction, implement and execute rural water supply schemes for the coverage of rural habitations from funds provided under ARWSP.

The Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development have further informed that as per the Comprehensive Action Plan 1999 and subsequent coverage reported by States/UTs, 97.02% habitations are fully covered, 2.73% are partially covered and 0.21% habitations are not covered.

(b) The Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development have informed that a community based National Rural Drinking