

Urban development and urban water supply financing corporation

2207. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH; Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's

(b) if so, what are the aims and objects of the proposed Corporation; and

(c) whether it is likely to function independently of the Technology Mission on drinking water, if so, the jurisdiction of the Corporation and the extent of financial assistance likely to be provided by the Corporation to the local authorities in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) With a view to extending technical help and guidance as well as long term finance to the Municipal bodies and local authorities in the country for the formulation and implementation of Urban Infrastructure Development Projects relating to Water Supply, Sewerage, Sanitation and other Urban Services, a proposal to set up an Urban Development and Urban Water Supply financing Corporation is under the consideration of the Government. In the Central Sector of the 7th Five Year Plan, there is a provision of Rs. 55 crores for the setting up of this Corporation.

Death due to contaminated drinking water in West Bengal

2208. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the *Hindustan Times* of the 7th

April, 1987 to the effect that chronic arsenic poisoning caused by drinking of contaminated tube well water had led to three deaths and caused various diseases including cancer among several people in the five districts of West Bengal;

(b) whether it is also a fact that more than 200 people in that State have developed skin diseases; and

(c) if so, what action Government have taken to meet the -situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAMANAND YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. However, no report of any death or cancer arising out of Arsenical Dermatitis has been received

ib) Yes, Sr. It is a fact that more than two hundred people have been affected by arsenical dermatosis.

(c) A team of Scientists and doctors of the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health and the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta made joint field surveys and conducted investigations in the reported areas. The team inferred that dermatosis cases were due to cumulative affect of arsenic being present in drinking water from shallow tubewells beyond admissible level. A High Powered Committee under the Chairmanship of the Director, Health Services, West Bengal with representatives from State Public Health Engineering Department, All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta etc was formed. The Committee after visiting the reported areas and examining water samples, strainers of shallow tubewells and -soil samples found the presence of Arsenic. No definite inference about the source of arsenic causing the malady could yet be drawn. The Committee recommended rejection of shallow tube wells and installation of deep tubewell: and polythene lined tubewells in the affected areas. Instructions for sinking of deep tubewells to provide safe drinking water in affected areas have been issued by the State Government. Suspect shallow,

tubewells are being closed. Proper medical treatment of affected persons by the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta has been arranged.

Loss to NCCF in supply of pulses under Public Distribution System

2209. SHRI BHAGATRAM
MANHAR:

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP
SINGH:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the NCCF suffered losses worth about Rs. 40. 00 lakhs and Rs. 55. 00 lakhs during 1978-79 and 1979-80 respectively in the supply of pulses to the Fair Price Shops in Delhi;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry was conducted to fix responsibility for these losses; and

(c) what action has been taken against those officers who were involved in these operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD):

(a) National Cooperative Consumers Federation has reported that it did not participate in any Public Distribution System during 1979-80, but, during 1978-79 in order to arrest the rising trend of prices of pulses, which were ruling very high, at that time, NCCF at the instance of the Department of Civil Supplies and Delhi Administration, undertook the supply of pulses in printed polythene packs of 1 kg. each to the Fair Price Shops in Delhi. At the time of finalising the proposals of this business, it was envisaged that even if the NCCF sustained some loss in these transactions, its efforts should be to bring the pulses from the various procurement centres to Delhi to make them available through the Public Distribution System. The Delhi Administration made an attempt to compensate the loss in this business to the NCCF by agreeing to release family planning advertisements worth about Rs. 3. 5 lakhs

which were to be printed on the packs of the pulses. However, this did not materialise. The NCCF has reported that the Delhi Branch, who handled the entire business, suffered a total loss of Rs. 37. 98 lakhs during the year 1978-79. No separate account for this specific transaction was maintained by the Delhi Branch.

(b) and (c) The scheme was undertaken in, public interest and at the time of formulating the scheme, some loss was anticipated.

Rationalization of quantity of containers tainers

2210. SHRI KISHOR MEHTA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 3362 given in the Rajya Sabha on 5th December, 1986 and to state:

Ca) what are the usual pack sizes, in those countries which have been following the metric system;

(b) whether the approved sizes for mineral water, jams, marmalades, jellies in Containers, Squashes Syrups Crushes; Fruit Juice and Vegetables are consistent with the metric system; and

(c) whether Government propose to rationalise the odd pack sizes in multiple of 25 for the smaller sizes and multiples of 250 in the larger sizes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD):

(a) There is no uniformity in pack sizes for packaged commodities in the countries following the metric system. For example, in the Federal Republic of Germany, mineral water and fruit/vegetable juices are required to be packed in 100 ml, 200 ml, 250 ml, 330 ml, 500 ml, 700 ml, 1 litre, 1. 5 litres, 2 litres, 3 litres, 4 litres and 5 litres. The same commodities are required to be packed in 180 ml; 550 ml, and 1240 ml if they are packed in metallic cans.

(b) Yes, Sir.