

I would like your honoured self to request the Minister in charge of Civil aviation to give his sharp and pointed attention to this matter so that the travelling people are saved of their misery. With these words, Sir, I thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

REFERENCE TO THE RURAL WATER SUPPLY IN RAJASTHAN

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan): Sir, I rise to make a Special Mention on the subject of rural water supply in Rajasthan.

Sir, a hundred per cent Centrally-sponsored programme was started in the name of acceleration of rural water supply programme. This was started by the Janata Government in 1977-78. Considering the intrinsic of this programme, the successive Governments continued with it. It was essentially meant to help the problem water supply. As is well known, more than States in solving their problem of rural water supply. As is well known, more than 90 per cent of the country's lesser lies in Rajasthan. Therefore, the State Government got the lion's share of allocation when it came to the Sixth Plan. That amounted to 125 crores roughly, which was roughly about 14 to 15 per cent of the total A.R.P. allocation. Now, the position has been changed because of which Rajasthan gets particularly affected. Assistance under A.R.P. which is fully funded by the Government of India, is now being linked to the allocation made under M.N.P. by the State Government. This was never done in the past. If this linking is insisted upon, then only economically better-off States would benefit more as compared to Rajasthan and States like Rajasthan, where there is chronic water shortage would be seriously affected. I would like to take a minute or two to give figures in respect of allocation. The Seventh Plan Draft formulation came out with a statement under para 12.57 that a new policy is to be evolved in the Seventh Plan to tackle problems of water supply which are peculiar to some States and in that Rajasthan was mentioned. Instead

however of evolving a new formula, based on the Seventh Plan formulations, Rajasthan's allocation under A.R.P. has been drastically reduced by the Central Government. In the financial year 1983-84, the allocation was roughly 41.5 crores. In 1986-87, it has been cut down to only 16 crores which is almost one-third of the allocation which was made three years ago.

Now, this is a very serious question as far as Rajasthan is concerned. We have roughly 33,000 villages. Village population and the boundaries of villages keep on changing because new hamlets keep on cropping up and vanishing. So, at any given time, there is a total of about 33,000 villages in Rajasthan. Of that, roughly 28,000 villages have drinking water problems. Rajasthan has a mean annual rainfall of barely 4 inches. There is no water in thousands of villages and the average water table is about 400 feet. In the light of these geographical and other difficulties of the State of Rajasthan, the Government of India should take into account, keeping in view the formulations of the Seventh Plan, hard and difficult geographical conditions, small and scattered population, high per capita cost of schemes as compared to other States and a very large cattle population which is a vital factor for special allocation to Rajasthan. Otherwise, it will be very difficult for the State of Rajasthan to meet the Seventh Plan target or to supply drinking water to the villages of Rajasthan. Therefore, I make three special and categorical requests. Firstly, the allocation under A. R. P. in case of Rajasthan must not be reduced. It must not be linked with MNP. Secondly, the formulation for A. R. P. allocation must take into account the special requirements of Rajasthan; and thirdly, the advance plan assistance which was given to Rajasthan because of drought conditions for three or four successive years which the State Government has exhausted, must not be linked with A. R. P. allocation. In the current year, the State of Rajasthan must be provided with an additional ceiling on expenditure. By making this Special Mention, the State of Rajasthan is not asking for charity. We are only asking for that which is Rajasthan's justifiable right.