

Plantation of Jatropha on wasteland in Tamil Nadu

3513. SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the total area of wasteland in Tamil Nadu;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the Central Government has advised the State Government to take up Jatropha cultivation on wasteland;
- (c) if so, what financial and other incentive package has been extended to Tamil Nadu to promote Jatropha cultivation in its wastelands during the last three years, year-wise; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR ADHIKARI): (a) According to Wasteland Atlas of India 2005 published by National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad, wasteland area in the State of Tamil Nadu is 17303.29 sq. km.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Rural Development has not advised the State Government of Tamil Nadu of take up Jatropha cultivation on wasteland.

(d) Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development is not implementing any scheme for Jatropha cultivation on wasteland in the State.

Access to drinking water in Jharkhand

3514. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per National Family Health Survey III not even one per cent of rural households in Jharkhand had access to piped drinking water;
- (b) if so, the reasons for poor state of affairs so far availability of safe drinking water for rural households is concerned; and
- (c) the steps taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (Kumari Agatha Sangma): (a) As per National Family Health Survey-III carried out in 2005-06, less than one per cent rural households in Jharkhand had access to piped drinking water.

(b) In areas not affected by ground water contaminations, ground water is considered a fairly safe source of drinking water. With the advent of India Mark II hand pump, water supply in rural areas by installing hand pumps is considered techno-economically a better option than untreated surface water, with a low operation and maintenance cost. It is easy to install and does not require electricity and is thus appropriate in areas without electricity supply. In Jharkhand, about 3.41 lakh hand pumps have been installed in rural areas, with an average of one hand pump for 71 persons.