

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 5th April, 1967/the
15th Chaitra, 1889 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the
clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair

MEMBER SWORN

Shri Shivdutta Upadhyaya (Madhya Pradesh).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT OF BACKWARD AREAS

*286 SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN Will the Minister of PLANNING, PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND SOCIAL WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether provisions have been made in the Fourth Five Year Plan for the accelerated growth of regions termed as backward according to the indicators of the Planning Commission; and

(b) if so, the details of the allocations so made?

THE MINISTER OF PLANNING, PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI A. K. MEHTA). (a) At the time of discussion on States' Draft Fourth Five Year Plan in October-December, 1966 identification of backward areas within State boundaries was discussed. Such areas have been identified in ten States. Of the remaining States the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland could be regarded as hill States. In the State of Assam the hill districts are markedly backward areas. For Punjab and Haryana the areas (except chronically drought affected areas on border with Rajasthan), the State Governments have not specially identified any areas as markedly backward areas. The views of the Governments of the two States of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh have not yet been received.

(b) The details of outlays of the accelerated development of these areas are being worked out by the State Governments concerned and will be finalised while finalising the States' Fourth Plan outlays

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: I am aware that the Planning Commission is seized of the problem of backward areas but I am sorry to state that very little has been done to develop them except determining them as backward areas.

I would not like to quote extensively but a potentially rich agricultural region like Marathwada with five districts has even today an irrigation percentage of only 4 to 5 and two of its districts have no railway line, almost no railway line. Does not the Minister consider that a time-limit be set to remove the imbalance in these areas?

SHRI ASOKA MEHTA: When the new State of Maharashtra was formed, as the hon Member knows, both Vidarbha and Marathwada were provided within the Plan of the Maharashtra State facilities for some accelerated development. We have to realise that when we talk about irrigation, railways and so on, with our limited resources we have to deploy them wherever they are most urgently needed. The irrigation plan of Maharashtra for the Fourth Plan is substantial but even when that is taken up, the backlog to be made up in Maharashtra in respect of major irrigation is so large that this problem can be tackled only over a period of time.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: Will the Minister therefore consider that this problem of backward areas is a special problem of the Planning Commission and will thus constitute a Special Wing in the Planning Commission to study the problems of these areas, to prepare schemes for them and to undertake follow-up work of these schemes of development?