

(b) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH):

(a) and (b) The State Government of Gujarat sought additional assistance of 1.58 lakh MTs of foodgrains for relief employment for drought of 2002-03, which has been approved by the Task Force on Drought Management.

DR. A.K. PATEL: Sir, luckily, this year we had a very good rainfall. So, there is no problem of drought. But Gujarat has been facing drought every alternate year for the last 10-15 years. And, for that, Government of Gujarat had asked for some more assistance. I have got the reply that 1.58 lakhs of metric tonnes of grain was supplied. But along with this Government of Gujarat has asked for another assistance also. It was worth Rs. 895 crores. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether something would be done to meet the demands of the Gujarat Government.

श्री राजनाथ सिंह: श्रीमन्, यह सच है कि गुजरात ने 1.95 लाख मीट्रिक टन ग्रेन की मांग की थी और साथ ही साथ 895.24 करोड़ रुपये की नेशनल कैलेमिटी रिलीफ फंड से डिमांड की थी। लेकिन मैं माननीय सदस्य को आपके माध्यम से यह जानकारी देना चाहूंगा कि एक हाई लेवल कमेटी ने डिफ्रेंट आइटम्स के लिए कुछ एमाउंट एलोकेट की थी- ड्रिंकिंग वॉटर सपलाई के लिए 39.58 करोड़, एम्प्लायमेंट जेनरेशन के लिए 29.16 करोड़, एग्रीकेयर के लिए 39.80 करोड़ (**व्यवधान**) एग्रीकल्चर इन्फर्टिलिटी के लिए 49.20 करोड़ और अदजर्ज के लिए 2.5 करोड़ टोटल 150.29 करोड़ के फंड की स्वीकृति हाई लेवल कमेटी ने अपनी तरहफ से दी थी। लेकिन प्रब्लम यह रही कि यह धनराशि गुजरात सरकार को मिल नहीं पाई। वह इसलिए नहीं मिल पाई कि गुजरात सरकार के पास सीआरएफ में बैलेंस 150 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक का था और टोटल यह बैलेंस जो गुजरात सरकार का है वह 171.39 करोड़ का है। श्रीमन्, एक यह भी प्रोविजन है कि जब तक सीआरएफ का पैसा स्टेट गवर्नमेंट के द्वारा खर्च नहीं कर दिया जाता है तब तक यह एनसीसीएफ से कोई धनराशि उसे उपलब्ध नहीं हो सकती। इसीलिए गुजरात सरकार ने जो 895 करोड़ रुपये की धनराशि की एनसीसीएफ से मांग की थी, वह गुजरात सरकार को उपलब्ध नहीं हो पाई।

Macro Management Schemes for Tamil Nadu

*439. SHRI S. P.M. SYED KHAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal have been received from the Tamil Nadu Government under the Macro Management of agriculture during the last Shree years and current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRIRAJNATH SINGH): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has been implemented a Centrally Sponsored Scheme called Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme in all States/UTs including Tamil Nadu since November, 2000. The Scheme was evolved by merging 27 ongoing Centrally Sponsored Schemes with a view to accord greater flexibility to the States to develop and pursue agriculture activities on the basis of their regional priorities to increase Agriculture Production. Funds as provided and approved by Planning Commission are released to States on lump sum basis in two equal instalments as per guidelines fixed by the Minister of Finance. Funds are released to States on the basis of their Work Plan proposals prepared by States themselves. The Work Plan proposals, as received from Tamil Nadu, during the last three years including current financial year, have been approved. The funds released and utilized by Tamil Nadu in the last three years are indicated below:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Funds released	Funds utilized
2000-01	4420.27	3335.47
2001-02	4500.00	5333.81
2002-03	3360.00	3971.75

For the current year (2003-04) the central allocation for Tamil Nadu is Rs. 4200.00, and the 1st Instalment (50%) of Rs. 2100.00 lakhs has already been released.

SHRI S. P.M. SYED KHAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. As stated by the hon. Minister, the macro management of agriculture scheme is only an amalgamation of 27 Central schemes existed before. The fund allocated is insufficient to cater to all the demands of the agricultur

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sector. Therefore, will the hon. Minister consider increasing the allocation to the better performing States like Tamil Nadu to help in increasing the crop production further?

The contribution of agriculture to the GDP has been declining over the years. That is why the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has launched commendable projects for water management and wasteland development. In view of the financial constraints of Tamil Nadu, will the Government provide a special package for wasteland development and watershed projects in Tamil Nadu?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is enough. Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Safety surcharge on railway fares

*421. DR. ABRAR AHMED:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways propose to raise Rs. 5000 crores through levy of safety surcharge on passenger fares towards a non lapsable railway safety fund over a period of six years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. A non-lapsable Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF) of Rs. 17,000 crores has been created from 1st October, 2001 for a period of six years to wipe out arrears of replacement of over aged safety related assets of the Railways. The Railways' contribution to this Fund, which is to be around Rs. 5,000 crores is to be raised through the levy of a Safety Surcharge on passenger fares *w.e.f.* 1.10.2001.

To end of March, 2003, Railways have cumulatively collected Rs. 907 crores as surcharge against a budgeted amount of Rs. 1,260 crores. The shortfall in collection has been made good from Railways' internal revenues. Budget Estimates, 2003-04 envisage a surcharge collection of Rs. 710 crores.