

Diversion of funds for tribal sub-plan in Kerala

2767. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to reports on diversion of fund allocated for tribal sub-plan in Kerala, which appeared in the 'Hindu' dated 25th July, 2002 and also on electronic media like Surya and Asianet;

(b) if so, the details of fund diverted and officials *prima-facie* responsible; and the steps taken to rectify the same;

(c) whether an inquiry would be initiated by an independent agency;

(d) whether any such incident of diversion of fund sanctioned to tribals was reported during the last three years; and

(e) if so, the details including action taken for the last three years, year-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Information has been called for from the Government of Kerala, which will be laid on the Table of the House on its receipt.

(d) and (e) No case of diversion of funds by the State Governments has been reported during the last three years.

Implementation of Tribal Welfare Schemes

2768. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some irregularities have been alleged in the implementation of tribal welfare schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) and (b) Some cases of alleged misutilisation of funds under the scheme of Post-Matric Scholarship in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh has been brought to notice, through newspaper reports.

(c) and (d) This matter has been taken up with the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and the State Governments are taking appropriate action in this matter.

TRIFED Procurement Centres

2769. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of TRIFED procurement centres in the country as on date along with the details for last three years, State-wise;

(b) the percentage of tribal population getting benefited from the service of TRIFED during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that tribals often sell their produce either to the middlemen or in the open market because of the improper services of TRIFED and physical inaccessibility; and

(d) if so, the steps Government propose to take for improving the services and setting up more procurement centres?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) TRIFED, have 104 procurement centres operating directly through marketing cooperative societies. The details are given at Statement-I. (See below). Besides direct procurement, TRIFED also undertakes such operations through the STDCCs, State Forest Development Corporations, Vandhan Samities and Large Area Multi-Purpose Societies (LAMPS) of different States. The details of the centres operated by such agencies are given at Statement-I I. (See below)

(b) The activities of TRIFED are restricted to the predominantly tribal areas. It is not possible to quantify the percentage.

(c) and (d) Although it is a fact that tribals sometimes sell their produce to the middlemen or in the open market, but it is not because of improper service of TRIFED or its physical inaccessibility. In a bid to meet their urgent economic needs, the tribals sometimes sell their produce to local traders as an advance sale against the money borrowed by them which is generally before the harvest of the crop. As already mentioned earlier, TRIFED with a large network of procurement centre, operating