

SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGI REDDY: What is the outcome of the meeting convened by the Minister of Commerce in New Delhi on 25th March, 2000 to explore options for increasing tobacco exports to foreign countries and the response received so far from the tobacco companies? What is the response received from foreign companies?

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Sir, we had a meeting. This is a market oriented economy. We cannot compel them to buy at a higher price. They know there is a glut. They know the price we have fixed is high. There is a limit for that. So, I think we have to reconsider the entire situation, the entire price situation. Probably, we should allow the market forces to operate and discover the price, a correct price, with some support mechanism. Probably, an imposition of a ban with a lower limit at which STC enters along with traders may revive the auction system. These are the suggestions. I have left it to them because they are nearer to the people; they are the farmers, they are the growers, they are the Government. So, if they come up with a new idea, we are ready to persuade.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, after deliberations with Ministers, bankers, farmers and traders, a decision has been taken in Andhra Pradesh to declare a crop holiday. Sir, I want to know from the Minister, what is India's share in world trade as far as tobacco is concerned; and what is the stock in the country, including with the STC. Next year, there is not going to be any crop from Andhra Pradesh. So, if the stocks are less for next year, what steps are being initiated to ensure that the traditional buyers of Indian tobacco would not look to other suppliers so that we will not be losing on traditional tobacco market. I want to know about this from the hon. Minister.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Sir, we are one of the third largest growers of tobacco in the world. That much I know. The backlog of stock is about 30 million kgs and this year, as I have told you before, the unauthorised crop alone is about 37.6 million kgs. Over-supply is the problem.

Residential schools for SCs / STs

*686. SHRI VEN DHAMMA VIRIYO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Parliamentary Forum of SC and ST Members of Parliament have demanded opening of atleast one residential school in

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every district of the country for imparting quality education to the children belonging to SC/ST families;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon by her Ministry, alongwith the results achieved with regard to this demand; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The recommendation was referred to the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development. The Department in turn forwarded the recommendation to all State Governments / UT Administrations for action, as the primary responsibility for setting up of residential schools lies with the States / UTs. The following schemes to provide residential schools are, however, being operated by this Ministry:—

(i) Special Educational Development Programme of Scheduled Castes Girls belonging to low literacy level; and

(ii) Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations for Scheduled Castes.

Before the creation of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, this Ministry was also operating certain schemes relating to residential schools for Tribal students. The schemes are now being operated by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

SHRI VEN DHAMMA VIRIYO: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government agrees that the drop-out rate at the level of primary education from amongst the children belonging to the weaker sections is very high and that it is due to many reasons, including the economic and social. The drop-outs are in large numbers. That is why the Parliamentary Forum of SC and ST Members of Parliament requested the Government to start residential schools in all the districts of the country. The Ministry says that it has started some training schools. I have seen these schools. The conditions are very poor. A scholarship of Rs. 100 per student per monthly is given to children belonging to SC and ST categories so as to enable them to travel from their villages to the district headquarters. That hundred rupees is to be spent on train fare or bus fare etc. How is it possible for students from SC and ST categories to get this training with just Rs. 100/-?.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: As far as I know, the question pertains to educational schools that we have started. So, how much is given to each child?

Now, I just want to tell you this, before I come to the point raised by you, that we have started 117 such schools in 1996-97. Till today, 2925 students have been given and the assistance per student per year has been Rs. 1 1340/- and not Rs. 100.

SHRI VEN DHAMMA VIRIYO: For Vocational training, you are giving only Rs. 100/- per student per month and Rs 11,340/-. You find out from the guidelines that have been given by your Ministry. Madam, it is only Rs. 100.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: I think, if it is Rs. 100, then it should be revised I will certainly look into it.

SHRI VEN DHAMMA VIRIYO: Madam, how much will you make it?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Actually, it is not a scholarship at all for vocational schemes. It is really a stipend given to students while they are learning, because they are going to get jobs later. We do give scholarships. But these are per-matric students and so on. The vocational scholarships are technically not even called scholarships. But, even then, they should be looked into.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, my question is on the reply given by the hon. Minister wherein it is said that two schemes are being run to provide residential schools for SC/STs. The first one is the Special Educational and Developmental Programme for SC girls, belonging to low literacy area. How many institutions are being run for SC girls under this scheme in the country? Secondly, is the hon. Minister aware if these are run in the State of Bihar also?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Two-hundred-and-one institutions have been set up in the past year. I have the details for Bihar. In Bihar, we are running two institutions in Madhubani, 2 in Purnia, 2 in Sitamarhi, 1 in Patna, 1 in Saran and 1 in Gopalganj.

श्री नागेन्द्र नाथ ओझा : सभापति महोदय, राज्यों के अंदर जिला हेडक्वार्टर में कुछ शिडयूल्ड कास्ट्स के हाईस्कूल पहले ही संचालित हो रहे हैं। उनकी हालत के बारे में कोई आंकलन केंद्र सरकार कराने पर तैयार है या नहीं अथवा कराया है या नहीं ? क्योंकि अपने जिले का मेरा अनुभव है कि वहां अनुसूचित जाति आवासीय उच्च विद्यालय में उनकी कक्षाओं में खाना बनता है जो बच्चों को दिया जाता है। इससे वे न सुबह पढ़ सकते हैं न रात को पढ़ सकते हैं। दूसरा उस स्कूल में हालत यह है—चूंकि आवासीय है- कि एक एक चौकी पर, जो उनका बिछावन है, उस पर तीन-तीन, चार-चार लड़कों को रखा जाता है। इसलिए जो उनके पढ़ाई लिखाई के इन्चायरनमेंट का सवाल है उस दृष्टि

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से क्या सरकार ने अभी आकलन किया है और इसको सुधारने के लिए राज्य सरकारों को क्या कोई सुझाव, सलाह या सहायता देने का विचार रखती है ?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, unfortunately, this does not come under me, in any way. It is a State subject. Even the scheme I was talking about, the information that I gave about the residential schools, is extremely a limited scheme, which is under repair at the moment, because, even that only considers giving schools for SC girls till Standard-I. That does not make any sense to me at all because, after Standard-I, where will they go? It is a residential school for a five year-old student. I would not send my child at the age of five years to a boarding school. Therefore, this scheme is under repair.

Regarding the dismal condition of schools in a State, I only have money to give to hostels. I will be happy to provide hostels, if there is a proposal for that. Regarding repair of schools, we have not received any proposals. I doubt if they come to me, because it goes to the Department of Education.

SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister replied that under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Welfare, there are two schemes for the Scheduled Caste students, to give grant-in-aid to voluntary organisations. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many voluntary organisations, throughout India, have applied for aid from the Government of India. How many applications are pending in the Ministry and how many applications are being considered? Secondly, with regard to the reply, the hon. Minister is shirking the responsibility. She says that her Ministry forwards the recommendations to all the State Governments, as the primary responsibility to set up residential schools, lies with the States. As per the Constitutional obligations to the weaker sections, particularly, as far as SC/STs are concerned, your Ministry is the caretaker Ministry. It is through your Ministry that you have to take the initiative to coordinate with various Ministries. If any State Government does not come forward to set up residential schools, you have to pursue. With regard to the replies given to Ven Dhamma Viriyo, it is a mere shirking of the responsibility. Will the Minister reply to my questions?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI Sir, the residential schools, assisted under the Non-Government Voluntary Organisations Scheme are 201 in 102 districts in India. Regarding the second part of the question, if I understood it correctly—would we help the State Governments to upgrade their schools—we

would be happy to do that. I am sure we can work out a scheme. There was a scheme called the Kasturba Gandhi Swatantra Vidyalaya Scheme which was meant for the Scheduled Caste girls specifically, but that scheme under a Cabinet decision has been transferred to the Ministry of Education. We are still trying to reform this scheme which is just for the first standard so that we can provide quality education.

SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Sir, I have not got reply to my question.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, I am sorry I did not understand his question.

SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Sir, I ask the hon. Minister as to how many applications have been received by the Ministry of Welfare from those organisations which have completed all the formalities and requirements but because there is no response from the Ministry their applications are lying unattended. I would like to know the present status of these applications.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, the total amount of money that I have for establishing schools for girls is Rs. 70 lakh which is not a great amount. There are a large number of people who apply and most of them have their documents missing. Once they do have all the document put together and have been recommended by the States or by their perns favourably or by the Members of Parliament who are prepared to vouch for them, usually get their grant within the same month or in a couple of months. I do not know as to how many are pending. As far as I know, we are usually fast in these days. But it is depending on the money made available to me.

DR. RAJA RAMANNA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, my question refers to the fact that we are starting residential schools for SC/ST students. What I feel is that they should mix up with the general total population. The answer is already available because of the fact that during the British days the best schools used to reserve 30 or 40 per cent of their seats for the orphans at the lowest level who did not know who their mother or father was. But it was based on the fact that they were missionary schools and the element of Christianity was there. So, I want to suggest that all good residential schools should have a certain component of SC/STs, and, they are provided with uniforms, this, that and everything that is necessary and brought up to higher level at an early stage.

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SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, I think the hon. Member has made an excellent suggestion. I am going to take up with the Education Ministry and see how far we can get ahead because I also personally believe that the schools for the SC/ST students are further isolating and alienating them and it is really not a good idea.

*687. [The questioner (Shri Suresh Pachouri) was absent. For answer *vide* page 26 *infra*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 688

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: Sir, I do not want to put the question.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Sir, a statement it...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He does not want to put it. Next Question.

Appointment/Nomination of SCs/STs in NCRPB

*689. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SC/ST Parliamentarians in their representations submitted to the Prime Minister on 17th December, 1996, 1st September 1997 and 23rd May, 1998, have demanded the nomination/appointment/ placement/ posting of persons belonging to the SCs/STs in the higher echelons of administration;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon;

(c) the total number of persons appointed/posted as Chairman/Official/ Non-Official Members of the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB); and

(d) the number of persons belonging to the SCs/STs among them?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These representations contained issues pertaining to other Ministries/ Departments and accordingly these were sent to the concerned Ministries/ Departments for action as appropriate.