

Rise in Child Prostitution

*583. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR
BIRLA:†

SHRI CHIMANBHAI
HARIBHAI SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any independent study about the rise in child prostitution in the country;

(b) if so, the percentage of rise in child prostitution in the country during 1995 and 1996;

(c) the reasons for growing child prostitution in the country;

(d) the number of girls, according to the study, if any, smuggled from across Nepal and Bangladesh borders for such vice dens; and

(e) the strategy proposed to be formulated by Government to check the flourishing child prostitution in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the house.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

(e) The Government has set up a Central Advisory Committee on eradication of child prostitution for ongoing review and recommendations of both legal and non-legal approaches for the rescue and rehabilitation of children in prostitution. The State Governments have also set up State Advisory Committees and are taking action to notify special police officers, set up Advisory Boards of social workers and Non-Governmental Organisations in red light areas, conduct regular raids and take measures for protection and

rehabilitation of rescued persons. Apart from stricter enforcement of the existing provisions of the Indian Penal Code; the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 and the Uvenile Justice Act, 1986, the Government has referred to law Commission amendments in the major criminal laws to tackle sexual abuse of children, as recommended by the National Commission for Women. In addition the Government is attempting to bring about an over all improvement in the status of children especially girl children through better education, health care and empowerment of women.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: The reply given by the hon. Minister is good. Once I had heard of child prostitutes in some of the South-East Asian countries. Now it has raised its ugly head in India also. Child prostitutes till a few years back, I am told, was not a common sight in the red light areas of Indian cities. Now they are found in plenty in these areas. It is estimated that the number of child prostitutes is about two lakhs and this may be underestimated. More so, the child prostitutes are from the neighbouring countries of Nepal, and Bangladesh. It is clear that young girls cannot be turned to prostitution without the connivance or consent of the parents. Some of the reasons behind such connivance are poverty, social deprivation, alcoholic and cruel parents, broken marriages and parental neglect. There are also cases of kidnapping by touts and middlemen. Again in this background, my first question is, child prostitution is a social crime as majority of child prostitutes are from the neighbouring countries of Nepal and Bangladesh. Has the matter been discussed at a high level among these three countries, how to prevent the social malady and how to jointly tackle this evil? My second question is, is the Government of India planning to increase vigilance on the borders so that any entry

† The Question was actually asked on the floor of the house by Shri Krishna Kumar Birla.

of young girls even when accompanied by some senior persons, is thoroughly checked to ensure that they will not go into prostitution?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Though a complete survey had not been conducted, the Central Social Welfare Board did conduct a survey in six major cities of the country like Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: What about Goa?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: A survey has been conducted. We will take up this State later on. 70,000 to one lakh prostitutes are found of whom 40 per cent are child prostitutes. Already measures have been taken. There was a suggestion from the National Human Rights Commission and the Law School of Bangalore went into the legal aspect of it and recommended amendment to the existing Acts.

The Government is considering that. Apart from this, steps are being taken to rehabilitate child prostitutes and children of prostitutes. Sir, we have also formed a board at the Central and State level which monitors and takes steps in this regard. It advises the police also. Sir, as far as implementation of various schemes is concerned, it is done by the State Governments. The Central Government gives all the assistance, in this regard.

As far as coming in of child prostitutes from Nepal and Bangladesh is concerned, in the year 1996, a raid was conducted in the city of Bombay. In that raid, out of 410 child prostitutes, 200 were from Nepal. We did not find any prostitute from Bangladesh.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Sir, part (a) of my second supplementary is this: Will the Minister consider investigating the affairs in Goa also, as one of my colleague has said about it just now? Sir, part (b) of my question is whether the Government of India is considering to enact a law for meting severe punishment to those people who

run this trade of child prostitution and also to those who lure these girls to this heinous trade.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, as far as amendment of law is concerned, as per the suggestion of the Law School, it is under active consideration of the Government.

Sir, so far as Goa is concerned, as per the latest information of the Government, it is on the increase. The National Human Rights Commission would like to have a seminar there. They are studying this problem.

श्री चिमनभाई हरिभाई शुक्ल: आदरणीय महोदय, मैं आपके जरिए मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि आपने लिखा है:

for the on-going review and recommendation of both legal and non-legal approaches.

यह नॉन-लीगल एप्रोच क्या है और आपने कहा है कि सेंट्रल बोर्ड है। तो उसके मेम्बरान कौन-कौन हैं। उसमें नॉन-आफिशियल कोई मेम्बर है या नहीं? यदि है तो:

What is the criterion of appointment of these members? You also have referred the Law School, Bangalore for making amendments in the law. I want to know about those amendments. कितने समय में आपको अमेंडमेंट मिल जाएगी और लागू करेंगे?...*(Interruptions)*... Should I repeat my question?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, so far as amendment of the law is concerned, I have already said that it is under active consideration of the Government. We will amend it, as early as possible.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA: What are those amendments?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: I will send the details of these amendments later on.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA: You must be knowing the details of these amendments, when you are going to amend the law.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: I will send the

details of these amendments because these are lengthy amendments.

Sir, so far as the Central Welfare Board is concerned, it has non-official members. The Chairman of the Board is also a non-official member. Right now, I don't possess the names of these members. I will inform the hon. Member about the names of the members of this board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Kamla Sinha. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री चिमनभाई हरिभाई शुक्ल: सर, यह बड़ा इंपोर्टेंट मामला है। इसमें नॉ न लीगल लिखा है। वह नॉ न लीगल क्या है। उसमें लिखा है:

We are making non-legal approaches. What are those non-legal approaches?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, non-legal measures like education, rehabilitation, training them for occupation are there. The Government is spending...
...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Sir, by non-legal measures he means social action.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA: This practice is a non-legal one.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: We take social measures like spreading awakening among them, their education, etc.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Sir, this problem has become a very serious problem over the years for the society and the Government. A large number of children are being misused. Not only girls, even little boys are being misused sexually and in many other ways. The hon. Minister is right when he says that it has social reasons like poverty, etc., and that is why the children are compelled to come to this profession. But, this is not the only fact. The other fact is that there are touts who lure the children saying that they would get them jobs here and there. In this way, they misuse little boys. I would like to know from the Minister as to what action he is going to take—he

knows all the facts because he has given some data here—in this regard. What positive action does the Government propose to take in this regard? I would like to know as to what this non-legal action is that the Government is planning to take. Sir, I find that the answer is not very satisfactory in this regard. Sir, I would like to know what amendments the Government proposes to the Juvenile Justice Act. I would also like to tell the hon. Minister that in most of the cases these children are put up with the adults in jails. I would like to know from the Government as to what can be done in this regard. The Government should come out with a positive view in this regard.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, so far as the causes are concerned, the analysis shows that 50 per cent of it is due to poverty, unemployment, lack of proper rehabilitation and lack of options, 24 per cent due to stigma and other social attitudes, 16 per cent due to family tradition and nine per cent due to ignorance and illiteracy. This is the percentage-wise break-up of those who are inducted into this profession. In demographic terms, 94.6 of the prostitutes were Indian, 2.6 per cent Nepalese and 2.7 per cent Bangladeshis. Sir, 84.36% prostitutes were Hindus, 10.96 per cent Muslims and 3.5 per cent Christians. So far as the castes are concerned, mostly they come from the Schedule Caste. So far as measures for rehabilitation are concerned, the Government has an extensive network of short-stay homes and the homes that have been set up under the juvenile justice Act for protection and rehabilitation of the victims. The services of qualified doctors are available in these short-stay homes. Their services are available on a part-time basis in the homes established under the J.J. Act. Poverty is one of the main causes for child-prostitution. Schemes for training, employment and income generation like the Integrated Rural Development, IRDP, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, support

to training and employment programmes, setting up of training and production centres, TRYSEM and DWARKA are being implemented to rehabilitate these people.

Sir, the Government of India is spending Rs. 6 crores on short-stay homes and Rs. 18 crores with the Norwegian assistance to rehabilitate them.

SHRIMATI

RENUKA

CHOWDHURY: Sir, this is a very uncomfortable question that all of us are addressing ourselves to. So, there is going to be a lot of discomfort when we talk about it. But, the reality is that it is very ugly. Sir, I beg your indulgence to tell the hon. Minister that none of the measures that they are talking about address themselves to the reality. We have to move swiftly. The word 'child' and the word 'prostitution' cannot co-exist because child is a symbol of purity. But, this exploitation is going on. We know what these short-stay homes are doing. I want to know if the Government is going to address itself swiftly and immediately to the urgency of this matter. Sir, any foreigner caught indulging in this here can be tried in his own country. The crime will remain valid in his own country, as it is done in Australia. An Australian who indulges in this crime can be prosecuted in any part of the world and back in his own home-country. So, he cannot come to India for a holiday and go back, as it is happening in Goa.

The other reality to which we need to pay attention immediately is that these poor children will now carry the transmitted-disease for life. What steps is the Government taking to sensitise the Police personnel? Sir, three days ago it was in the newspapers about an 8-year old child who was exploited and the Police was so kind as to take that child in the same van in which they took the man who had perpetrated the crime. An 8-year old child! More often than not, we teach children obedience to ciders. So, a

child will not speak. A child doesn't say because it is threatened under duress of death. So, the children are terrified. They don't tell their parents. We need to advertise these dangers during prime-time. We need to create a help-line for mothers of these children who are not taken seriously when they go to the Police Station to complain. The Police rejects their complaints saying that they are telling dirty stories, which is not the truth. And then these children have to go back to live with this guilt and afflicted with this disease.

Sir, we have to change our educational system. We have got to have compulsory sex education. Sex is a three letter-word. It is not just about an act, it is about knowing the facts to protect oneself and it is not only about girls and women, it is about men too. It is about boys who are being sexually exploited. That is why I said it is a very uncomfortable question that we are going to address ourselves to. But we have got to reach out now. We are already late. And none of these measures help. What rehabilitation measures? There are not rehabilitation measures even for adult prostitutes. We had the famous Mukti Express which brought a train-load of women from Tamil Nadu and then they told them to weave mats and to get a princely some of Rs. 150 or Rs. 200 to live. Then they were supposed to be morally joyous because they had been salvaged from this life of crime! I can't believe that we have such a bigoted vision of such a reality that is happening right under our nose. The Government is saying that the percentage is 40. Please take it from me that it will be at least 80. These are the most unrealistic statistics and this is the most unrealistic vision and it pains me, Sir, as a citizen, as a mother and as a person with social responsibility. I am not speaking as a public representative now. So I want the hon. Minister to please convince me whether these measures will help. He has got to take stringent measures. I don't know about this committee that has been formed. With

whom has it been formed, what is it going to examine and when is it going to come out with a report? That is something which befuddles me.

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I appreciate the concern of the hon. Member. This is a challenge that the society is facing. It is a very serious problem. The measures that are being taken at present are inadequate. For that, it is not only the Government but also NGOs who have to come forward and make concerted efforts and create an awareness. In addition to that, the Government also has to contemplate radical changes in the law that are necessary. I agree with the hon. Member that there are lapses on the part of the Police. Sometimes the Police personnel also connive in such cases. The Government is contemplating certain measures to prevent that from happening. But so far as implementation is concerned, it is the State Governments who have to prevent it through the Police. Similarly, other positive measures, particularly, spread of education and literacy is also necessary. Sir, from the statistics we find that of all the child prostitutes, only 3% to 4% are literate and the rest are illiterate. Literacy goes a long way. I do not say that it will prevent it but it certainly will help such other measures. As I have already said, the Government is contemplating, the Government is seized of the matter, the Government is serious about it. I seek the cooperation of the NGOs and other leaders in implementing the measures that the Government is going to take.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: What is the Government doing in respect of the children who have been taken away for camel riding and all in the other countries? Has any arrest been made? Is there any decline in those numbers?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: There is no decline instead there is an increase. I must admit it and I am admitting it. I said, therefore, it is a serious matter. I do

not want to hide things. Hence, I assure the hon. Members that the Government will take serious steps as early as possible.

DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Hon. Chairman, Sir, this is really a serious problem having international implications. In the whole world so many things are happening and we are concerned because many foreign Governments, due to some incidents which are taking place in the Gulf countries, put restrictions on the younger ones coming to their countries. But, what is happening in our country? I came to know that about 10,000 girls from the North-East are going to Singapore. What is the purpose? The purpose is that they will be provided employment there. What employment? They are employed as maid-servants employed to work in hotels as waitress receptionists and in such other such services. What is our benevolent Government doing? The Government is giving Rs. 10,000 as a subsidy. What for? For travel facilities. This means, we do not know what is happening in this country. Sir, all other countries are imposing restrictions on very young children from going abroad, if they are uneducated and could not get any fruitful employment, and their Governments are providing employment to them. But, there it is not employment. The whole world knows for what other purposes the young girls are used. It is a very shameful aspect and therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact, and if it is a fact, it is very shocking that our own Government itself is promoting such activities of illegal trafficking on international scale when other Governments like Sri Lanka and Thailand are putting more and more restrictions because of certain untoward incidents which are happening in the Gulf. Young girls were murdered, hanged, there. What is the response of the Government?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: So far as young

girls going to Singapore for employment and the subsidy being given by the Government to such girls, is concerned, it is not true. The Government is not supporting such travel of young girls. Sir, that much I can say. I do concede that even some countries are attracting girls from this country, it may be Gulf, it may be +Singapaore, and here we have to take preventive measures. That is why, I said, laws are to be amended in this respect. The Government is also considering as to how to prevent this problem.

श्रीमती वीणा वर्मा: माननीय सभापति जी, सभी प्रश्न सप्लीमेंटरी द्वारा श्रीमती रेणुका जी ने पूछ लिए हैं, मैं सिर्फ एक छोटा सा प्रश्न इस संबंध में माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहती हूँ। अभी मेरे पूर्व माननीय सदस्य ने भी यह पूछा कि बहुत सी ओरतें दूसरी कंट्रीज में से लाई जा रही हैं और वहां उस तरह से प्रोस्टीट्यूशन, बच्चों का प्रपस्टीटफ्यूशन शुरू होता है या इल्लीगल चाइल्ड पैदा होते हैं और वह भी उस पेशे में डाल दिए जाते हैं। दूसरी तरफ हमारे देश में बहुत से विदेशी आ रहे हैं और अनब्याही मां जो है यहां बन रही है। अब वह अपने बच्चों को वापस नहीं ले जा सकते हैं। पुष्कर में और कई जगह केसेज अखबरोँ एँ मैंने पढ़े थे। हमारा कानून ऐसे बच्चे वापस ले जाने के लिए परमिट नहीं करता क्योंकि वह अपने फादर का नाम नहीं बता सकते, बच्चों के फादर का नाम नहीं बता सकते। तो ऐसे बच्चों को बाहरी देश में भेजने के लिए, जो उन्हें ले जाना चाहते हैं या ऐसे नागरिक जो सिंगल आए थे और डबल हो गए और बच्चे को ले जाना चाहते हैं, उसके लिए क्या आप कोई कानून में संशोधन का प्रस्ताव लाएंगे?

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, so far as my knowledge goes, there is no prohibition on the mother to take back the child. This is the position, as far as my knowledge goes. But I would get the information. *(Interruptions)* I am saying that I have no complete information about it. I said it. But if that is the law, I think it needs to be amended.

*584. *[The Questions (Shri Suryabhan Patil Vahadane) was absent for answer vide col. 28 infra.]*

Decline in Urea output

*585. **SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA.** Will the Minister of CHEMICAL & FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first six months of 1996 registered a six percent decline in urea output;

(b) if so, how will the target of 163 lakh tonnes in 1996-97 be achieved; and

(c) if so, how the requirement for urea will be met?

रसायन और उर्वरक मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री शीश राम ओला): (क) से (ग) एक विवरण पत्र सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) पिछले वर्ष की इसी अवधि के दौरान प्राप्त उत्पादन की तुलना में 1996-97 के प्रथम छः महीनों में यूरिया के उत्पादन में 5.1% की कमी आई है।

(ख) 1996-97 में यूरिया का उत्पादन 162.73 लाख टन के लक्ष्य की तुलना में 156.20 लाख टन था।

(ग) 1996-97 के दौरान 23.28 लाख टन यूरिया का आयात करके स्वदेशी उपलब्धता तथा मांग के बीच के अन्तर को पूरा किया गया था। इस वर्ष के दोनों फसल मौसमों के दौरान सभी राज्यों में यूरिया की मांग पर्याप्त रूप से पूरी की गई थी।

SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Would the hon. Minister kindly tell us as to what are the specific factors and reasons for the decline in urea production?

श्री शीश राम ओला: सभापति महोदय, यूरिया के प्रोडक्शन में कोई कमी के कारण आपूर्ति में दिक्कत आई हो, ऐसा नहीं है। हमने वर्ष 1996-97 में 162.73 लाख टन यूरिया का उत्पादन करना था, जिसके विपरीत 156.20 लाख टन यूरिया का हमारे यहां उत्पादन हुआ। इस प्रकार 6.53 लाख टन की कमी हुई। इस वर्ष 23.53 लाख टन यूरिया आयात किया गया और वर्ष 1996-97 में ओपनिंग स्टॉक में 24 लाख टन यूरिया हमारे पास था। इस प्रकार से गए वर्ष में दोनों फसलों में यूरिया ठीक से, पर्याप्त मात्रा में, किसान को मिल सका।

SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Sir, the statement itself says that there has been a decline in the urea production. But the