

like the Delhi-Agra-Jaipur circuit. Funds are being poured into these areas while other areas are being neglected and the Government has a lack of interest in opening up new areas which have more potential, like the North-Eastern States. But apart from the non-availability of infrastructural facilities, one single factor which has acted as a major irritant and hindered the growth of tourism in the North-East is the Restricted Area Permit system. The RAP was introduced in 1962 in the wake of the Chinese aggression in view of security requirements. It has been there for the last 31 years. There have been occasional relaxations, but they have not been adequate. As a result, the number of foreign tourists has been dwindling steadily over the years and it has also led to the loss of precious foreign exchange to the country. State Governments have been trying to impress upon the Government at the Centre the urgent need to abolish the restrictions. A number of conferences of the Tourism Ministers of the North-Eastern States have been held. The subject has been intensely discussed and debated. The attention of the Government has been drawn. MPs belonging to the North-Eastern States have been raising this subject in both the Houses of Parliament. The attention of the Prime Minister himself has been drawn more than once. But, surprisingly, no decision in the matter seems to be forthcoming.

I wish to demand, through you, Sir, the complete withdrawal of this retrograde measure from the whole of the North-Eastern region. And, if there be any impediment in the wholesale lifting of the restrictions, then the restrictions may be lifted in a phase manner. To begin with, the restrictions may be lifted from the Kaziranga National Park, on an experimental basis. We all know that the Kaziranga National Park is famous throughout the world for the

one-horned rhinos. It also has a significant bird life, of more than 350 species. It has also been a centre of attraction for domestic as well as foreign tourists, mainly foreign tourists. But due to the restrictions, they have not been able to come and those who have come are very few in number. The Government is allowing groups of four to enter the area which hardly serves any purpose. We know that many more foreigners would like to come into these areas, specially Kaziranga National Park, and it would be a major foreign-exchange-earner for the country. I would call upon the Government to seriously consider lifting of the restrictions from the Kaziranga National Park, in the first phase and the gradual lifting of the restrictions from the entire North-Eastern region. It would come as a great relief to the underdeveloped and fund-starved North-Eastern States and would go a long way in boosting tourism in that part of the country. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI NYODEK YONGGAM (Arunachal Pradesh); I associate myself with this special mention, Sir.

Need to Provide Adequate funds for National Commission for Women

SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the unequal status of women in India in every sphere of life is very obvious and apparent; really, it is very appalling. Every day, we hear about incidents of injustice being heaped on women and about atrocities being perpetrated on women. And, it is rightly said:

जरी-ए- खक हं मै, परबाज की हसरत हे मुझे
अधिया तेज चलो और उड़ा लो मुझको ॥

This is aptly describing the plight of women in India.

[Shrimati Chandrika Abhinandan Jain]

With a view to improve the condition of women, the National Commission for Women was set up on the 31st January 1992. It is almost for two years that this body has been functioning. But, I am afraid, it has not yet taken off the ground. A lot of power is required to see that it works effectively. It really requires teeth and Power. No doubt, it has to act as a surveillance agency and facilitator in redressing the grievances of women. But, at the same time, a new approach is required to the functioning and it has to insert dynamism. Sir, the National Commission of Self-Employed Women in the Informal Sector has recognised women's role as major earners of the family. It is not for supplementing the income of the family that the woman makes efforts, but to perform the role of a major earner of the family. The Commission has recommended that at least 50 per cent funds of the development plans should go to women. Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to this recommendation of the National Commission that 50 per cent funds of the development plans should be allocated for women. The hon. Prime Minister had made an announcement on the Independence Day. It is a very welcome announcement. A 1,000 crore plan was earmarked for women for empowering women with more strength, giving them more powers, making them independent and it has enthused women to open their own bank accounts and at the same time similar amount is to be given as an incentive once these bank accounts are opened. This will really go a long way in improving the socio-economic condition of women in India.

Sr, poor implementation of the labour laws has an adverse effect on women. The right to work should be made a fundamental right. Sir, as I said earlier, more teeth and power are required for the National Commission

for Women to function effectively. The National Commission for Women needs to be strengthened by providing district level mechanism. So far, we have an apex body. This Commission has been functioning at the Central Government level. We need to percolate it down to the district level and the State level. It is my suggestion that we should have district level mechanism for checking incidents of violence against women. The conviction rate relating to offence against women is very low. The offences are many but the conviction rate is very low. The mechanism for better investigation and chargesheeting should be evolved at the local level. Special cells in police stations should be set up for registration and monitoring of crimes against women. An increasing number of women police officers should be inducted into the police.

And finally, Sir, family courts have been established in many States, but in some of the States family courts have not been established. They should be established in such States. At the same time we need to review the functioning of the family courts. More women judges should be appointed so that they can perform their functions in a better way. Sir, State Governments should also take the initiative in setting up State level commissions to ameliorate the plight of the women.

Sir, you have given me sufficient time. I must thank you for that.

SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL (Gujarat): Sir, I would like to join with her and add a word that there should be these women commissions in all the States. And there should be woman police officers in police stations in each district in the beginning and then in each tehsil as well, so that cases of atrocities against women can be handled as early as possible. More woman judges should be employed and family courts should be established where they have not yet been established so that