

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) No, Sir. Under the Pre-matric and Post matric scholarship scheme for Scheduled Castes, Rs. 1.57 crore and Rs. 18.14 crore have been released respectively during current year. The balance admissible central assistance against pending demands of Rs. 18.83 crore and Rs. 292.26 crore respectively will be released in due course. Under the Post matric Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Tribes, against demand of Rs. 44.12 crore, Rs. 44.03 has been released.

Welfare of older persons

†2843. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of old persons is increasing constantly in the country but most of them are living in poverty;

(b) the number of old persons in the country and the reasons for increase in their number;

(c) the efforts made by the Government for mobilizing regular source of income for old persons and to improve their living standard; and

(d) the manner in which Government are ensuring that only needy persons should get the benefit of said efforts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) As per the Census 2001, the number for older persons in the country is 7,06,90,000. Improved life expectancy has contributed to the increase in the number of older persons. No survey has been undertaken to ascertain the poverty levels among the aged.

(c) and (d) The Central Government is providing additional central assistance (ACA) to State Governments at the rate of Rs. 200/- per month per beneficiary under National Old Age Pension Scheme to pay pension to destitute older persons.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.