

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. Thank you. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please resume your places.  
...*(Interruptions)*... Question No. 84.

**Vacant land in cities for housing**

\*84. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:†

SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government has given directions to the State Governments to identify vacant land in key cities for construction of houses;
- (b) if so, the response of the State Governments in this regard;
- (c) whether in view of great demand for housing in cities, Government proposes to identify unused land and to handover the same to local development authorities for building houses; and
- (d) if so, to what extent the shortage of houses is likely to be met?

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

***Statement***

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In pursuance of the resolution adopted by the National Conference of State Ministers of Housing, Urban Development and Municipal Administration on "Affordable Housing for All" held on 20.01.2009, a communication has been sent to all states on 24.03.2009 for initiation of steps in line with the resolution adopted in the Conference that availability of land for housing be augmented to meet the shortages and to keep pace with the increasing population in urban areas. A need for providing land for housing free of cost or at nominal cost for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS); and at controlled prices for the Low Income Group (LIG) and Middle Income Group (MIG) acknowledged in the Conference and review of existing legal and regulatory framework with a view to enabling acquisition and assembly of additional land adopted by the Conference has also been highlighted in the communication.

(c) and (d) 'Land' and 'Colonisation' being State subjects, it is primarily the responsibility of State Governments to take measures for increased supply of land for adequate shelter.

However, in line with the resolution adopted in the National Conference of State Ministers of Housing, Urban Development and Municipal Administration on 'Affordable Housing for All' held on 20.01.2009 that the Central Government may support and partner in addressing the agenda of 'Affordable Housing for All', with measures to encourage allotment of land for EWS; Central Government has launched a new scheme of 'Affordable Housing in Partnership' for providing Central Assistance to States to incentivise land assembly for affordable housing to promote development of projects for affordable housing units by provision of central assistance of 25% for the cost of provision of civic services at an approximate cost of Rs.5,000 crores to Central Budget.

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† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Janardhan Waghmare.

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Sir, even though the Government of India has asked the State Governments to identify vacant land but the fact is that in most of the towns and cities, very rarely, vacant land is available. And, the Municipal Councils and Municipalities are not in a position to buy land. Financially, they are very weak. In such a situation, will the Government give money to buy land for the housing purposes?

KUMARI SELJA: Sir, as I have said in my answer to the main question, land and colonisation subjects are, primarily, with the States. So, in that regard, the main responsibility for providing land for housing lies with the States. However, the Government of India has taken note of the short supply of land in the urban areas. At the moment, I would like to share with the House that only three per cent of the land is in the urban areas which supports about 30 per cent of the population and contributes about 60 per cent to the GDP. So, clearly, Sir, there is a need to add more land to the urban areas. The State Governments, from time to time, increase the municipal limits. We try to augment the supply, but it is a serious issue, especially, as far as the poorer sections of the urban society are concerned. There is a huge shortage of housing for the urban poor. Sir, we have been discussing this issue time and again. We have come out with a scheme for affordable housing in the urban areas in partnership and, of course, as per the speech of the hon. President, now, we are coming out with a new scheme of *Rajiv Awas Yojana*. The earlier scheme of affordable housing in partnership will be included in that as well. Under that scheme, if a project is put forth for affordable housing and if the coloniser or the State Government, whichever is putting forth the project, promise to earmark about 25 per cent of the land of the dwelling units for the urban poor, then the Government of India will give 25 per cent of the cost of internal or external infrastructure for that, but this scheme, as I said, will also be included in the *Rajiv Awas Yojana* for which guidelines are being framed.

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Sir, we would like to know the criteria on which the houses will be distributed. In our country, in many places untouchability still prevails. In such a situation, the dalit families are likely to be excluded. And, we have the philosophy of inclusive society. Have the Government given thought to this particular problem?

KUMARI SELJA: Sir, the JNNURM, primarily, includes the marginalised sections of the society which, obviously, includes the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and Minorities. So, care has to be taken and it is being taken under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission which, of course, is a programme for slums in the urban areas.

SHRI N.K. SINGH: Sir, successive independent studies have suggested that quite apart from the absolute shortage of land, the shortage is exasperated by complex rules on stamp duty, conversion rates, permissible FAR ratios and the conflicts between Municipal, State and the Central legislations.

Is the Government contemplating to come up with a comprehensive measure which harmonises these conflicting rules and encourage genuine supply side elasticity which can improve the amount of available vacant land to Government?

KUMARI SELJA: Sir, the hon. Member is absolutely right about this. There have been studies which have suggested and marked these issues. The Government of India and our Ministry have been discussing this with the State Housing Ministers, the State Urban Development Ministers from time to time. In fact, we have done it many times over. I have personally taken it up with the Chief Ministers. There is no uniformity in stamp duties and many other things; Rent Control Act, for instance. We have been taking it up with the States. Many States have agreed to reduce the stamp duty. Some States have not because they feel, erroneously, I believe, that the higher the stamp duty, the higher the tax collection. But that is not so. The hon. Member himself understands that. But these are issues which cannot be tackled in a limited time-frame, even though we have tried to make it as part of our reform process under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. But I am glad to say that at least the need is being recognised today, the needs of the urban poor is being recognised today, the need for housing is being recognised today, and, I appeal to all the Members of this House that they must take it up with their respective State Governments that they must come on board and try to augment the land supply in the urban areas, especially, for the urban poor.

SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: The basic issue is ideal and real. I mean, the intention of the Central Government is definitely laudable as in the last sentence of the reply, it has been said, "25 per cent for the cost of provision of civic services at an approximate cost of Rs. 5000 comes to Central Budget." Constructing houses for the weaker sections of the society is one thing and providing civic amenities is another thing. Sir, I will request the hon. Minister to find out the money given to various State Governments. According to my information and my own inspection in the city of Ahmedabad, the money provided under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission is utilised for underground gutter, etc. in the most developed middle class area of the city; instead the intention is the affordable houses.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put the question.

SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the hon. Minister give information about the four cities of Gujarat, i.e., Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat and Rajkot? How many housing units are constructed for low-income group, poor people, weaker sections of the society, etc.? What is the total grant given to these four cities?

KUMARI SELJA: Sir, under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, there are two components. One is, for the infrastructure of the urban areas of the towns and cities; and the other is, providing basic services for the urban poor which includes basic amenities in the slums of these cities. Sir, as far as the four cities mentioned by the hon. Member are concerned, I will collect the information on the housing aspect, the BSUP, and supply them to the hon. Member.

SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Sir, in this scheme of affordable housing for poor, in the reply also, it is said, 'this is for key cities.' I would like to know which cities are included in it. What are the names of those cities? The is part(a) of my question. Sir, as a part of this question, if the Government is serious about this scheme, if the Government wants to protect those lands which are vacant today, will the Government introduce reservation in the development plan of the concerned cities? I want to know whether it can say that these plots are reserved for housing for poor. I want to know whether this type of reservation can be introduced.

KUMARI SELJA: Sir, the National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy as well as the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission has clearly stated that 20-25 per cent of the land must be reserved for the poor and, at least, 10-15 per cent of the land must be reserved for the urban poor, or 20-25 per cent of the developed land or dwelling units must be reserved for the urban poor. The Government has been taking this up with the State Governments from time to time. But, Sir, the hon. Member would appreciate that ours is a federal structure and the Central Government can only try to persuade and impress upon the respective State Governments to take up these issues, which affect them as much as the Central Government and they are as concerned about the urban poor as the Central Government. There are various schemes like the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission which are worked out in partnership with the State Governments and local bodies, and to make it a success, the State Governments have assured the Central Government, by taking up the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, that they will take care of these aspects.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to Hyderabad where land that was procured for housing for the weaker sections of society was handed over to a Singapore company. While the hon. Minister is assuring us that affordable housing would be made available for the poor, land procured for the poor is being given away to the Singapore company. Will the Minister assure us that land will be made available for housing? I am talking about Hyderabad.

KUMARI SELJA: Sir, as I said in the beginning, land is the property of the State Government. They have various projects which are upcoming, which they have, sanctioned. I am not aware of each and every project in each and every State, but this is an issue which concerns the State Government.

#### **भ्रष्टाचार के संबंध में वैश्विक सर्वेक्षण**

†\*85. श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र :††

**श्री बृजभूषण तिवारी :**

क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान वैश्विक सर्वेक्षण की ओर दिलाया गया है जिसमें देश की उच्च नौकरशाही को भ्रष्टताम करार दिया गया है;

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††सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र द्वारा पूछा गया।