

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 6th November, 1986/15  
Kartika, 1908 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the  
Clock. Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Committee to review rejected freedom  
fighters' pension cases**

41. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the  
Minister of HOME AFFAIRS  
be pleased to state

(a) whether Government propose to  
constitute a Committee to review all re-  
jected pension cases received from the  
freedom fighters;

(b) if so, what are the details in this  
regard;

(c) whether Government also propose to  
evolve a new formula for the payment of  
pension to freedom fighters; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this  
regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE  
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI  
CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI); (a) No,  
Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I request that  
Question No. 41 and Question No. 47 be  
clubbed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I have looked  
into it Question No 47 is different from  
Question No. 41.

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Mr.  
Chairman, Sir, I would like to know from  
the hon'ble Minister the total number of  
applications received from the freedom  
fighters, which have been rejected so far—  
Statewise and by when a decision is likely  
to be taken for the grant of pension to them?

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:  
Sir,

more than 70,000 applications were  
filled for grant of pension under Swatan-tarta  
Sainik Samman Pension Scheme. They were  
reported as pending with the Central  
Government as on 20th June, 1986 for final  
decision. Sir, most of this pendency was due  
to non-receipt of the verification reports  
from the respective State Government and  
the Statewise re-rejection cases are not there  
but Statewise, the pending cases are there. I  
can read out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can give  
merely the number •

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI;  
Right Sir.

Name of pendency cases

State UT.	
1 Andhra Pradesh . ,	195
2. Assam	53
3. Bihar .	713
4. Gujarat	Nil
5. Haryana	Nil
6. Himachal Pradesh	Nil
7 Karnataka	2

		2
8. Kerala		56
9. Madhya Pradesh		242
10. Maharashtra		68
11. Manipur		Nil
12. Meghalaya		5
13. Nagaland		4
14. Orissa		19
15. Punjab		Nil'
16. Rajasthan		Nil
17. Tamil Nadu		4
18. Tripura		8
19. U.P.		Nil
20. West Bengal		60
21. Chandigarh		2
22. Delhi		19
23. Goa		65
24. Pondicherry		3
TOTAL And Hyderabad		1533
Committee caeses		350
Andhra Pradesh Maharashtra		2276
Karnataka		301
<i>Arya Samaj Samiti cases: All States and Union Territories—1265.</i>		
Grand Total of application is- 5725		

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether there is any proposal under the Government's consideration to reserve some of the posts in the Government services for the wards of the freedom fighters? If so, what are the details thereof.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: We are giving a to of facilities but this particular thing has not come to the notice of the Government. We are giving first class passes to travel in the railways to the freedom fighters, his spouse if no other dependant is there can travel with him and Sir, we are asking the Health Ministry to give them medical facilities in the Central Government hospitals and Sir, I think such facilities are being given.

SHRI B. SATYANARA-YAN REDDY: Sir, as the statement given, by the hon'ble Minister shows that a number of cases are still pending, the total number shown is 5725, I would like to know from the Minister whether any relaxations have been considered by the Government in processing these- applications. Still there are some cases which do not fit into the present category. So I would like to know whether the Government is considering relaxing or amending the present procedure in order to bring in those who really took part in the freedom struggle so\* that they may get the benefit.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: Sir,, the late Prime Minister Indiraji, our

present Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi and the Government have been very much sympathetic to the Cause of the freedom fighters. Even in regard to cases which are rejected, the Government has decided that if there is a fresh appeal, they will be considered. Sometimes genuine cases might have been rejected. So in those genuine cases which might have been rejected, we are asking them to make a fresh appeal so that the cases are reviewed. If the hon. Member can cite any genuine cases, we shall consider them.

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : सभापति महोदय, अभी हाल के महीनों में तो फ्रीडम फाइटर के केसेज काफी स्पीडी डिस्पोजल हुए हैं। लेकिन एक समस्या उनकी है जो विडोज आफ् दी फ्रीडम फाइटर हैं उनके लिए कोई आसान तरीका निकालें, नहीं तो उनको बहुत दौड़ना पड़ता है। या तो फ्रीडम फाइटर पहले ही एफीडेविट दे दें और डी० एम० ओ० वहां पर मान ले या फिर कोई आसान तरीका निकालें। मेरा अनुभव यह है कि एक विडो फ्रीडम फाइटर के एड्रेस में गलती हो गयी थी और आज दो महीने से मैं विभाग को लिख रहा हूँ लेकिन जवाब नहीं मिल रहा है। मिनिस्टर तो जवाब देते हैं लेकिन विभाग लगता है कि सोया हुआ है या पता नहीं क्या है? इसलिए हम दो बिंदुओं पर सफाई चाहते हैं एक तो विभाग कुछ करे और दूसरा फ्रीडम फाइटर के विडोज के लिये जल्दी पेंशन मिले ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have put the question. You are repeating yourself.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Yes, I have repeated myself. I make a frank admission.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: I can share the anxiety of the hon. Member. We are taking a very sympathetic view so far as the widows are concerned .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. All women. Why widows only? All women.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: What is the sympathetic view? I am asking you a simple question.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: I can give some information as the hon. Member is interested. A special drive was launched and immediately after "Operation Clearance", most of the cases of widows have already been transferred and the remaining cases are being examined on a priority basis. We also propose to authorise the State Governments to issue sanction to widows after proper verification, if he can bring any particular case to us, we shall look into it.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no You write to the Minister.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: I can write to the Minister. Let them simplify the procedure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are 40 Members who want to ask questions. Mr. Thangabalu.

SHRI THANGABAALU: Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that only four cases are pending from Tamil Nadu. According to my information, 300 to 400 cases are pending. There are certain genuine cases which were rejected. In fact, co-prisoners and the State Government have recommended those cases and those cases are also rejected by the Department. Will the Government reconsider those cases if they again ask for pension?

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: The 'hon. Member met me and We have discussed this problem. Any time he can come and if any genuine cases are there, we will surely look into it.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARA-JAN Sir, the amount disbursed in 1984-85 Was about Rs. 33 crores and the amount disbursed in 1985-86 would probably be Rs. 84 crores. I know that the amount was enhanced recently. I would like to know if the definition of "freedom figh-

ter" has already been liberalised because I understand that the definition was extended to cover persons who participated in the Arya Samaj movement in 1938-39 against the Nizam regime. My specific question is whether the definition of "freedom fighter" includes those who participated in regional movements with particular relevance to the fact that the State Governments themselves have evolved schemes for regional movements. I would like to know whether the Central Government includes these regional movements also in the definition of "freedom fighter".

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: Now the question of regional movement does not arise. We are accepting those movements in any part of the country which are really connected with the freedom movement of this country. As regards the instances pointed out by the honourable Member, for the suffering of the freedom fighters whatever little we are spending it is not enough. The estimated expenditure for this will go up to Rs. 60 crores a year.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: The honourable lady Member wanted to know whether the regional movements are under consideration. I should like to add to the reply of my honourable colleague, we have under active consideration of the Government three movements: (1) the Madurai Conspiracy Case. (2) the ex-INA case and (3) the Movement of Kalipatnam from Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: My supplementary relates to the problem of verification. There are certain cases where the freedom fighters applied for pension quite late. In a given case a situation did arise where the certificate from a co-prisoner was not forthcoming for the simple reason that no co-prisoner was alive at that time, and on that score alone the application has been rejected. Would the honourable Minister kindly tell us what is the verification process which the various State Governments conduct in such cases, particularly when the local residents of the village or the town from which the freedom fighter hails do con-

cede that he has been a renowned freedom fighter of the area?

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: There is no difficulty in it because the Government has set up screening committees, non-official advisory committees, State-level committees, etc. Therefore, in a case at any place if the official document is available and if it has been omitted, we are going to look into that case; it is not very difficult. We can condone the delay in such genuine cases.

SHRI VISHVAJIT PRITHVIJIT SINGH: It is with a sense of extreme desperation that I rise to raise this matter. I have written a number of letters to the Home Ministry and I have received cryptic replies saying that the Delhi Administration has been asked to look into the matter. Delhi Administration has been constantly writing to the Home Ministry, right from 1983 onwards, that all the papers are complete. I am raising an individual case of Shri Amir Chand Jain...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Vishvajit, about individual cases you may write a letter to the Minister . . .

SHRI VISHVAJIT PRITHVIJIT SINGH: I have already written to the Home Minister but I have received a cryptic reply. That is why I am taking recourse to raising the matter in the House. I do not normally do such things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The new Minister will be more sympathetic.

SHRI VISHVAJIT PRITHVIJIT SINGH: I would like an assurance from the honourable Minister. In this case two other co-accused have already been granted pension on exactly identical documents, as referred to and recommended by the Delhi Administration. And when the third case has already been recommended and repeated reminders have been sent, I get a reply from the Home Ministry saying, "Therefore, her case has been referred to the Delhi Administration for verification and report."

Now, verification of everything has been gone through. The gentleman has already died. It is for his widow. Therefore I want an assurance from the honourable Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I also add to the weighty arguments?

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: As the Chairman has already pointed out, the honourable friend can meet me; in a genuine case the Government is sympathetic.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: It does not reflect on the efficiency of the Government that even after forty years of independence we are still groping to know who is a freedom fighter and who is not. We are wasting so many crores; we are giving concessions of hundreds of crores, and when it comes to a poor, old, freedom fighter we are verifying, re-verifying, re re-verifying for years. Even if there are a few bogus cases, it is better to grant pension to all the applicants rather than make genuine people suffer. There are old people who come and represent to us. We write to the Prime Minister, to the Home Minister. Even assuming that of all these cases there are a few bogus ones, it will not add up to a few crores. Since the Prime Minister is present here, will he kindly assure us that by a blanket order he will grant pension to all these people who are aged?

SHRI BUTA SINGH: It is not correct to say that the Central Government is found wanting in this. I do not propose to make this issue as something between a State and the Centre. But the fact is that out of about 4,45,000 cases, 3,40,000 cases are still pending. It is not because of the Central Government, but mainly because of the State Governments. We made a special drive and we have decided a substantial number of cases where we could use our discretion. In fact I have decided that we would send a team of officers to all the capitals where these cases are sticking. But, I am sorry, I have to inform the House that in some of the States including Andhra Pradesh, the

pensions of the genuine freedom fighters were discontinued by the State Government.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA:  
No, no. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BUTA SINGH: We are taking up this issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Sukul.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Sir, in view of the kind and benevolent attitude of this Government towards the freedom fighters, especially the various concessions available to them, I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether the freedom fighters' pension is also commutable as is the case with regard to the pension of the retired public servants and, if not, whether the Government would consider making it commutable at least to the extent of one-third amount of the pension.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: There is no provision for this, Sir. This is only a suggestion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Next Question. Question No. 42. Mr. Yadav.

SHRI RASHEED MASOOD; Sir, I have got a case pending in U.P.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Nothing will go on record. Question No, 42. Mr. Yadav.

SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:\*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing of what he says will go on record. Everybody cannot be given a chance.

सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय द्वारा  
प्रकाशित पत्रिकाएं  
\*42. श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : क्या  
सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्री यह बताने की  
कृपा करेंगे कि :  
(क) क्या यह सच है कि सूचना और  
प्रसारण मंत्रालय विभिन्न मंत्रालयों/

•Not recorded as ordered by the Chair,