

of electronics, mechanical engineering and people with other technical qualifications?

SHRI ARUN SINGH: The hon. Member has made a very valid point. There are very highly skilled people available in the armed forces or defence services in all kinds of technical trades. I am prepared to make an assurance that the action on this concept of equivalance<sup>†</sup> that means relating experience and performance of a serving personnel to a civilian counterpart, will be expedited by us.

**Changes in the district planning set up suggested by the G.V.K. Rao Committee**

\*402. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI :  
SHRI ATAL BIHARI  
VAJPAYEE;

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the significant changes suggested by the G. V. K Rao Committee in the district planning set up for the poverty alleviation programmes and in restructuring of the implementation machinery; and

(b) whether the States were asked to give comments thereon, if so, what are the details thereof and the guidelines issued to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI AJIT PANJA).- (a) The significant changes suggested by the Committee include the following;

(i) involvement of Zila parishad & District Development Committees in the programmes;

(ii) Posting of District Development Commissioner in each district;

(iii) formulation of separate District Plans with District Budgets;

<sup>†</sup>The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Lay K, Advani.

(iv) constitution of District Planning Team and District Anti-poverty Team; and

(v) associating representatives of voluntary agencies and participants of the programmes in the Special Committees of the Panchayat Raj body.

(b) Yes, Sir. Replies from most of the States/Union Territories are awaited. After receipt of their replies, the matter will be placed before the National Development Council for consideration. In this background no guidelines in the matter were required to be issued to the States/Union Territories.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, the key recommendation of the G. V. K. Rao Committee is the creation of a development administration, a set-up headed by the Development Commissioner who shall be of a rank not less than that of the Chief Secretary and a kind of a parallel administration the objective of which, he says, being "to establish the primary of the development administration over the maintenance, administration." Now, apart from the feed back that you get from the States to the specific recommendations made by the Committee, I would like to know the Government of India's reaction to this key recommendation because it is a matter of principle, it is a matter of policy it is a matter of basic fundamental approach. Do you agree with it or do you reject it or is the Government's position that still it is under consideration, even this key recommendation?

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, this key recommendation is under consideration. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: You prompted the answer by saying, is it under consideration?

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, this key recommendation, the hon. Member will himself stand up and say that the States have not been consulted. The Committee was formed in March 1985, the report was submitted in January 1986 and immediately thereafter it was circulated to the States and Union territories. As it touches about 5,80,000

villages 438 district in the country including 5092 blocks, we cannot unilaterally decide even though it is a key recommendation.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Sir, yet another recommendation made by the Conunittee relates to the panchayati raj institutions which, the Committee says, should be the principal instrument apart from voluntary agencies in order to alleviate poverty in the real sense of the word. Sir, I would like to have information about the States in which panchayati raj institutions are really functioning. In quite a few States (they are absolutely moribund, if not altogether non-existent. One of the recommendations, that he has made in regard to this, is that elections should be held regularly in respect of panchayats and panchayati raj institutions also. How does the Government propose to implement this? Is the Government willing to consider the possibility of making constitutional provisions in this regard? Today the Panchayati Raj set-up has no constitutional guarantees no constitutional sanction. Is the Government willing to consider this suggestion?

SHRI AHT PANJA: Sir, up till now, the States of Orissa and Himachal Pradesh have given their reaction to this Committee's report. But it is a valid point made by the hon. Member. Some of the Union Territories are saying that there is no concept of Panchayati Raj there, so how they are going to do it. We are compiling all these reports from each of the States and it is really a suggestion for a structural change from the State level down to the grassroot level, up to the village level. Therefore after getting the reactions where the Panchayati Raj is performing well, where there are difficulties, where it does not exist we shall formulate the principles.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The point which the hon. Member wanted is, whether you will consider a constitutional amendment to make panchayat elections compulsory.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: At this stage, it is very difficult to say.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Sir, as every thing is under consideration, I

will not refer to any particular recommendation. But I would like to know whether the Union Territory of Delhi or the Delhi Administration has apprised the Government of its reaction in regard to the recommendations made by the Rao Committee.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Yes, they have.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: What are they?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Mohapatra.

SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Sir, as per the provisions of the Seventh Plan, 50 per cent of Central assistance is to be provided to the State Governments for strengthening the planning machinery at the district level in order to ensure effective monitoring of the beneficiary-oriented schemes. Since the schemes are being implemented at the village level, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the District Planning Boards have been set up all over the country to look after the detailed working of the poverty alleviation programme.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, it does not really arise out of this question, but I can answer it when the hon. Member has raised it. Before this Committee's recommendations are taken into consideration and given effect to, the existing system is to have SLCCs—i.e. State Level Coordinates Committees—and have them divided into district level as the hon. Member has referred to. That is, the District Collector, Members of Parliament, Members of legislative Assembly, Heads of the Central Cooperative Bank, other land banks, then the key bank, official of the lead bank, two representatives of the weaker sections and one representative from voluntary organisation are taken in. At the present moment as it is functioning, not in all the States and Union Territories it is functioning well. But we are taking up with the State Planning Boards so that they augment the existing machinery to cater to the needs of people.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, I am a little confused. On going through the statement,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't make any confessions.

SHRI K. MOHANAN: Mr. Buta Singh is there.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: That is Mr. Buta Singh's prerogative.

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: It is a virus.

SHRI A.G. KULKARNI: Sir, if you allow me, I will develop my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Yes.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Because it is a very important question on the poverty alleviation programme which is the crux of the development of village and rural economy. Perhaps the Minister is aware that various evaluations have been made by the planning Commission, Ministry of Rural Development, etc. of the poverty alleviation programme. What I find is that the poverty alleviation programme at the implementation stage... Mr. Minister, either you allow me to speak or you don't stand in between. Sorry.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: You address the Chair. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Parliamentary practice, you need not teach me. I am a better parliamentarian.

SHRI THANGABALLU: He is totally confused, Sir.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: I think, Sir, since the Prime Minister is here, people want to show their...

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, I am very sorry that my presence is disturbing Shri Kulkarni. But I would request him to address the Chair and put his supplementary.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: I did not mention that his presence was disturbing me. His presence is provoking his Members to shout. I am coming to my point. My point is more important. The question is addressed to the Prime Minister. Has the Government, the Ministry gone through these evaluation reports? The evaluation reports have brought out a fact that

in these IRDP or the NREP or whatever other programmes you have, between 35 per cent and 60 per cent are the leakages at the implementation stage.

Then, Sir if I go through the reply here, the Rao Committee talks about involvement of Zilla Parishads and the District Development Boards. Already in Maharashtra at least—I am concerned with Maharashtra—the Zilla Parishads are implementing the IRDP and the NREP themselves. The second thing is about the Development Commissioner. This is a new concept. You know, Sir. You were also Finance Minister here. You know the administrative charges. The poverty-alleviation programmes are so top heavy that little funds are left for the persons who should get the benefit.

Last point. I want to know whether you have increased the benefit from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 6,000. The evaluation reports of your own Ministry, the Rural Development Ministry and the Planning Commission state that it is very difficult to build even tangible assets with this amount, that because of the munificence of the Finance Minister increasing the taxes and inflation being rampant the real assets are not being built. Is there any...

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Two minutes over.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't disturb.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Is there any basic rethinking on these programmes of poverty-alleviation? I find, Sir, they are the best as far as...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: ... the policy is concerned but the implementation is weak.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, there is a shift in the thought process for implementing this poverty-alleviation programme. That is why the G. V. K. Rao Committee was specifically formed. That happened in all his country's diverse sectoral programmes and major thrusts being made and their increased number made it necessary to coordinate these sectoral programmes if best benefits are expected from these pro-

grammes. That is why these are the recommendations, major recommendations I have stated in the written reply.

It is true, in Maharashtra Panchayati Raj is functioning well. But the G.V.K. Rao Committee is for the entire country. And for the entire country when the recommendation is made, the totality is taken into consideration. And one of the major factor is to see that the poverty-alleviation programme reaches the people at the grass root level, and that is why these are the Committee's recommendations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question, No. 403.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, I asked him whether the benefit under the poverty-alleviation programme has been increased from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 6,000 and whether the Government in your Department it has been done in the Rural Development Department—has made any evaluation, You have actually avoided a reply to this question and sermons you are giving me. What is your view? I want to know from the Minister. This is a very important question for rural people. This is not a joke.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next question with regard to edible oils, I thought, was more important.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Let him reply this question about the evaluation report. I would like to know whether he has himself read the evaluation report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is nil right. It is not that he reads it. The evaluation report is read by the Department staff. Is't it so?

SHRI AIT PANJA: Yes, Sir.

### **Rise in the prices of edible oils in the country**

\*403. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of edible oils are going up in the open market and that these are in short supply in the public distribution system itself;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to bring down the prices of edible oils and for their adequate supply to the fair price shops in the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI AIT PANJA): (a) There has been increase in the prices of edible oils in the open market. There is, however, no shortage in supply of imported edible oils under Public Distribution System.

(b) Due to drought in certain oil producing States, there has been a shortfall in the production of oilseeds. This and the onset of lean season has resulted in rise in prices of edible oils.

(c) To check the rising trend in the prices of edible oils in the open market and ensure adequate availability in fair price shops, the allocation of imported edible oils to States/Union Territories under Public Distribution System has progressively been increased from May, 1986.