

Pending freedom fighters' pension cases

*102. SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of freedom fighters' pension cases pending with his Ministry for sanction of pensions;

(b) how many cases of those freedom fighters from Marathwada region who had participated in Hyderabad Mukti Andolan, are pending with the Ministry; and

(c) by when these cases are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement I

(a) State-wise pendency of applications as on 30.6.1986 is given in the enclosed statement (See below)

(b) As on 30th June, 1986, a total of 3,626 applications from the Ex-Hyderabad area now forming part of Maharashtra State were pending disposal.

(c) A non-official Committee has been set up to scrutinise the applications from the ex-Hyderabad area now forming part of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The pending cases will be disposed of as soon as the recommendations of the Committee are received. The Committee has been requested to expedite their recommendations on the pending cases. A special drive has been launched to clear the pending applications received in time by the 15th August, 1986 and for this purpose special efforts are being made and special steps taken.

Statement II

S. No. Name of the States/U.T. Admns. Number of Pendencies

1. Andhra Pradesh	3301
2. Assam	4880
3. Bihar	13584
4. Gujarat	83
5. Haryana	101
6. Himachal Pradesh	41
7. Jammu & Kashmir	1402
8. Karnataka	1407
9. Kerala	4603
10. Madhya Pradesh	410
11. Maharashtra	9417
12. Manipur	85
13. Meghalaya	83
14. Nagaland	13
15. Orissa	1121
16. Punjab	1042
17. Rajasthan	52
18. Tamil Nadu	349
19. Tripura	873
20. Uttar Pradesh	1017
21. West Bengal	24319
22. INA Cases	4856
Union Territory Admns.	
1. Chandigarh	10
2. Delhi	185
3. Goa	361
4. Pondicherry	52
GRAND TOTAL	73,647

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: (a) How many total cases of freedom fighters have been received by the Ministry from the entire country and how many have been cleared.

(b) It has been learnt from the Hyderabad Mukti Andolan that one committee has been appointed by the

Home Ministry to identify the freedom fighters and to recommend their cases to the Home Ministry for the disposal of pension cases. How many times has the Committee met, how many cases have been recommended and how many of those have been cleared?

(c) Can the Government give any time limit to clear all freedom fighter cases of pensions? If so, what would be the time limit?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: The answer to the first part of the question is that the total number of applications which we have received, both under the 1972 scheme and under the 1980 scheme, is 4,44,725; the total number of sanctioned cases is 1,39,279; the total number of cases rejected is 2,31,079; the number of pending cases is 73,647. As far as part (b) question regarding granting of pension to the freedom fighters from Marathwada region who had participated in Hyderabad Mukti Andolan is concerned, the Committee met five times in the last one year from July, 1985 to June, 1986. The total cases they recommended for the pension was 3,500 and for rejection 3,000. Out of these 3,500 cases, 1,315 belonged to Maharashtra State, 1,618 to Andhra Pradesh and 565 to Karnataka. Out of these total 3,500 cases, 3,300 cases have already been cleared. So far we have been left with only 200 cases.

As regards part (c) of his question, under the direction of the hon. Prime Minister, a special cell has been created within the Home Ministry and almost 300 officers and staff are working overtime in addition to the existing 70 officers. A direction has already been given, as I have mentioned by the Prime Minister, that by 14th August all the 73,647 cases should be cleared.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: Sir, on the advice of the Home Ministry railway passes have been issued to the freedom fighters'

for a period of six months considering the age and physical capability of the freedom fighters'. I want to know whether the Government would extend the period for 3 to 5 years?

Secondly, I would like to know whether the Home Ministry is considering enhancement of pension to the freedom fighters who were in Andaman jails?

Thirdly, I would like to know whether the Government is considering Arya Samaj movement for the purpose of freedom fighters' pension?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Regarding first part of his supplementary is concerned, we have already given the passes to the freedom fighters. Of course, the passes are only for six months. But there were some representations from the pensioners and the freedom fighters' that they should be provided passes on par with Members of Parliament and those passes should not be time bound only for six months, but it should be more than that. We are holding discussions with the Ministry of Railways and as soon as we complete the discussions we may come to some conclusion.

As far as second part of his supplementary is concerned, the hon. Member might be aware that before independence most of the freedom fighters who were sent to *Kalapani* their cases were considered. I think some two months back in the Cabinet it was decided that the pension to a male freedom fighter was getting Rs. 500 per month previously should be enhanced to Rs. 800; and that of a widow to Rs. 500.

Regarding Arya Samaj movement for the purpose of freedom fighters' pension, this has already been recognised and accepted by the Government.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: We are happy that this pension scheme has been liberalised. We are in a free coun-

try because of the selfless service and sacrifice of the freedom fighters. But unfortunately contrary to the expectations the number of persons who are claiming under the scheme are increasing. There are escalations whether they are logical or factual. It should have declined, as you know. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the reason for this increase? Whether the Government has relaxed norms for getting pension? Is there any corrupt practice? Is there any freedom movement which is known only to the pensioners and to none in the country?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: There is nothing like that what the hon. Member has said. Previously the deadline was fixed as 1972 and subsequently it was extended to 1980, in order to receive the forms. Thereby we got some more forms. There is nothing like the hidden freedom movement and giving them more concessions. It is not like that.

SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in 1942, the freedom fighters were looting banks, trains and treasuries of the Government to purchase arms to continue the Quit India Movement till the achievement of independence. The British Government had arrested, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced them to jails under section 395 of the Indian Penal Code without keeping their records as freedom fighters. Now, Sir, the pension of these freedom fighters was stopped on the ground that they were involved in the dacoity cases which were, in fact the part and parcel of the national movement. Therefore, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Home Minister what is the number of such cases pending in India and what steps have been taken regarding the pension of these freedom fighters?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, the facts regarding this question are not available with me. I will get

them examined and write back to the hon. Member.

SHRI K. MOHANAN: Sir, this is something awkward that we are still continuing with receiving applications on freedom fighters pension. Sir, when I had met our beloved late Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi regarding freedom fighters pension cases with a group of people from Kerala, she told me, "I do not know whether after two or three generations, applications will come for freedom fighters pension." So, my specific question is that by what time, we have to take a final decision on these applications and wind up the scheme and to give pension to all the deserving persons and by what time, a time bound programme would be implemented and by what time all these pending applications would be cleared?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, I think, the hon. Member did not listen my answer to first question in which I have already said that by 14th of August, all the pending cases will be cleared. That is the deadline.

SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MAS-ODKAR: I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the position of Goa freedom fighters cases pending with the Government?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, as far as Goa is concerned, 361 cases are pending.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have any decision been taken on them?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: We have already said that all the cases are mixed up together and they are being cleared.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we go to the next Question No. 103