

(d) if so, the measures that are being taken to uproot it totally?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON): (a) to (d) Article 17 of the Constitution of India has abolished practice of untouchability, its practice in any form is forbidden and it is an offence punishable in accordance with law. The protection of Civil rights Act, 1955, prescribes punishment for the enforcement of any disability arising from preaching and practice of untouchability. As per the data provided by National Crime Records Bureau, in regard to offences against Scheduled Castes, number of cases registered by Police, under the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, during the year 2008 are 248.

The Act is implemented by the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. With a view to ensure effective implementation of provisions of the Act, central assistance is provided to States/Union Territories, which includes strengthening of enforcement and judicial machinery, incentive for inter-caste marriages and awareness generation. They are requested to implement provisions of the Act in letter and spirit. Review meetings are also held with State Governments from time to time.

Residential schools for SC/ST students

841. SHRI RANJITSINH VIJAYSINH MOHITE-PATIL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) how many residential schools are presently running for the students of SC/ST in all over the country with specific reference to Maharashtra;

(b) whether Government has any plan to establish some more residential schools for students of SC/ST in the State; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON): (a) Under the Scheme of Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organizations working for Scheduled Castes, 168 residential schools are getting Grant-in-Aid, including 20 in Maharashtra.

As regards Scheduled Tribes, Ministry of Tribal Affairs releases grant-in-aid to State Governments for setting up Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS). 88 EMRS, including 4 in Maharashtra, are functional. That Ministry also implements a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Establishment of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub Plan Areas, under which central assistance is released to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, for construction of Ashram School buildings. During Tenth and Eleventh Five Year Plan (up to 2009-10), central assistance has been sanctioned for 460 Ashram Schools, including 31 in Maharashtra.

(b) and (c) The Government provides assistance for residential schools for Scheduled Castes, on X receipt of proposals duly recommended by State Government Grant-in Aid Committees, subject to their conformity to the norms of the Scheme and availability of funds.

As regards Scheduled Tribes, Ministry of Tribal Affairs has issued revised guidelines on 14.12.2009, requesting the State Governments to submit the proposal for setting up additional EMRS. The Scheme of Ashram Schools is need based and demand driven and funds are released to States/Union Territories, on the basis of complete proposals, subject to availability of funds.

Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizen Act, 2007

842. SHRI R.C SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many States are not implementing the Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

(b) whether it is also a fact that many States have not yet formulated rules, appointed maintenance officer, setting up of maintenance tribunal, etc;

(c) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(d) the matter in which the Ministry would ensure that the above Act is implemented in its true spirit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON): (a) to (d) The maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 was enacted in December 2007.

The Act has to be brought into force by the individual State Governments and UTs. States and Union Territories which have brought the Act into force are required, under the Act, to frame Rules, appoint Maintenance Officers and to constitute Maintenance Tribunals and Appellate Tribunals for effective implementation of the Act.

The Ministry is continuously pursuing the matter with the States and UTs. In addition. The National Council for Older Persons constituted in the Ministry reviews the progress of implementation of the Act in various States from time to time.

The issues of bringing the Act into force and taking necessary steps for effective implementation of the Act were also taken up with States and UTs in the Welfare Ministers/Secretaries Conference.

As a result, so far, 22 States and all the Union Territories have notified the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. (The Act does not extend to the State of Jammu and Kashmir).

Out of the 22 states and 7 UTs that have notified the Act, so far, 13 States and 2 UTs have constituted Maintenance Tribunals. 9 states and 1 UT have framed the Rules under the Act and 11 States and 1 UT have appointed Maintenance Officers.