

[19 March, 2005]

RAJYA SABHA

that the legitimate aspirations and rightful claim of OBCs, which constitute the majority in the country, are fulfilled.

1. The concept of 'Creamy Layer' now applied to OBC alone may be removed as done for others, as the Constitution speaks of socially and educationally backward class, but not of economic criteria.
2. The reserved percentage for OBCs, as insisted by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, may be clearly laid down and placed in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.
3. Reservation for OBCs should also be ensured in promotion.
4. Relaxation of age in appointment as well as in promotion may be extended, as has been done for other classes.
5. Backlog vacancies of OBCs may be filled up, without applying the limit of ceiling.
6. Reservation for OBCs in judiciary must also be done liberally.

Thank you.

SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member.

SHRI DATTAMEGHE (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member.

**Demand to Compensate the Victims Affected by
Bhopal Gas Tragedy**

SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I wish to draw your attention towards the world's biggest industrial disaster. This world's biggest industrial disaster, which devastated Bhopal, too was not enough for us to reorient our policy to deal with, at least, man-made disasters. Isn't shocking to find people struggling for compensation even after twenty years of the accident?

Of course, under the pressure from the Supreme Court, now the Government has started to disburse the compensation money. But where is the true justice? There is a whole lot of people who have suffered on account of this accident in an indirect way. Contamination in drinking water in Bhopal is five times higher than the WHO'S upper limit. A number of public interest groups have collected samples from the soil, groundwater, fruits and vegetables and found unacceptable levels of heavy metals and other toxic waste.

We ignore endemic threats and only respond to scandalous, dramatic developments like the gas leak. We sprang to attention, but then failed to bring justice to the affected. Yet, twenty years on, the survivors still await just compensation, adequate medical assistance and treatment, and comprehensive economic and social rehabilitation. The plant site has still not been cleaned up. So, toxic wastes still pollute the environment and contaminate water that surrounding communities rely on. And, astonishingly, no one has been held to account for the leak and its appalling consequences. On behalf of the affected people of Bhopal, I am urging the Government that the site should be cleaned up and affected communities be compensated. There is also a need to promptly assess the damage to health and the environment caused by the leak and the contamination. Thank you.

SHRIJAI RAM RAMESH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the Health Minister is here. You had asked him to sit down. I would request him to please look at all the health facilities and medical facilities for the Bhopal accident victims.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Narayan Singh; ... *(Interruptions)*...

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): Sir, ... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no; you can ... *(Interruptions)*... Dr. Narayan Singh Manaklao ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir/this is an important issue.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: In the Special Mentions, no other ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, he wants to respond.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then you should not expect any reply from him.

SHRI JAI RAM RAMESH: Sir, he wants to respond.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: I have already asked the Indian Council of Medical Research to do another survey about Bhopal in association with all the Government machinery there, and give a report to me.

SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Thank you; Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Narayan Singh.