

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: What steps does the Government of India propose to take to see that all scholarships available for the Indian students are fulfilled as early as possible and are they going to take some special steps for seeing that these scholarships don't lapse?

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: I should like to assure the hon. Member that ordinarily we would not allow these scholarships to lapse but this was a special difficulty. The UNESCO did not write to us in the beginning that these applications should be sent by a certain date. It was only in December that they informed us that the applications must be sent by the 31st December and so the 4 candidates could not be sent.

MERCY PETITIONS FORWARDED BY THE KERALA GOVERNMENT

*77. **SHRI M. VALIULLA:** Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mercy petitions so far forwarded to the President by the Kerala Government; and

(b) the number of cases in which reprieve has been granted?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT): (a) Eight petitions for mercy have been received from or on behalf of convicts under sentence of death in Kerala State since 1st November 1956.

(b) Death sentence has been commuted to imprisonment for life in the case of seven prisoners.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: Are there any cases which have come for revision before the Ministry once the orders were passed not to remit any sentence from death to a life sentence?

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: There was one case in which the petition for mercy had been rejected at one stage but on the representation

of the Kerala Government and because of the lapse of a considerable time since the rejection of that application, the orders were revised by the President.

SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: May I know the criterion by which such reprieves are granted by the President?

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: It is a general question and it is difficult to specify any definite criterion here in answer to a question. Mercy is the prerogative of the President and whoever deserves, he extends his mercy to him or her.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Does the death sentence of Shri Vasu Pillai also come under the reprieves granted?

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: Yes.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Was the offence committed by Shri Vasu Pillai a political murder?

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: I don't know what a political murder means.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Was it a murder?

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: It was a murder.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: Is it not a fact that the date of hanging of Shri Vasu Pillai was changed several times? If so, may I know what was the reason for that?

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: Yes, it is a fact. The case in the ordinary course would have deserved capital punishment but as I said, because of the earnest and very persistent request and representation of the Kerala Government and as I said, the long interval that had passed since his arrest, it was considered proper to revise the order and to grant mercy.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: May I know why the mercy petition of Vasu Pillai was first rejected and then later on reprieve was granted?

MR. CHAIRMAN: President's prerogative.

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT: I have already answered the question. It was considered proper at that stage, if the capital sentence could be commuted to one of transportation for life, to so commute it.

URBAN CREDIT SURVEY

*78. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state whether Government propose to undertake a survey of the urban credit to find out the extent of indebtedness especially of the employee and artisan classes?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): No all-India survey of indebtedness or credit needs in the urban areas is under contemplation. The pilot projects initiated by the State Bank of India are, however, intended to throw light on this problem of urban credit needs, especially the needs of artisans and those engaged in small-scale industries.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: May I know whether the Government or the Reserve Bank have got any idea whether the artisan classes and class IV employees are in any way better situated or are they in worse conditions in the matter of education of their children, housing and so on and are the Government taking into consideration this aspect?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: It is a very general question and impinges on various aspects of economic conditions and so it is too large a question. But generally speaking so far as artisans or small industrialists are concerned, it is realised that there is need for credit facilities to be developed and

the Reserve Bank, the State Bank and the Small Scale Industries Corporation have taken various steps to provide the much needed credit facilities to them.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: In the year 1951 the Reserve Bank of India appointed a committee for surveying rural indebtedness and rural credit. Is it that they have stopped at that or are they going to advance to other spheres also apart from rural indebtedness and rural credit?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: That survey was mainly for rural areas.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: May I know the cities in which these pilot projects were started?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: The cities are Agra, Delhi, Ludhiana, Bombay, Kolhapur, Surat, Coimbatore, Madras and Vijayawada.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: May I know whether the enquiry is completed and whether any conclusions have been drawn?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: It is not an enquiry. It is a pilot project started by the State Bank of India and the State Bank co-ordinates the various organisations like the co-operative banks, the State Finance Corporations etc. and through their joint effort they provide credit facilities desired by the small scale industrialists. In those areas a number of schemes came up. They were processed and the credit needs were met. So there is no enquiry as such.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: May I know whether these projects were established in order to enquire into urban indebtedness or to evolve a machinery for solving urban indebtedness?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: It was mainly a machinery to facilitate the flow of credit to the small men.