

(a) whether it is a fact that even after celebrating the 65th Independence Day of our country, the untouchability is still prevailing in many parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has taken any concrete steps to eradicate this social evil from our country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI PORIKA BALRAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Article 17 of the Constitution of India has abolished untouchability, its practice in any form is forbidden and enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability is a punishable offence, under the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, 1955. The Act extends to whole of India and is implemented by the respective State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations. As per the data of National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, the number of cases registered under the Act, has declined from 254 in 2009, to 74 in 2011. During 2011, out of 35 States/UTs, cases were registered only in 10 of them, viz., Andhra Pradesh (13), Gujarat (02), Himachal Pradesh (03), Jammu and Kashmir (01), Karnataka (12), Kerala (01), Rajasthan (05), Maharashtra (10), Tamil Nadu (12) and Puducherry (15).

(c) and (d) The State Governments/Union Territory Administrations are provided due Central assistance under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, for effective implementation of the PCR Act. They are also addressed from time to time to, *inter-alia*, implement provisions of the Act in letter and spirit. A Committee, under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment constituted in 2006, also reviews implementation status of the Act in various States/Union Territories. The Committee has so far held twenty meetings wherein implementation of the PCR Act was reviewed in 24 States and 4 Union Territories.

Abolition of manual scavenging

1375. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the latest census data shows that manual scavenging is still prevalent in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the States which have not been able to abolish the practice of manual scavenging;

(c) whether Government proposes to conduct any fresh survey to know the actual number of manual scavengers in the country;

(d) whether Government has prepared any action plan including introduction of a new legislation to eradicate manual scavenging in the country; and

(e) whether Government considers granting of a monthly pension of Rs.2000 to the manual scavengers who are rehabilitated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI PORIKA BALRAM NAIK): (a) and (b) As per the "Houselisting and Housing Census, 2011" data released by the Registrar General of India, there were 7.94 lakh latrines in the country from which night soil was removed by humans. However, the number of persons still engaged in manual scavenging is not available.

(c) The ongoing Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011, in rural India is, *inter alia*, capturing the data about the manual scavengers in the rural areas, including the non-statutory towns. A fresh survey of the manual scavengers in the statutory towns is also planned and a pilot has been initiated in 5 districts.

(d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has introduced "The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Bill, 2012", in Lok Sabha, on 3.9.2012, to, *inter alia*, eliminate the manual scavenging in the country.

(e) Presently there is no such proposal under consideration.

Effect of power restrictions and escalating costs on textiles industry

1376. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the textile industry in Tamil Nadu alone is losing about Rs. 300 crore a day due to fall in production because of power restrictions and escalating costs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;