

Government has to initiate a national dialogue with all political parties, industry and other organizations to see how best the private sector can fulfil the aspirations of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe youth. Accordingly, 218 organisations of the industry and trade in the corporate world have been addressed to elicit their views/comments on affirmative action including reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Private Sector. After receiving their response, meetings will be held with the industry and thereafter, consultations will be held with the political parties and other organisations on this issue. However, no enactment is proposed.

Outreach programme of the NIOH, Kolkata

1114. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the outreach programme of the National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata;

(b) whether it is a fact that this programme has been well received in many States;

(c) the steps proposed to activate the NIOH to continue the outreach programme;

(d) whether the NIOH would assist the tribals and weaker sections in such programmes; and

(e) what other steps would be taken to further this programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped, (NIOH) Kolkata, organizes Composite Rehabilitation Camps for assessment of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and fitment/distribution of aids and appliances. These camps are also used for awareness generation for prevention of disabilities and propagation of various schemes. During the current financial year 16 Camps were organized benefiting 3724 PWDs. NIOH has also set up a Composite Regional Centre (CRC) at Srinagar and 13 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) in various districts of West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim,

and Andaman and Nicobar Islands for providing rehabilitation services and fitment/distribution of aids and appliances to the PWDs.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) Outreach programme is one of the major activities of the Institute through which rehabilitation services are provided to the persons with disabilities who are residing in rural and remote areas.

The Institute has planned a number of identification and distribution camps through DDRCs and CRC at Srinagar to further its outreach services. Many DDRCs viz., Ranchi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Tejpur, Dimapur, Shillong etc. are located in predominantly tribal districts.

Scheme for the elderly persons

1115. SHRI DATTAMEGHE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether October 1st of every year is observed as the International Day for elderly people in India;

(b) if so, the manner in which this day has been celebrated this year;

(c) whether Government are running some grant-in-aid schemes for the elder persons;

(d) if so, the details and salient features thereof;

(e) whether Government have set up a National Council for the Elder Persons to advise and assist Government on policies and programmes for elder persons;

(f) if so, its composition and terms of reference; and

(g) what is the future plan of action for welfare of the elder persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATISUBBULAKSHMIJAGADEESAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) A "Walk for Health" was organized in New Delhi in which more than 2500 senior citizens had participated. Messages from the President, Prime Minister, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment