

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: I can only say, Sir, that the Central schools, which the hon. Member refers to, are governed by the Board of Management which includes representation from various Forces like the Army, Navy and the Air Force, and any direction to be issued to all Central schools or, for that matter, all Navodaya Vidyalayas have to be placed once before the Board. But I am grateful for the suggestion that he has made.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now, Q.No.79. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K. N. BALAGOPAL: Sir, with regard to this question, I want to seek a clarification. If a Member has any 'special interest' in it and he wants to raise a question, I want to know whether he has to declare about his/her special interest on this issue...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that is an accepted rule in the House.

SHRI K. N. BALAGOPAL: We are asking questions about installation of cameras. If any Member is a part of any such company, I would like to know whether he has to express his interest in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. You have reiterated a point which is well understood by everybody in the House. Thank you. Now, Q.No.79.

#### **Low literacy rate in Telangana**

\*79. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the literacy rate is dismal in the newly carved State of Telangana, particularly in Karimnagar district, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government would consider launching a special literacy mission to change the scenario, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government would provide a special package to Telangana to overcome its low literacy level *vis-a-vis* Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the table of the house.

#### ***Statement***

(a) Census 2011 reported the literacy rate of undivided Andhra Pradesh as 67.02% against the country's average of 72.98%. The combined literacy rate of 10 districts in Telangana comes to 66.46%, whereas District Karimnagar had a literacy rate of 64.15%. The low literacy rate is due to various factors including poverty

and gender and social inequities.

(b) and (c) Saakshar Bharat, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Adult Education and Skill Development, is being implemented since October, 2009 in the rural areas of 410 Districts in 26 States and one Union Territory that had adult female literacy rate of 50% or below as per Census 2001, and all left wing extremism affected districts irrespective of their literacy rates. The main goal of the programme is to increase the country's literacy rate to 80% and reduce the gender gap to 10 percentage points. The Programme is being implemented in 9 eligible districts of Telangana including Karimnagar.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has spelt out the Central Government policy in this regard. But, specifically, I would like to know whether the Central Government is going to have a plan or initiate a plan to improve the literacy rate, particularly, amongst women in the newly formed State of Telangana.

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, my answer exhaustively reflects the efforts made thus far. But I would also like to state here that in September, 2015, from the District Nalgonda, Ankireddygudem Gram Panchayat, which is in the State of Telangana, in fact, won the Saakshar Bharat Award for the best performing Gram Panchayat. Hence, let me also answer that in Telangana, out of ten districts, nine are covered under the Saakshar Bharat Scheme and we have even ensured that we reach out to public representatives so that under the Sansad Aadarsh Gram Yojana, public representatives, specially, even Members of Parliament, in their nodal districts, can help us in ensuring 100 per cent literacy within their respective States. I should add here, Sir, that 22 Gram Panchayats are adopted by hon. Members of Parliament within the State of Telangana under the Aadarsh Gram Yojana. Our intention, with the assistance from public representatives, is to ensure that by the end of this year there is 100 per cent literacy in those Gram Panchayats.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Sir, will the Centre undertake any social audit of literary and school education programmes in Telangana?

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Since the question posed does not relate directly to the question which has been asked in No. 78, I will only say that performances of State Governments with regards to various parameters of education, be it primary education, secondary education, is consistently studied and audited by the State Governments themselves and when the States speak to the Centre with regards to the performance of particular schemes, they also bring forth their own audit or their own observation about how the schemes are performing within their respective States.

**श्री बसावाराज पाटिल:** सभापति जी, यह साक्षरता विद्यार्थियों की शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता के साथ जुड़ी हुई है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि आज एक तरफ साक्षरता चल रही है, तो दूसरी तरफ पूरे देश के सरकारी स्कूल्स में होने वाली पढ़ाई की क्षमता घट रही है और वहाँ बच्चों की संख्या एकदम कम हो रही है। इसको सरकार कितना सीरियसली लेगी? क्या सरकार लिटरेसी के साथ-साथ शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता को बढ़ाने की दिशा में भी कोई ठोस कदम उठाएगी या break through thinking करेगी, यह आप मुझे बताने की कृपा करें। आप लिटरेसी को राज्य के ऊपर न छोड़ें। सर, मैं आंध्र प्रदेश और तेलंगाना की शिक्षा के प्रश्न के साथ-साथ शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता से संबंधित प्रश्न पूछ रहा हूँ।

**SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI:** Sir, I would only say that since this question pertains to adult education, I am sure that the Members here will help me congratulate all those adult learners who have thus far taken these examinations. I would also state here in the House that on the 23rd of August, 2015 over 1,26,00,000 citizens, which is the largest number ever sat for the adult education programme assessment examination they are expected to take this examination also in the month of March, 2016, on the 20th of March, and I am sure, Sir, you will join me in at least congratulating them for taking this effort, and I hope that they will successfully pass this examination they sit for.

The hon. Member here expresses his concern with regards to not depending only on States for the literacy programme. Let me here, unequivocally state that our intention is that till we do not work in a cohesive manner with the States, the milestones that we set for achieving complete literacy is not a milestone that can be achieved in isolation. I would also say that the *Saakshar Bharat* Programme is complemented also with Skills Training Programme and Financial Literacy Programme. In fact, the Adult Education Centres in the country have ensured that in the Jan Dhan Yojana over one crore bank accounts were opened for adult illiterates. So, I think, this effort needs to be complimented.

**SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU:** Respected Chairman, the newly carved out State, Telangana, is under-nourished in several sectors. It is a established fact. It is also an established fact that less literacy and education is there in Telangana and the *Saakshar Bharat* Mission, the Centrally-sponsored scheme initiated by UPA in 2009, has given wonderful results in adult education. Has the Human Resource Development Ministry assessed the impact of *Saakshar Bharat* Mission or are they going to inculcate and include advanced tools in the *Saakshar Bharat* Mission or the younger children of 14 years of age of 9th and 10th classes act as literacy ambassadors to encourage literacy of the adults across the nation? I would like to know that.

**SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI:** Sir, at the outset, let me extend my grateful thanks to the hon. Member for stating here emphatically that the *Saakshar Bharat*

Mission has been a success because in the previous answer, another Member from his own Party stated that it has been a disaster. So, my grateful thanks to you for recognising, at least, the achievements of the adult education programme. Insofar as, specifically, the State of Telangana goes, the number of literates has increased and I would state here, for records, from 15.43 million to 20.78 million in the State of Telangana from the year 2001 to 2011. And, for instance, in a district like Karimnagar, it has increased from 1.66 million to 2.02 million. The hon. Member asked whether any assessment has been done of adult education programme. Sir, carrying out assessment is a continuous process.

Secondly, we have also included issues like skill development, skill training, financial literacy and helped, in fact, adult illiterates who joined the programme to even open a bank account. This in itself is an indication that we leverage this particular programme to ensure that we empower our citizens not only through education, not only to read the written word but also to ensure that electoral literacy, financial literacy and skill training can be given through the same programme.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, may I make a point?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to ask a supplementary?

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: No, Sir. I just want to make a point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alright. Let us hear that.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, I am surprised that there are hon. Members who have asked questions and walked out even before answers have been given!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair has noted that.

#### **Violation of GFR under MPLAD scheme**

\*80. SHRI PAUL MANOJ PANDIAN: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been instances of blatant violation of General Financial Rules (GFR) under Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS);

(b) whether it is also a fact that some district authorities reported inflated expenditure figures and showed released money as utilized under the scheme; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that 12 district authorities of six States inflated the figures of expenditure by ₹ 35 crores by showing the entire advance of ₹ 100.17 crores released to the implementing authorities as utilized, and if so, the details thereof?