

Concern over the living conditions of slum dwellers in the country

SHRI BINOY VISWAM: Sir, I rise to draw the attention of the Government to the sorrowful plight of the slum dwellers. Around 26 per cent of the population still lives in slums. After 72 years of Independence, this is the fact of the entire country. One out of six Indians is living in slums. In India, 2613 towns are having slums and 1.2 million slum households do not have even safe drinking water. Six out of ten slum households do not have proper drainage system. There are high possibilities of communicable diseases in slums including HIV and TB. Most of these slum dwellers are faced with the threat of eviction that any time they may be thrown out of their houses. High crime rate is also a reality there. We all know about Article 21, which speaks about the Right to Life. We know that it is not of simple existence. Right to Life means right to have a dignified life, and these people, who are our fellow beings, are denied of even that right. They are living but not leading a dignified life. It is high time now to ensure that their lives are secured. It is our duty, our obligation. We all know that there are so many projects. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is there, PM Awas Yojana is there, health projects are there, and we allocate a lot of money for these projects. But this large sum of money does not reach them. Most part of that money reaches elsewhere. It is a serious thing. My plea is that the money meant for the poor should reach them. The money meant for the slums should reach there and their rights, including drinking water, drainage system, proper education, proper healthcare, all should be ensured. For that, I request the Government to issue a White Paper to explain to the country as to what has happened to the money meant for the slum dwellers and in that way, we should know who have taken away their rightful share.

This is my plea and I hope that the Government and the House will appreciate that. Thank you.

SHRI K.K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD (Karnataka): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Members, who are associating, please send the slips.