

SPECIAL MENTIONS

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please read the subject and lay your Special Mentions.
Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy; not present.

Need for steps to revive education affected due to covid-19

DR. AMEE YAJNIK (Gujarat): Sir, the Covid-19 breakout led to the closure of schools. It has affected the education of nearly 290 million children and already six million children are out of school. The immediate impact of the breakout is less attendance in schools. The Annual Status of Education Report, an annual survey, has mentioned in its recent study that many young children have not joined school and there is a sharp jump in out-of-school children in the 6-10 age group. This has gone up from 1.8 per cent in 2018 to 5.3 per cent in 2020 and for children up to 16 years from 4 per cent to 5.5 per cent. One of the reasons could be that parents have decided to keep their children at home to keep them safe.

The learning levels of children from low-income groups have suffered heavily. They have limited access to smart phones, TV, radio or textbooks.

Given this grave situation, the Government will have to bring back children to school and encourage the drop-outs to come to school. Even in normal situation, it is tough. With parents hesitant to send their children to school, this would require special efforts. There is an urgent need to focus on education by the Government with special focus on the girl child as they are likely to be out of school in larger numbers.

SHRI SUJEET KUMAR (Odisha): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by Dr. Amee Yajnik.

Need to revisit existing schemes to check severity of hunger and malnutrition in the country particularly amongst *Adivasis*

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Odisha): Sir, Global Hunger Index Report of 2020 ranks India 94 among 107 countries. India features even behind Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Indonesia among others. Out of the total 107 countries surveyed, only 13 countries fare worse than India including countries like Rwanda, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Liberia, Mozambique etc. According to the Report, 14 per cent of India's population is undernourished. The immediate impact of hunger and

malnutrition is child mortality. Globally, malnutrition is the cause of at least 45 per cent of child mortality while in India, this number is 68.2 per cent.

Different categories of *Adivasis* mostly suffer from acute malnutrition in great numbers if we compare it with most of the other communities. The lack of accountability of many Government officials in remote and inaccessible regions is responsible for the poor delivery of State programmes to these people and it is one of the reasons of this problem.

The Mid-day Meal programme in Government schools to check malnutrition of teenagers often failed to meet the standard of nutritional values. Under-nutrition among adolescent girls is more alarming. More than 44 per cent of India's adolescent girls are underweight. In most of the States, the proportion of adolescent girls with anaemia is alarmingly high, ranging from 76 per cent to 92.9 per cent. Malnourished girls who marry early also give birth to underweight child and thus the cycle continues.

I would request the Government to take a serious note of this problem and revisit all the schemes relating to hunger and nutrition, particularly, amongst the *Adivasis*; otherwise, we are digging the foundation of a weaker generation and subsequently a weaker nation.

SHRI SUJEET KUMAR (Odisha): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member.

Demand to re-examine the norms for eco-sensitive zones in Kerala and amend the related notification

SHRI M.V. SHREYAMS KUMAR (Kerala): Sir, areas around Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary have been declared as eco-sensitive zones in a Draft Notification recently released by the Union Ministry of Environment.

As per this Notification, most of the activities going on at present are banned in an area of 118.59 square kilometres, which is termed as eco sensitive. This area includes thickly-populated human settlements and towns, even a municipal town like Sultan Batheri.

The Kerala Government had given a proposal to the Union Government for excluding most of the human settlements in the Notification for the eco-sensitive area. Instead of approving the proposal, the same Draft Notification has been returned now. The people of the area are agitated and worried about losing their settlements. Many public organisations and political parties have called for large-scale agitations in Wayanad. I understand that there is a move to enforce