

accommodates over 60,000 outstation students annually, yet offers only 20,000-30,000 hostel seats. This gap forces students into unregulated private housing, often plagued by overcrowded rooms, high fees, poor sanitation and inadequate safety measures. Substandard food, unhygienic kitchens and irregular meal timings further compromise students' physical and mental well-being. Educational hubs like Kota, Allahabad, Pune and Indore face similar distressing conditions. To address these issues, Government's intervention is crucial. Regulations for hostels and coaching centres, enforced through safety audits and holistic guidelines, can improve living standards and meal quality. Specially designated zones for educational institutions, akin to Special Economic Zones, could include rent ceilings and other controls to ensure affordability and accountability. A 24x7 helpline for student grievances would provide timely redressal and support. Such measures would safeguard the well-being of students, ensuring that their focus remains on education while addressing the inequities and challenges of India's booming coaching industry. I urge the Government to look into it. Thank you.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI GHANSHYAM TIWARI):** The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member, Shri Kartikeya Sharma: Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala) and Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala).

#### **Demand for overall development of persons with disabilities**

**श्री संजय सेठ (उत्तर प्रदेश):** मैं आज एसे संवेदनशील मुद्दे पर बोलने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूं, जो हमारे देश के ढाई करोड़ दिव्यांग नागरिकों के जीवन को प्रत्यक्ष रूप से प्रभावित करती है। हमारी सरकार दिव्यांगजनों के विकास के लिए Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 को कानून लाई थी, लेकिन धरातल पर इसका implementation अभी तक पूरा नहीं हुआ है। आंकड़ों के अनुसार केवल 3 per cent public buildings दिव्यांगजनों के लिए fully accessible हैं। हमारे public transport system की स्थिति सबसे ज्यादा चिंताजनक है, क्योंकि मात्र 7 per cent Railway Stations में accessible platforms हैं, 5 per cent से भी कम public buses accessible हैं और सिर्फ 9 per cent traffic signals में visually impaired citizens के लिए audio facility है। ये आंकड़े चिंताजनक हैं। हम सबने देखा है कि किस प्रकार Paralympics में हमारे दिव्यांग भाइयों और बहनों ने पूरे देश का नाम रोशन किया था।

इसलिए यह जरूरी है कि इस वर्ग को विकास की मुख्यधारा से जोड़ा जाए और उनको पर्याप्त अवसर दिए जाएँ। Accessible transportation एक प्रमुख मुद्दा है, जिसके अभाव में हमारे दिव्यांग भाई-बहनों को education और employment में समस्या होती है। मेरा सरकार से आग्रह है कि time-bound manner में पूरे transport infrastructure को accessible बनाया जाए। हमें हर bus stop, हर railway station, हर metro station को universal accessibility के standards पर लाना होगा। Transport की accessibility सिर्फ एक सुविधा नहीं है, बल्कि यह हमारे दिव्यांग नागरिकों के समग्र विकास का एक द्वार है, जो उन्हें आर्थिक स्वतंत्रता देने के साथ सशक्त भी बनाएगा। मेरी सरकार से यह माँग है कि इस पर ध्यान दिया जाए। धन्यवाद।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI GHANSHYAM TIWARI): The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member, Shri Sanjay Seth: Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu) and Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu).

#### **Demand for Special Category Status for Odisha**

DR. SASMIT PATRA (Odisha): Sir, Odisha has been demanding for the Special Category State status for more than two decades. The Biju Janata Dal President and former Chief Minister had raised this demand several times in the past. Odisha has suffered many natural disasters. Cyclones such as the 1999 Super Cyclone, Phailin, Hudhud, Titli, Fani, Bulbul, Amphan, Yaas, Gulab, Jawad, Michaung to the recent Dana have cumulatively caused massive economic losses to Odisha. Floods and deficit rains have aggravated those financial losses which have had an adverse impact on the lives and livelihood of people of Odisha apart from destruction of thousands of crores of rupees worth public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, etc., due to cyclones and floods. Therefore, it is important that losses from such natural disasters be compensated to Odisha by providing Special Category State Status. The SDRF and NDRF Funds are insufficient to the large-scale damage that Odisha suffers from time to time. Special Category Status will ensure 90:10 ratio from Centre to State funding of Central Programmes and help Odisha to conserve its own resources and deploy them more effectively to rebuild those public infrastructure that have been damaged due to natural disasters. This is a long-standing and very genuine demand of 4.5 crore people of Odisha. I urge the Government of India to provide Special Category State Status expeditiously.