

Declaring the Lavana caste as ST

† 603. SHRIKRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Assembly of Himachal Pradesh has passed a resolution unanimously for declaring the Lavana caste, which is engaged in the occupation of the rearing of cows, as Scheduled Tribe and also the Members of Parliament of that State several times requested orally, and in writing to Government to declare Lavana caste as Scheduled Tribe; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government in the matter, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE): (a) to (c) The Government of Himachal Pradesh as recommended inclusion of the Lavana community in the list of Scheduled Tribes. The recommendation has been processed as per the modalities approved for deciding such claims.

Employment for Tribal youths

604. SHRI AKARAPU SUDARSHAN: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the action taken to provide employment to the tribal youths;

(b) whether Tribal Welfare Unions are demanding reservation in beedi units in certain districts like Khammam in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the steps proposed in the matter to help tribal youths desisting exploitation by naxalites?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE): (a) The Government of India in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs administers *inter-alia*, a scheme of setting up vocational Training Centers in Tribal Areas. The total provision under this scheme for the year 2003-04 is Rs. 8.00 crores.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.