

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, March 30, 1993/Chaitra 9, 1915
(Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Performance of Navodaya Vidyalayas

*461. SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be please to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the performance of the Navodaya Vidyalayas in the recent past;

(b) if so, the result of the evaluation made; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to improve the performance of the Navodaya Vidyalayas?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (c). No, Sir. The

Programme of Action 1992 has envisaged a comprehensive review of the scheme after Navodaya Vidyalayas have been established and consolidated in all districts of the country. Keeping in view that the objective of Navodaya Vidyalayas is to provide good quality education with a strong component of culture, inculcation of values, environmental awareness and physical education for all-round development of the students pre-dominantly from the rural areas, the overall performance of the Vidyalayas has been satisfactory.

SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said that the overall performance is satisfactory. But I have to say that the overall performance is most unsatisfactory. Our late beloved Rajiv ji started the Navodaya Vidyalayas with the intention of giving equal opportunity to the intelligent students of the rural areas. With that motive, in every district of India, the Navodaya Vidyalayas have been started. Nearly 2000 applications have been received at every Navodaya Vidyalaya. The best students after taking a very strict test are admitted in Navodaya Vidyalayas and the admission is only to the extent of 80 students. After giving them training, after giving them free education everything is free - if you see the performance, you will be surprised. In reply to a Starred Question No. 15, dated 24.11.92 about the Central Board of Secondary Examination results, it had been stated that in 1991, 4833 students appeared and 4629 students passed. That

means, 204 students failed. In 1992, 10,920 students appeared.

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask the question.

SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: I am just giving the information.

MR. SPEAKER: You do not have to. You have to receive the information.

SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: This information has not been received. This is the earlier information. You may see how every year the standard is going down.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, you have to ask the question. Please ask the question.

SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: From this Report you will find out that the boys who are the best boys taken are given education. But about 10 per cent of the boys failed and only 60 per cent of students secured 1st class during the year 1991. In 1992, the Percentage 1st Class, however came down to 50. So, the case of failure increase gradually. The fact is when the students are taken inside, at the admission stage, they get about 90 per cent marks and now they are getting so much less. That means, the boys will not get any opportunity in future. so, what is the purpose of keeping them in the Navodaya Vidyalayas? What is the future in store for them? There is no commitment of the teachers. Navodaya Vidyalayas Samiti is not doing anything. As you have said, there is no evaluation. What is to be done? Who will these boys come up? There is no opportunity to them. If the Navodaya Vidyalayas fail in this respect, the rural intelligent boys will have no opportunity in the future to come up in life.

MR. SPEAKER: You mean, everybody should pass.

SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: What steps the Government is taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): The anxiety of the hon. Member is very genuine. I will not deny that there was some difficulty in the interim. One of the reasons was that the very idea of having continuing with the Navodaya Vidyalayas came under question. And it was ultimately only last year that it was finally decided by the Janardhan Review Committee that this scheme would continue. That part, recruitment of teachers also posed some difficulties. Now we have adopted a procedure by which teachers will be fully recruited. The internal situation in some of the schools has also caused some of the problems. But I can assure the hon. Member and the House that overall performance of the Navodaya Vidyalaya has been above average and it is our effort that we should bring them on par with the least of the schools in the country because they are functioning in area where the facilities of this nature are normally not available.

SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: I am not happy with the answer. What I want to tell the hon. Minister is that he should appoint some committee, some involvement of MPs in this is called for so that we can look into this matter in more detail. Secondly, there is no commitment on the part of the teachers. He should pay more salaries and take hard work from them and they should work for the students day and night so that results to come.

My second question is, after passing the 12th, what is the opportunity for the student to go for higher studies to become doctors and engineers? They cannot compete with 90 per cent marks and crpitation fees. What opportunities will our hon. Minister be able to provide for the futur for the

better prospects of these students otherwise? they will pass out 12th and they will be lost.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, the question of overall assessment and also including people from outside the educational sphere for making this assessment is accepted in principle and at some point of time when the institutions are opened in all the districts of the country we will have a fairly broad assessment area. I am totally accepting this principle that we should have an assessment and then find out where things need to be improved. So far as opportunities for students passing out from 12th is concerned, naturally the opportunities will be there as they are for everyone else in the country.

SHRI MUMTAZ ANSARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been provided under Navodyas Vidyalaya that exchange of students will take place from one State to another under the provision of cultural exchange. But as a result of exchange of students from one State to another, it is generally found out that students have been put to lot of trouble, specially the girl students. For example, in the Faridkot district of Haryana, girls were raped by teachers also and in Nagaland, there have been complaints and grievances have been expressed by the students to me also that the students have been beaten up by the local students. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what steps and what measures have been undertaken in order to protect the interest of the students in the absence of guardianship of the students?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: There may be occasions here and there where such unfortunate incidents took place. But, by and large, this cultural exchange has helped the students to understand the country and in many schools I have myself visited and met the students who have come from other States. They did complain for the first five to

six months about the change of environment and many other things. Gradually, they have been able to assimilate themselves. We should be looking into the specific grievances and removing them. But the idea of having these cultural exchanges is very necessary in the present context.

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has mentioned that the objective of setting up of Navodya Vidyalayas is to develop cultural, environmental awakening and health consciousness among students and to ensure their all round development. It is true that we can achieve all these objectives through such schools. But the conditions in several Navodaya Vidyalayas are deplorable. They do not have their own buildings and the students are studying in the godown of a Warehouse. This way, I do not think we will be able to achieve our objectives regarding environment, culture and health. The scheme was implemented in 1986. I would like to ask the hon. Minister the number of Navodya Vidyalayas opened till date and at how many places buildings have been constructed; The reasons for which buildings have not been constructed for the remaining schools? If buildings are not constructed in the next seven years then do you have a plan to construct such buildings so that some steps can be taken to develop cultural environmental awakening among the students and to inculcate values.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Till date, Navodaya Vidyalayas have been opened in 322 districts. So far as the question of their buildings is concerned it is true that only 119 such schools have been provided with buildings and we are making efforts to construct buildings for the rest of the schools as well, so that the scheme is implemented in real terms. But hon. Members are well aware of the limitations in this regard. I cannot say

much in this regard.

[English]

SHRI RAM KASPSE: Mr. Speaker Sir I would like to stress on two three points. The result of the above-average students, as far as their all-round progress is concerned, is dependent on many things, firstly the environment in which they live, secondly the teachers they get and thirdly ultimately what we are trying to get out of them.

I will mention here one specific Navodaya school, that is Boordi in Thane District. The school was opened long ago. It is having no facilities at all. The teachers are not enough in number. Really speaking, if this is the position, if you say that the results are above average, about the above-average students we feel that all the things necessary need to be done immediately. Now it is clear and last year only you have decided that we will go in for Navodaya schools. So, please assure us that all these things will be completed within a year or two. That is my expectation.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: The hon. Member has pin-pointed the essential requirements very correctly and that is precisely our effort. I cannot say that in each Navodaya schools we have been able to fulfill this in complete measure. About the school which the hon. Member has pointed out, I will make a personal assessment and I would like to come to the hon. Member on this subsequently

SHRI BALIN KULI: I would like to know whether it is a fact that Assam is deprived of Navodaya schools. Will the Government consider introducing this scheme in Assam?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: There was some difficulty in Assam, but we are overcoming it and we are opening Navodaya Vidyalayas there.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, regarding the particular school which has been mentioned by the hon. Member, I cannot say anything at the moment but I would certainly try to look into the reasons for the situation that has developed described by him. So far as the question of setting up committees regarding running the schools is concerned the committees are there but the proposal of inducting public representatives into them is under consideration of the Government and we are very soon going to take a decision in this regard so that public representatives can be associated with them.

[English]

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the objective of the Navodaya Vidyalayas is to impart good and quality education to the students of predominantly rural areas. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the criteria have been fixed by the Government to select the students from the rural areas? what are the criteria which have been fixed by the Government to select them?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: There is a selection process which is already being implemented by which we ensure that SC/ST students in proportion to their population in that district are taken; not more than 25 per cent should be from urban areas; generally students from lower income groups should be there; 1/3rd should be girls. These are the things on which they are selected.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: The hon. Minister has replied in the manner in which the Government generally deals with the questions.

(Interruptions)

The hon. Minister does not believe in following the berten path. He believes in departing from the berten track he proved at Suraj Kund and we were expecting that his reply would also be on the same lines.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, today the internal management of the Navodayas Vidyalayas is very defective. In my district, a student of my constituency belonging to Scheduled Caste died one and half year ago in suspicious circumstances. This incident was a result of a defective internal management of Navodayas Vidyalayas but the entire matter was hushed up. Today, the internal management of these schools has worsened to such an extent. *(Interruptions)*

There is a school in Rajgir, which is a famous pilgrimage and this incident took place at the very site where Gautam Budhia attained 50 per cent enlightenment. Such is the state of affairs of these schools. Generally the internal management in all Navodaya schools in Bihar is very miserable. The students do not even get their meals in sufficient quantities and moreover they are not taught in a proper manner. In view of this, we would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you, whether the Government have a proposal to constitute an Advisory Committee of Navodaya Vidyalayas of the district and include M.P. and M.L.A. of that district in it for the proper monitoring of the activities of the schools and also to ensure that the objects with which Navodaya Vidyalayas were started are being achieved or not.

SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know whether it is true that more than one thousand sanctioned posts of teachers are lying vacant in these schools for the reason that the schools

located in the interior do not have residential facilities. You have promised to construct houses but I do not think that you will be able to construct these before 15 to 20 years as your financial position is very miserable. Navodaya Vidyalayas sangathan has asked for a sum of Rs. 16000 crores in Eighth Five Year Plan but you only allotted Rs. 900 crores. Providing meals to the students does not cost much. It costs only Rs.200 or Rs. 225 per students does not cost much. It costs only Rs. 200 or Rs., 225 per student. They are not getting good food. I myself have visited many schools which do not have 90 per cent teachers. Latehar Navodaya Vidyalayas of Bihar, Jawahar Aligarh Navodayas Vidyalaya Sitamarhi and Jenyin Navodaya Vidyalaya are glaring examples. I have been there. Due to non-availability of residential accommodation the schools do not have 80 to 90 per cent teachers. Therefore, I want to know from the Government if it is not in a position to construct houses for teachers then is the Government considering the closure of these schools.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, situation may be good at one place and bad at another place but it will not be justified to wind up a good scheme. Instead of winding up the scheme we should improve the situation. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA: The teachers are not going there, very few have come forward. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: There is no doubt that there is dearth of teachers. We are making efforts to employ teachers in more and more numbers by the end of next academic session. Regarding accommodation and other facilities, it is but natural that we have our limitations as per the present situation of the rural areas. We cannot change

this situation for Navodaya Vidyalayas.

Uniform Policy on PDS

*462 SHRI MANJAY LAL:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated a uniform policy at national level with a view to make public distribution system more comprehensive and effective in the country;

(b) if so, the main features thereof; and

(c) the time by which the policy is likely to be implemented?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED):(a) to (c). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

As per the present policy of the Central Government, entitlement to benefits of the Public Distribution System (PDS) is universal. However, at the 15th meeting of the Advisory Council on PDS held on 21st March, 1993, it was resolved that "a National Policy on PDS may be evolved, which should focus on the need to ensure supply of larger and more meaningful quantities of foodgrains through PDS to the really needy and poorer sections of the Society". The implementation of PDS is a joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments. Any change in the existing policy can be made only in

consultation with the State Governments. Therefore, it may not be possible to set any definite time limit for a decision in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRI MANJAY LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reply given by the Government is evasive. The hon. Minister has stated that the meeting of the Advisory Council on the Public Distribution system was held on March 2, 1993. The members in that meeting decided to evolve a policy to ensure supply of foodgrains to the poor people. I would like to place before you some figures. If you compare the figures of October, 1991 and October, 1992, you would know the real position. The total foodgrains supplied in 1991 was about 17.10 lakh tonne while that in 1992 13.99 lakh tonne foodgrains was supplied. In November, 1991, the total quantity of foodgrains supplied was 15.29 lakh tonne while in 1992 it was 13.76 lakh tonne. Similarly in December, 1991 the total quantity of foodgrains supplied was about 15.81 lakh tonne while in December, 1992 it was 14.57 lakh tonne. 25 per cent reduction has been enforced in just four months and the Government proposes to adopt a new policy to supply foodgrains to the poor people. It also proposes to curtail about 30 lakh tonne of foodgrains during the year 1993-94. Foodgrains supply has been curtailed in each month. The Government may please make it clear whether it proposes to supply foodgrains to the people living below poverty line through PDS.

SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, no curtailment has been made nor it is intended to curtail foodgrains supply. I would like to state with regard to the point to which the hon. Member has drawn attention that owing to lower procurement, reduction at some places was certainly made during the last several months. But on the whole I do not think that the Government has