

(c) Some immediate remedial measures have already been put into operation through increase of budgetary allocations for payment of khadi rebate and interest subsidy. Government also set up a High Power Committee under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister to look into the whole gamut of KVI sector including the question of increasing the flow of funds into this sector. The Committee has since submitted its report. On the basis of the recommendations, an action plan has been drawn up. This action plan is under implementation.

Leprosy

*225. SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO :

SHRI C.P. MUDALA GIRIYAPPA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of persons in the country are of the opinion that leprosy is incurable and hereditary;

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to create awareness among the masses on leprosy;

(c) whether the Government have also drawn up an action plan for the rehabilitation of lepers and for early detection of the disease; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C. SILVERA) : (a) to (d). While it is true that a small section of the population continue to have misgivings about the curability of the disease or about the disease being hereditary, the high rate of cured cases is gradually bringing down such misgivings. In addition, extensive health educational activities have been taken up in hand through governmental and nongovernmental agencies to remove this from the minds of the people and provide correct and scientific information.

Under National Leprosy Eradication Programme, free domiciliary treatment services multi-drug therapy to leprosy patients are provided. Health education is a central component for increased awareness to encourage early self reporting. Local folk media, camps, seminars, posters campaigns and film on leprosy are promoted. Electronic media and press are also involved to propagate true messages on leprosy and availability to treatment.

Under the programme, stress is laid on early treatment and complete cure to avoid disabilities. Adequate medical rehabilitation, leprosy ulcer care and vocational training services are provided through 75 Reconstructive Surgery Units and 50 Leprosy Rehabilitation Promotion Units. Free Micro Cellular Rubber (MCR) Chappals are provided to insensitive foot.

Rural Poverty

*226. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN :

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have undertaken any review of the number of villages under absolute poverty;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) the deficiencies identified by the Government in the programmes initiated by the Centre for the upliftment of such villages; and

(d) the strategy formulated by the Government to remove the deficiencies and to tackle the rural poverty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI HARJIBHAI PATEL) : (a) and (b). The latest estimate of Poverty ratios on the basis of NSS data pertain to 1987-88. These estimates are prepared for State level poverty ratios only.

(c) and (d). For upliftment of rural poor, Government has implemented two major poverty alleviation programmes namely Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP) and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY). These programmes are constantly reviewed by the Centre through periodical reports, field visits, workshops and seminars, Central and State Level Coordination Committees and Concurrent Evaluation of programmes to identify deficiencies, if any, in their implementation. In case of IRDP, some of the identified deficiencies in the programme include (i) Low level of per family investment, (ii) Deficiencies in making investment projects bankable, (iii) Inadequate skills in managing credit based assets by poor families, (iv) Low level of rate of recovery from the beneficiaries. The strategies adopted to overcome these deficiencies are (a) Raising the overall level of investment per family to Rs. 12,000, (b) improvement of procedures for selection of beneficiaries with particular emphasis on involvement of gram sabha, (c) strengthening of technical inputs for preparation of projects, (d) Extension of the coverage of the scheme of family credit plan to more districts in the country, (e) Liberalisation of the norms for infrastructural development, (f) Raising the amount of stipend to TRYSEM beneficiaries, and (g) Organising recovery camps to improve the rate of recovery of loans.

As regards JRY, deficiencies identified have been: (i) some of the elected Heads of Panchayat were not trained for implementation of JRY, (ii) Annual action plans were not discussed in the gram sabha meetings in some of the states, (iii) Less utilisation of locally available material in construction works and (iv) low share of women in employment generation. The various deficiencies as pointed out above have been brought to the notice of the respective State Governments to take corrective measures for better and effective implementation of JRY. In addition, several new

initiatives and strategies have been adopted in the recent past which include (i) Introduction of Intensified JRY in 120 backward districts in the country, (ii) Launching of Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) in 2,443 blocks in backward districts and States in India, (iii) Substantial step up in the outlays for rural employment programmes during the 8th Plan, (iv) reinvigorating the Panchayat Raj institutions at different levels so as to increase the peoples' participation and involvement in the implementation of the programmes.

The total allocation for Rural Development has been substantially stepped up to Rs. 30,000 crores during the 8th Plan compared to an expenditure of about Rs. 10,955 crores in the 7th Plan and greater emphasis is laid on poverty alleviation programmes. During the 8th Plan period, the Government strategy is to utilise the enhanced allocations of rural development on building up of rural infrastructure such as all weather roads in tribal, hill and desert areas, minor irrigation works and water harvesting structures, school buildings, primary health centres etc. This strategy, it is hoped, will help in providing more sustained employment to rural people and development of villages.

Job Avenues in Rural Areas

*227. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Schemes like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana have not helped much to create job avenues in rural areas;

(b) whether there is still unabated migration of labour to big cities; and

(c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI HARJIBHAI PATEL) : (a) to (c). Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) is being implemented in the rural areas of the country from 1.4.1989 with the primary objective of providing additional gainful employment to the unemployed and underemployed persons in the rural areas. In the process, it also results in the creation of economic productive assets for the direct and continuing benefit including sustained employment to the rural poor.

It is true that the wage employment programmes like the JRY have not been able to check migration of labour from rural areas to the cities fully but undoubtedly they have provided ample employment opportunities in the rural areas. Further, it is felt that the problem of rural migration will be arrested to a significant extent, with the strategy shift from 1993-94 for the wage employment programmes. These programmes have since been intensified in the most backward areas of the country.

With a view to provide employment to more people in the rural areas, the second stream of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has been started during 1993-94 to intensify JRY in 120 selected backward districts of the country, where there is concentration of unemployment and underemployment. Special and innovative projects meant for specific areas and deprived groups are also taken up with an aim to improve their lot and to arrest migration of labour. Government of India has also launched the Employment Assurance Scheme w.e.f. 2nd October, 1993, which aims at providing 100 days of assured employment during the lean agricultural period to persons above 18 years and below 60 years of age who are in need of employment and seeking it. The EAS is in operation in 2443 backward blocks of the country which are situated in drought prone areas, desert areas, hill areas, tribal areas, tribal pockets and flood prone areas. 5015.68 million mandays of employment have been generated so far since the inception (upto February, 1995), under JRY including the second stream-JRY. Under EAS, 237.48 million mandays have been generated during 1993-94 and 1994-95 upto February, 1995). The feed back from the field is that these wage employment programmes have helped to a considerable extent in checking the migration of labour from rural areas.

Import of Coal by C.C.I.

*228. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Cement Corporation of India is unable to procure coal within the country and has floated global tender for imports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether those taking C.C.I.'s cement are proposed to be given priority for awarding the tender for coal;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether C.C.I. has not been able to find market for its cement in the country; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) and (b). CCI has floated a global tender for import of 30,000 MT of quality steam coal in order to explore the possibility of obtaining coal on more favourable terms, including supply against letter of credit and tying up the import of coal with the export of cement.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.