

Proportional Representation to Students from Weaker Sections of Society in Institutions for Higher Education

1085. SHRI GHULAM MOHAMMAD KHAN: Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced its policies in regard to higher education and to give proportional representation to eligible students from weaker sections of society particularly in good institutions and prestigious courses:

(b) whether Government are aware that at present about 80 per cent of the students in higher education come from the well-to-do families in the top 20 per cent income group while the rest come from the poor masses which form 80 per cent of the population of the country; and

(c) if so, the policies of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): (a) to (c). The policy of the Government is to regulate expansion of higher education while at the same time enlarging opportunities for students belonging to the weaker sections of society. According to the guidelines indicated by the Central Government, 20 per cent of seats in all institutions of higher education are required to be reserved for the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates. The educational institutions are also advised to give a concession of 5 per cent in the minimum percentage of marks required for admission to any course, and in case the 20 per cent seats earmarked for SC/ST candidates remain unfilled, a further relaxation in marks may be given.

The Government are aware that the facilities of higher education are at present being availed of mainly

by persons belonging to higher income groups. However, the Government are not aware of any national survey to indicate precise percentage of students in higher education belonging to well-to-do families.

Progress of Land Reform under 20-Point Programme

1086. SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which the former Government succeeded in implementing the 20-point Economic Programme of the former Prime Minister in regard to matters connected with his Ministry such as land reforms etc.;

(b) whether it is possible to give facts relating to this State-wise; and

(c) whether the present Government have any intention to continue these aspects to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) and (b). Out of the 20-point Economic Programme announced by the former Prime Minister, four points, viz. (i) implementation of agricultural land ceilings and speedier distribution of surplus land and compilation of land records; (ii) stepping up of provision of house-sites for landless and weaker sections; (iii) plan for liquidation of rural indebtedness, legislation for moratorium on recovery of debts from landless labourers, small farmers and artisans, and (iv) five million more hectares to be brought under irrigation and National programme for use of underground water, concerned the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Six statements giving the progress in respect of these programmes, as reported by State Governments, are laid on the Table of the Sabha. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-408/77].