

taking action against persons spreading ill-will, hatred or disharmony between members of different communities. In the wake of recent incidents of alleged attack on minorities, the Chief Secretaries of the concerned States have been advised to issue suitable instructions to the district law and order enforcing authorities to respond immediately to the complaints of atrocities/harassment of the minorities and initiate prompt and effective action to identify and punish the guilty. The Govt. is clear that facts of violence against the minorities, whenever and in whatever form they occur, must be dealt with sternly and exemplary punishment awarded to the perpetrators.

Welfare of Scavengers

1597. SHRI MUNI LALL:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the funds allotted to welfare department for the welfare of scavengers;

(b) the funds diverted towards other schemes; and

(c) the details of assistance provided for the welfare of scavengers during the current year and proposed to be provided during the Ninth Five Year Plan, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Funds allocated for this year is Rs. 90.00 crores.

(b) During this year Rs. 35.00 crores have been diverted to Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship to Students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

(c) During the current year no financial assistance has been provided for the welfare of Scavengers as sufficient funds are lying unspent with the State Scheduled Caste Development Corporations. In the Ninth Five Year Plan, the tentative allocation for the National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their Dependents is Rs. 520.00 crores. State-wise allocation of funds will be decided each year as per the requirements of various State Governments.

Infiltration

1598. SHRIMATI BHAVNA KARDAM DAVE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bangladeshi are infiltrating into the country through Siliguri passage; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government to check such infiltration?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) There are reports of infiltration of Bangladesh nationals through Siliguri.

(b) A series of measures have been taken by the Government to curb the problem of infiltration of Bangladesh nationals into India. These measures include raising of additional battalions of Border Security Force, reduction of gaps between the border outposts, intensification of patrolling both on the land and the riverine border, accelerated programme of construction of border roads and fencing, increase in the number of outpost towers, provisions of surveillance equipments etc. The matter has also been taken up with the Government of Bangladesh on various occasions. The progress of these measures is reviewed regularly at various levels.

[Translation]

Fellowship by Ambedkar Foundation

1599. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the foreign fellowship is being provided for higher studies by Ambedkar Foundation;

(b) if so, the details of fellowship provided for Ph.D. and Post Doctorate courses during the last three years, subject-wise;

(c) whether there has been much delay in holding interviews and announcing the results;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to avoid the said delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details of persons who have been awarded Dr. Ambedkar Overseas Fellowships during the last three years are as follows:

S.No.	Year	Name of the Awardee	Subject
I.	1995-96	Three foreign fellowship were awarded in these two years, two out of which were for Ph. D in Sociology	
II.	1996-97	and one in International Relations.	
III.	1997-98	Nil	Relations

(c) The Governing Body of Dr. Ambedkar Foundation has discontinued the Scheme for Dr. Ambedkar Overseas Fellowship w.e.f. 14.9.1997 and decided to introduce revised Schemes of Dr. Ambedkar National Fellowship and Dr. Ambedkar Overseas Fellowship which are being finalised for introduction.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

Retirement Age

1600. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Government has submitted any proposal to the Union Government for raising the retirement age of its employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) No, Sir. The retirement age of employees working under the Govt. of NCT of Delhi has already been increased from 58 years to 60 years at par with the Central Government employees.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Exotic Weed Seeds

1601. SHRI JAYARAMA I.M. SHETTY:
DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD:
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:
SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have imported wheat from Australia in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof and foreign exchange incurred thereon;

(c) whether the Australian Wheat imported by BTC contain exotic weeds and major problem for Karnataka as appeared in the 'Hindustan Times' dated October 13, 1998;

(d) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(f) whether the matter has been taken up with the Australian Wheat Board;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the steps taken by the Government to dispose of the Australian Wheat?