

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3711

ANSWERED ON:18.04.2000

WIDOWS IN VRINDAVAN

CHELLAMELLA SUGUNA KUMARI;M. JAGANNATH;TUFANI SAROJ

**Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem Captioned `` Water has been flowing for long in Vrindavan`` appearing in the `Sunday Times (Times of India) dated February 20, 2000;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Uttar Pradesh Social Welfare Board has submitted its report regarding the condition of Widows in Vrindavan;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether widows residing in Varanasi are also being ill treated; and
- (f) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken to assist widows residing in Vrindavan and Varanasi to enable them to live a life of dignity with human rights?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

(SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b),(c),(d),(e)&(f) The Uttar Pradesh State Social Welfare Advisory Board conducted a survey in 1998 and its report indicated that more than 5000 widows were living at Vrindavan and more than 1000 widows were living at Varanasi.

The Central Government has set up a Committee under the Chairpersonship of the Minister of State for Women and Child Development to coordinate the efforts of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal Governments and the Central Government organisations for rehabilitation of the marginalized women of Vrindavan and to monitor flow of benefits of Central Schemes to the target group. The Central Committee last met on 2.3.2000. The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has established two shelter houses and provided necessary arrangements of medical care and protection of the inmates living in these shelter houses. The State Government has also established a Women Police Cell at Vrindavan. The State Government is also persuading Non-Governmental Organisations to set up more shelter houses for the rehabilitation of these widows. Besides, there are various Central Government schemes for self employment for women such as Setting up of Employment-cum-Income Generating Units for Women (NORAD), Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP), Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY), Socio-Economic Programme (SEP), Condensed Courses of Educational and Vocational Training for Women (CCE&VT) under which preference is given to such marginalized women in the matter of providing assistance. The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh is also implementing programmes, with special focus on marginalized women, under which financial assistance is provided for implementing self-employment programmes through Non-Governmental Organisations. Other schemes such as National Old Age Pension Scheme and the Social Defence Scheme provide for pension and rehabilitation of such aged and marginalized women.