

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) The Ministry of Welfare has no information from any State Government regarding death of Scheduled Tribe persons due to poverty during the last two years.

(b) and (c) In view of the reply to (a) above, the question does not arise. However, in respect of steps being taken by the Government of India for alleviating poverty amongst Scheduled Tribes and monitoring of preventive measures against deaths of children in remote and backward tribal areas, a Statement is attached.

Statement

All the programmes of the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment meant for poverty alleviation, such as Integrated Rural Development Programme, as well as Rural Employment Programmes such as Jawahar Rojgar Yojana, Employment Assurance Scheme etc. provide for specific financial and physical targets for STs. Besides Ministry of Welfare also provides Special Central Assistance to the Tribal Sub-Plan of the States for supplementing the State efforts for providing assistance to ST families for Family-Oriented Income-Generating Schemes meant to raise Scheduled Tribes above the poverty line. Loans are also provided by the National Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Finance Development Corporation through its State channelising agencies for providing employment/income-generating assets on subsidised loan to members of the STs. Reservations in employment are also provided to the STs under the Constitution. It is further intended that different programmes for improving literacy amongst the STs and providing them with opportunities for vocational education and training will help them to cross the poverty line in coming years.

A Central Planning Committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Welfare has been in existence since 1993 to monitor preventive measures against deaths of children in remote and backward tribal areas. This committee, in consultation with the State Governments, has identified 369 Blocks in 52 districts and 13 States which are vulnerable in this respect and where measures are required to prevent such occurrence. The concerned State Governments are required to prepare specific action plans for this purpose and to operationalise and implement these plans in identified areas, rigorously, particularly during the hardship season from May to September, every year. The measures to be taken under the action plans include setting up of early warning systems, and intensification of programmes in basic areas such as drinking water, health services, nutrition, public distribution system and employment generation. The concerned Central Ministries/Departments such as Ministry on Rural Areas and Employment, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Food Procurement and Distribution, Ministry of Civil

Supplies, Consumers Affairs and Public Distribution are expected to monitor the action taken in this regard by the concerned Department in the respective State Governments.

Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1991

*530. SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA :
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

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

(a) whether there are representations from the Traders Associations and different Chambers of Commerce for not extending the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 after the same expires in August this year;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon;

(c) whether the Government are reviewing the provisions of the Act, inconsistent with the ethos of liberalisation;

(d) whether as a part of the review the Government are considering pruning of the list of commodities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (c) The Government have received representations from a few trade organisations against extending the validity of the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 beyond 31st August, 1997. Hoarding and blackmarketing of essential commodities are still prevalent and the situation may not warrant withdrawal of existing powers. However, the matter is under consideration of the Central Government in consultation with the State Government/UT administrations.

(d) and (e) Review of the list of essential commodities under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 is an on-going process. As part of this exercise, Government are considering deletion of some items from the list of essential commodities.

Police Encounter in Connaught Place

*531. SHRI LALIT ORAON :
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Police recently killed two