

**COMMITTEE
ON
GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES
(1992-93)**

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

**THIRTEENTH REPORT
on
Educated and Uneducated Unemployed
Persons**

(Presented on August 23, 1993)



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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES***
(1992-93)

Dr. Laxminarain Pandey CHAIRMAN

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4. **Smt. Saroj Dubey**
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Shri Murari Lal — *Director*
Shri Joginder Singh — *Deputy Secretary*
Shri K.K. Ganguly — *Under Secretary*

* The Committee was nominated by the Speaker w.e.f. 13 December, 1992 vide Para 1596 of Lok Sabha Bulletin Part-II dated 14.12.1992.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Committee on Government Assurances, as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf, this thirteenth Report of the Committee on Government Assurances.

2. The Committee (1992-93) were constituted on December 13, 1992.

3. The Committee at their sitting held on May 24, 1993 took the evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation, Home Affairs, Office of Registrar General of India (Census) in connection with the non-implementation of an assurance given on August 5, 1992 in reply to Unstarred Question No. 4305 regarding educated and uneducated unemployed persons. At their sitting held on August 17, 1993, the Committee considered and adopted the Draft Thirteenth Report.

4. The Minutes of the aforesaid sittings of the Committee form part of the Report.

5. The conclusions/observations of the Committee are contained in this report.

6. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officials of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation and Office of Registrar General of India (Census), a Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

NEW DELHI;
August 17, 1993

Sravana 26, 1915 (Saka)

DR. LAXMINARAIN PANDEY,
Chairman,
Committee on Government Assurances.

REPORT

EDUCATED AND UNEDUCATED UNEMPLOYED PERSONS

1. On August 5, 1992, the following Unstarred Question (No. 4305) given notice of by Acharya Vishwanath Das Shastri, M.P., was addressed to the Minister of Planning and Programme Implementation:—

- (a) the number of educated and uneducated unemployed persons in the country as per the 1991 census;
- (b) the names of the States having maximum unemployment;
- (c) the percentage of the total unemployed persons of both categories in these States;
- (d) the number of persons provided employment during the Seventh Five Year Plan and the target fixed in this regard for the Eighth Five Year Plan; and
- (e) the details of the various schemes, which are being implemented by the Government for the rehabilitation of the employees and the workers rendered unemployed due to the new economic policy of the Government?"

2. The then Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation (Shri Sukh Ram) gave the following reply:—

"(a) to (c): The information is not yet available as the data collected in this regard in the course of the 1991 Census are under process.

(b) Information regarding the number of persons provided with employment during the Seventh Plan period is not available. On the basis of the surveys on employment and unemployment conducted by NSSO in 1983 and 1987-88, the net increase in Usual Principal Status employment between 1983 and 1987-88 is estimated as 32.1 million. The Eighth Five Year Plan envisages creation of additional employment opportunities of the order of 8 to 9 million per year, on an average.

(e) The Government has created a National Renewal Fund to provide a social safety net to the labour force by providing assistance to cover the cost of retraining and re-deployment of labour arising as a result of modernisation and technology upgradation and also to provide compensation to labour affected by restructuring of any industrial unit."

3. Reply to parts (a) to (c) of the question was treated as an assurance by the Committee which was to be fulfilled within three months of the date of reply *i.e.* by November 4, 1992.

4. On November 16, 1992, the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation approached the Committee on Government Assurances through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. IV/PPI(8)USQ 4305-LS/92 dated November 16, 1992, to drop the assurance on the grounds indicated below:—

“The matter has been examined in consultation with the Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India. The processing of data relating to unemployment collected in the 1991 census is likely to be completed *by the end of 1994*, and the necessary tables may become available by *early 1995*. Keeping in view the long time to be taken in the compilation of the data and the preparation of the tables, it is requested that the assurance under reference be dropped.”

5. The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation for dropping of the assurance at their sitting held on December 28, 1992.

6. The Committee decided not to accede to the request of the Ministry and further decided to take oral evidence of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation and the Registrar General of India (Census) to know the reasons for the delay in implementation of assurance.

7. The decision of the Committee was conveyed to the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation with the suggestion that action should be expedited to fulfil the assurance.

8. In response to the decision of the Committee, the Planning Commission *vide* their O.M. No. H 11016/33/92-LEM-PU dated March 29, 1993 submitted a short note on the processing of 1991 census data and also requested to let the Registrar General and Census Commissioner explain the position to the Chairman, Committee on Government Assurances. The contents of the note were as follows:—

“In the Census, all persons are classified as main workers, or marginal workers or non-workers on the basis of work done during last one year. If a person had worked for major part of the last year *i.e.* for more than six months, he/she was classified as main worker. If he/she had worked less than six months, he/she was classified as marginal worker. If the person had not done any work at all during last year, he/she was considered as non-worker. At the time of 1991 census, information was collected from all “non-workers” whether they were seeking/available for work.

1991 Census data is being processed on the computers in a phased manner as per the approved Tabulation Plan. Before the tables are prepared, all the Individual Slips have to be edited and coded. Since

this is a huge task likely to take at least 2 to 3 years, it was decided that the processing of the data may be done in three stages as under:—

(a) In stage 1, all the Individual Slips of States and Union Territories with a population of less than 10 million and 10% of the Individual Slips of the 15 States having a population of more than 10 million would be processed so as to make available the data to the users at an early date;

(b) In stage 2, all the Individual Slips pertaining to main workers (other than cultivators and agricultural labourers), marginal workers and non-workers will be processed so as to bring out detailed Tables on the economic activity of the population.

(c) In stage 3, the Individual Slips of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes would be processed so as to bring out detailed Tables relating to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The Scheme of phased processing in 1991 Census has been undertaken so as to make available the data in a more expeditious manner, keeping in view the resource constraints, particularly for data entry. At present, the Individual Slips pertaining to stage 1 are being edited and coded in the State Directorate all over the country and they would be processed on the computer during the year 1993. When tables based on the sample are released in 1994 data on the number of persons seeking/available for work would be available age-wise for each district of India separately for rural and urban areas. The data would also be available for each city.

The remaining Individual Slips of stage 2 would be processed during the year 1994 and the detailed tables are likely to be available by early 1995. One of these tables would give number of persons seeking/available for work by age, sex and educational level."

9. It was, however, decided to hear the views of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation and Home Affairs, Office of Registrar General of India on May 24, 1993 and they were requested to furnish detailed reasons for the delay in fulfilment of the assurance.

10. On May 14, 1993, the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation *vide* their U.O. Note No. H 11016/33/92 LEM-LU furnished the following brief note to the Committee:—

"The 1991 Census Operations were conducted by the Registrar General of India and Census Commissioner, who functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The processing and tabulation of the data collected in the Census is also done by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner as per Tabulation Plan in a phased manner. The Planning Commission is not involved in the Census Operations and in the processing and tabulation of census data.

The Assurance under reference was, therefore, taken up with the Registrar General and Census Commissioner."

11. On May 15, 1993, the Office of Registrar General of India, Ministry of Home Affairs vide their O.M. No. H-11016/65/92-Ad-I submitted the following brief note on the delay in implementation of the assurance:—

"The enumeration for the 1991 census was undertaken during the period February 9—March 5, 1991. The enumerators filled up two forms — Individual Slips for each person and Household Schedules for each household. Individual Slips had 23 main questions and household schedules were based on Individual Slips.

All the Individual Slips (over 84 crores) and household schedules (over 16 crores) were collected at 163 Regional Tabulation Offices all over the country for compilation. This led to the preparation of what is known as "Primary Census Abstract" or PCA.

Information on 84 crores on individual slips required coding (and editing) as they were to be fed into the computers for generating a total of 112 Tables as per the approved Tabulation Plan.

Since the number was very high, and resources were constrained, this has been undertaken in phases.

Census Commissioner, India has so far released following data:

- (i) Provisional population figures including literacy rates, upto district level, were given within 20 days of the enumeration. (Paper-1 of 1991 published).
- (ii) Rural-urban distribution of the population (provisional figures) was given in August, 1991. (Paper 2 of 1991 published).
- (iii) The number of workers and their distribution (provisional figures) was supplied in November, 1991. (Paper 3 of 1991 published).
- (iv) The Primary Census Abstract (PCA) was released on January 14, 1993. (Paper 1 & 2 of 1992 published, and village level data available on the NICNET)."

5. PCA

The data on PCA relates to residential houses, households, total population, children (0-6 age) population, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes population, literates, number of main workers as per the industrial categories and marginal workers and non-workers. All these figures upto village/town-ward level are now available at the district and State NIC computers, and also with the officials in the Government of India Ministries and Departments.

6. On the basis of the PCA, in the next 3/4 months, the following data are being released.

- (i) PCA specially for Sc & ST population.
- (ii) A-Series Tables (a total of 13), called "General Population Tables". This will give data on population for territorial units at various levels and also decadal variations since 1901.
- (iii) In the next few months, H-Series Tables (total 17) will also be released. This will contain data on houses and amenities such as construction materials used in houses, drinking water and toilet facilities, electricity and types of fuels used in Indian houses. This is based on the 'Houselisting' done before the actual census.

Tables Based on I. Slips

The approved Tabulation Plan, apart from A-Series and H-Series tables, includes data tabulation relating to workers, social and culture, migration, fertility and special tables for SC and ST. They are called B, C, D, F and SC, ST series Tables.

These Tables will be prepared after entering the informations on Individual Slips in to the computers. The data entry work is going at 15 places in the country. As approved by the Technical Advisory Committee, the data on majority of the tables will be presented on the "sample basis" (i.e. 10% of I. Slips, which will mean examining of over 11 crores of the slips) and the remaining on the full count basis.

The data relating to the unemployment i.e. non-workers seeking available for work [B-1(S) Table] will be presented on sample basis; whereas for the educated unemployed i.e. the data on non-workers seeking/available for work by age, sex and educational level will be tabulated on full count basis as otherwise the information on sample basis would not give a correct picture of the educated unemployed in the country.

The Census Commissioner, India will start release of district-wise Tables, prepared on sample basis, from late 1993 and are scheduled to be over by early 1994. However, the Tables on the basis of full count, which will include the table relating to the educated unemployed will be released only around early 1995.

It may be mentioned that earlier, in 1981 census, it had taken around 4 to 6 years for final release of all the tables though the population in the country was lesser and there was no full count tabulation.

Census being a massive administrative operation collection of voluminous data and information, their processing and dissemination take time, though efforts have been made to speed up the process and also give data in phases."

12. On May 24, 1993, representatives of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation and Office of Registrar General of India

appeared before the Committee. When asked to explain the reasons for the delay in furnishing information in fulfilment of the assurance, the witnesses stated as follows:—

“....The question specifically related to the number of educated and uneducated unemployed persons in the country, as per the 1991 census. The answer that we gave was that, this information was not yet available as data collected in this regard in the course of the 1991 census are still under process.

Sir, the census which is undertaken once in ten years is a very huge exercise and the data become available over a period of almost the whole decade. This phasing is decided on the basis of an approved tabulation plan and a number of things have already been completed by the Registrar-General Census...

So far as the data on educated and uneducated unemployed are concerned, this is collected in the census on the basis of one particular sequence. That is, the total population is classified into three categories: main workers, marginal workers and non-workers.

The main workers are those who have worked for the major part of the year. The marginal workers are those who have worked for less than six months a year. Then there are the non-workers. The data on employment and unemployment is derived from nonworker category. Further we ask whether they are available or seeking for work and if yes, then they are categorised as unemployed. This is broadly what unemployment would mean according to the 1991 census.

Now the 1991 census data are being processed on the computers in a phased manner and according to approved tabulation plan. All individual slips and data are coded. this is a huge task which takes almost two to three years. According to the plan of tabulation that the Registrar General of India has prepared, the data on the specific aspect of the unemployment of the educated and uneducated is likely to take something about two more years to become available. The current tabulation plan that is going on will be throwing up certain kind of data. In fact, in the first phase the tabulation is done partly on a sample basis. All the individual slips of all the Union Territories and the States which have less than one crore of population are analysed, coded and tabulated; and from the States which have more than one crore of population, a 10% of sample is taken. On that basis it should be possible to get an estimate of the total unemployed persons but this tabulation is not done by educational categories. So in the first phase all the tabulation that have been planned and which is likely to take another one year we will get the figure of total unemployment. But we will get the unemployment of different educational categories, only after the entire 100 per cent individual slips are tabulated.

13. When the Committee desired to know the special steps taken to make available the data relating to educated and uneducated persons with which they are concerned at the earliest, the representative of the Registrar General of India explained as follows:—

“Regarding the first part of the question, I may tell you that population census is only one source of a data on this particular aspect. We have two other sources of data. One is the National Sample Survey, run by the Department of Statistics, which conducts all India sample Survey, once in a period of five years and gives detailed data on unemployment including by educated and uneducated categories. The last survey that was undertaken was in 1987-88. The next survey is due during the current year. I think the preparations are already on to conduct that survey. At the moment we have tried to make certain kind of estimates on the basis of what we have got in 1987-88 and what have happened since then.

Another source is the Ministry of Labour, which run employment exchanges throughout the country. People who are seeking jobs register themselves in employment exchanges. From this source, we have information State-wise and by educational categories. The only problem is that all those who are registered with the employment exchanges are not necessarily unemployed and therefore that figure cannot be taken as that of the unemployed, though we have details of how many are educated and uneducated. But taking the National Sample Survey data on the one hand and the trend shown by data from the Director-General of Employment and Training, we try to make estimates as to what would be the total educated and uneducated unemployment.

In the beginning of Eighth Plan, we have estimated that 7 million educated persons were unemployed.”

14. The Committee then enquired whether any expert opinion had been taken for processing the data on computers.

15. The representatives of the Registrar General of India stated as follows:—

“The sequence of tabulation is decided by two formal sources. One is a technical advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India, which has come out with various aspects relating to conduct and processing of the census. This is as per the recommendations of the technical advisory committee. There are various stages which have been outlined in terms of priorities and sequences.

That is the first part. In addition, other formal mechanisms are there in the census such as the Data Users' conferences. There were two such conferences which involved the various data users like the various Ministries, Planning Commission, the State Governments, the

universities, research organisations, etc. It was through these Data Users' Conferences that the contents were decided by way of a formal document which is known as "Tabulation Plan". This is a reference base which the people downstream have adopted for data processing. Within these premises, under the work instructions given, the crucial stage before the computer processing starts, editing and coding operations.

....I would like to supplement what my colleagues has said. One of the pre-requisite stages is that computerisation work can be taken up only after the editing and coding is done. Then the work-flow starts off, data entry, validation, reconciliation, software development and the generation of various tabulation through the stages shown in the processing charts—which itself is a complex system—and there is a flow diagram for it. To make it simple, all these things are done in 15 geographically different locations. So, the work-flow in terms of logistic also is important because editing and coding is also done at the State Capitals.

Lot of data comes at this stage from different locations and a reconciliation of data is necessary to finalise it till the quantity controls are assured. Then the next stage is in terms of technical stages, meant for the master file creation and computerised editing which is another important thing. After that we come out with a clean master data file. That is the data which is the raw material for the main computer to generate the tabulations programme. Actually the software development exercise involves around 120 tabulations. Once the software testing is over, the process starts.

Then there is another second level of check of the computer tabulations by the Subject Matter Division and that is what completes the computerised process."

16. The Committee asked the representatives whether the computer technology that was being used in other countries was also followed in the country. The representative of the Registrar General of India replied as follows:—

"Obviously the data processing for population is done in other countries also, but the methodology, the technique and technologies are different. In the developed countries, for example, in United States, in European countries and also in Japan and some other countries they have experimented and also successfully used some of the new technologies for data capture."

17. When the Committee further desired to know whether the foreign countries are fully dependent on computers or they also undertake data processing manually, the representative stated, that by and large most of them have switched over computers for which there were

various levels of technologies. While we are working on computers for data entry, they are doing it by direct reading.

18. The Committee sought clarification on the following point mentioned in para 4 of the note furnished by the Ministry to the Committee:—

“Kindly make it clear, as you have stated in your note para 4: Census Commissioner, India has so far released following data:

- (i) Provisional population figures including literacy rates, upto district level, were given within 20 days of the enumeration
- (ii) Rural-urban distribution of the population (Provisional figures) was given in August, 1991;
- (iii) the number of workers and their distribution (provisional figures) was supplied in November, 1991;
- (iv) the primary census abstract (PCA) was released on January 14, 1993. That data on PCA relates to residential houses, households, total population, children (0-6 age) population, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes population, literates, number of main workers as per the industrial categories and marginal workers and non-workers. All these figures up to village/townward level are now available at the district and State NIC computers and also with the officials in the Government of India, Ministries and Departments.”

19. While clarifying, the representative of Registrar General of India added:—

“This is called Primary Census Abstract. There are two schedules, Individual Slips and Household Schedule. Most of the entries are transferred to Household Schedule and total is derived from there. Immediately after the census was over we opened 163 regional Tabulation Offices throughout the country. These were wound up in 1992 and this was done manually in the Regional Offices and then later on with the help of NIC this data was computerised and the very purpose of the computers was that. Earlier what happens when the PCA was ready the publishing took lot of time and now we computerise the data so that the data is available right down to the district level to the district planner and to the Government of India. These are the basics only and does not give the details. This is all done manually.”

20. The representative of Registrar General of India further stated that although this is collected manually yet they have used electronic transmission through NIC and the entry is done through computers.

21. The Committee desired to know the basis on which the Ministry of Planning had been working in the absence of the latest census. In reply the witness explained as under:—

“It takes time in finalising the data even though the Planning Commission will itself desire that such data be made available immediately. Some difficulties such as problems related to means and technology come in the way. Therefore, it takes time. We obtain many data from the Registrar General immediately. The primary data would be available only after twenty days after the census.

We have received most of the data but the remaining are delayed. The data in detail are found in other sources. Census is such a big operation that it is difficult to enquire from each and every person in detail. The Survey done by NSS is more useful, its information is available with us. A plan was prepared in 1992. The data till 1990 were available from NSS. Therefore, the data afterwards were based on imagination.”

22. Thereafter the Committee enquired whether the existing staff is sufficient to cope up with such a voluminous work or there is a need to increase the staff. The representative of the Ministry of Planning explained that the Government had issued orders not to make any fresh recruitment and that was once difficulty faced by Registrar General of India to complete the census work.

23. The Committee further enquired when the first census was conducted and how many times it has been conducted thereafter and whether data processing on all these occasions was done manually. In reply, the representative replied that the first census was conducted in 1872 and thereafter in 1951. Subsequently it is being conducted after every ten years. The last census was conducted in 1991 which was the fifth one after independence. He further added that prior to 1991 census the data compilation work was done manually but it is for the first time the data collected is being fed in the computer.

24. When the Committee asked why not to change the present system and take the census figures from Gram Panchayats, Municipal Corporations and teachers to facilitate easy compilation, the witnesses explained that although civil registration system is already in vogue, but through this and other sources complete information is not available. However, since 1967 sample registration system had been started. Under this system 200 sample blocks were established in the country for sample survey and the information is gathered every month and after every six months a supervisor checks it. Many other countries had also adopted this system.

25. The Committee suggested that if a regular chart is maintained it would not take much time to finalise the data and the Ministry would not

be required to approach the Committee for dropping the assurance. The representatives agreed and added that there could not be cent per cent accuracy through Civil Registration System even in developing countries.

26. The Committee further enquired the steps proposed to be taken for accuracy of data as the manual survey which is a stupendous task, takes a lot of time and money to verify the data that has been collected and even then figures are not correct.

27. The representative of Registrar General of India stated that immediately after the census is over, verification of samples is done. Experience uptill now is that 1.8 per cent of the population is under counted. He further added that this is prevalent not only in our country but in other developed countries also such as USA, UK etc.

28. The Committee further asked how the priorities like age, qualification etc. are reflected in tabulation.

29. The representative explained that in tabulation plan 120 kinds of tables are there and all sorts of information like age, qualification and employment etc. are collected. He further added that in all 9 categories of education such as primary, secondary, matriculation, technical, engineering and teaching etc. are taken into account age-wise and sex-wise and the country-wise information about all these upto district level is available. In case of cities whose population is over one million, such information is available barring the State of J & K where census could not be held in 1991.

On being asked whether there is any proposal before the Government to issue identity cards in order to avoid hurdles in collecting information, the representative replied that there was no such proposal at present because the detailed information that is collected would not be possible through issue of identity cards. The Committee further desired to know the steps taken to prevent double counting as it has been generally seen that at the time of census, some members of the family live in cities or some others in villages. Explaining the census procedure, the representative stated that a scheduled period for census was fixed for 20 days. The last census started on 9.2.1991 and was completed on 28.2.1991. After that five days were given for verification. The census was based basically on the actual availability of a person on the last day of the census. The State, place of birth etc. were not incorporated in the census. Two schedules were made in this regard. First of all, the head of the family was contacted and record of his total family members recorded. After that, enumerators used to take details of head of the family followed by those of wife, sons and daughters according to their age, marriage and sex. That way it can be checked whether a particular person is residing at a particular place or not; also whether he does any work or not and where he is working. There were about 23 columns in the 1991 census. Individual slips were also prepared, simultaneously by the enumerators. It was called field information. The

process went through another three stages before reaching the final stage where one could get information of various type as per the requirements. In the second stage, the Table work involved lot of editing. Then it was fed in the computer. The last stage is called the dissemination. Broadly speaking, the whole process consisted of field enumeration, computer network, data entry and processing and dissemination. It could produce results in 120 various tabulated forms for use in the country even district-wise and city-wise.

30. In the last census, 1.6 million enumerators were deployed. It was undoubtedly a stupendous task. It involved both manual as well as table and computer work.

31. On seeking further information on miscellaneous matters by the Committee, the representatives stated that all the enumerators had to take census of all those who were homeless on February 28, 1951. The issue of nationality is not taken into consideration after 1991 census in the Indian census. The census was useful because most of the Indian population was in rural areas and there was no other authentic and more reliable procedure to obtain census figure in the remote corners.

32. The Committee then asked if it was possible to give atleast the total percentage of unemployed persons in the country alongwith the information of States which are having maximum unemployed persons and their percentage in comparison to the total population of each State.

33. It would be helpful in implementing the assurance partly keeping in view the main thrust of the Question. The representatives replied as follows:—

“...As Dr. Papola said the data processing in regard to the major States having more than one crore population is 10 per cent and in Union Territories and small States it is done on hundred per cent basis. We can provide data regarding the total unemployed persons in the next year i.e. First part of 1994, age-wise data could be provided in the first part of 1994. As far as, the second part is concerned, we have already said about education that those datas would be available only after the second phase of processing in 1995 is over.

...We can provide the information about part-B of the question to the Committee only in 1994—both educated and uneducated (Total unemployed) and about complete composition, only by 1995. For that, break-up would be required as who is educated and who is not.

...We can give the information about the total unemployed in 1994, a year after that the State-wise datas of both the figures would be available with us. Not only that, city or district-wise datas would also be available with us.

As far as only the names of the States, are concerned, perhaps

the information would be available with us according to the 1991 census. We know about such States which have maximum unemployment. The States, placed in the order according to the 1951 census, are today in the same order in which the States would be on the basis of unemployment. For example Kerala is in the first place in the list even today since either in total or in regard to figures of educated members. Kerala is on the top till date. It is followed by West Bengal in the second place and Tamil Nadu in the third. If all the States are ranked like-wise then probably it may differ upto some extent from the ranking based on the 1991 census, but it may not make much difference. Some change may reflect in two, three or four States. We do not have the latest figures with us so that we can say anything comprehensively in this regard but this is certain that Kerala is in the first place in the matter of literacy. If this question would not have been based on the 1991 census, and it would have been of general type then we would have already given the reply to it. Then there would not have been a chance for any assurance."

The witnesses further submitted as follows:—

"As far as the estimated number of unemployed persons is concerned, it is available with us but it is difficult to give the State-wise details thereof. We can give the State-wise details of 1987-88. We can say on that basis that how many unemployed persons were there in which State, what was the number of educated and uneducated persons. We have no problem in providing any information in this regard. We have the information regarding 1987-88 with us."

34. While submitted written replies to the Committee *vide* their O.M. No. H-11016/33/92-LEM-PU dated July 29, 1993 on a point raised about the special steps taken to expedite and make available the data at the earliest, the Ministry stated as follows:—

"In a massive operation like the Indian census, it is not possible logistically, operationally and from resource point of view to isolate only one item of data and compile it as a special case. It would, in fact, upset and delay the whole process of tabulation from the previously laid out plans."

35. The Committee take note of the fact that that Ministry of Planning gave an assurance on August 5, 1992 to furnish the number and percentage of educated and uneducated unemployed persons in the country as per the 1991 census and also the States having maximum number of educated and uneducated unemployed persons.

36. The fifth census was commenced on February 9, 1991 and completed on February 28, 1991. During the census period—1.6 million enumerators were deployed to complete the census. They have filed two forms namely

Individual Slips and Household Schedules. The Household Schedules were as many as 16 crores and the individual slips were about 84 crores in number. 163 Regional Tabulation Offices all over the country were established. In these offices manual work on compilation of census Individual slips and Household Schedules was done. Thereafter, these Regional Tabulation Offices all over the country were closed in 1992. Then Ministry proceeded to carry out further work called Primary Census Abstract (PCA). On January 14, 1993, the Primary Census Abstract has been released which contains information relating to residential houses, households, total population, children (0-6 years) population, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes population, literates, number of main workers as per industrial categories and marginal workers and non-workers. All these figures upto village/town level are now available at district and State NIC computers, and also with the officials in the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India.

37. The Committee also take notice that as per the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee, appointed by the Government in which experts in the field were the Members, it has been decided to compute data based on "Sample basis". In "Sample basis" 10% of the total individual of those States/UTs whose population exceeds 10 million (1 crore) will have to be taken up and State/UTs whose population is below 10 million or 1 crore, a full count of the Individual slips has to be done.

38. The Committee note with distress that this work is yet to be taken in hand during the remaining part of current year and also during the full next year i.e. 1994. This time is essentially required to release the figures relating to unemployed persons and the figures are likely to be released in early 1995 only.

39. The Committee are fully convinced that census being a massive operation requires a continuous administrative skill to compile and complete it especially the tabulation of the Individual Slips and Household Schedules for the first time through the electronic media, yet the Registrar General of India should not underestimate the importance of the figures of educated and uneducated unemployed persons in the country. The Committee observe that the required data could have been made available by this time had a right decision of "Sample basis" been taken in right earnest and later on the work relating to the balance 90% of the Individual Slips should have been taken up immediately thereafter and the assurance implemented by indicating that the figures were based on "Sample basis".

40. The Committee hope that the Ministry of Home Affairs will reactivate the office of the Registrar General of India and a review would be conducted to plug loopholes in the present mechanism adopted to finalise the census work. The experience of introduction of computers may be analysed in detail to make the system foolproof and purposeful in all respects. The Committee are of the view that the computer net work also

needs expansion atleast at district level to eliminate the long delay to get information as and when required.

41. The Committee desire that the Government should undertake a "crash" programme to finally compile the data of educated and uneducated unemployed persons in the country as early as possible as the success of the goal of the Eighth Plan is dependent on correct figures in this regard.

New Delhi;
August 17, 1993

Sravana 26, 1915 (Saka)

DR. LAXMINARAIN PANDEY,
Chairman,
Committee on Government Assurances.

**MINUTES
SIXTH SITTING**

*Minutes of the sitting of the Committee on Government Assurances held on
May 24, 1993 in Committee Room No. 'D', Parliament House Annexe,
New Delhi*

The Committee met on Monday, May 24, 1993 from 15.00 hours to 16.30 hours.

PRESENT

Dr. Laxminarain Pandey—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri B. Devarajan
3. Shri Prabhu Dayal Katheria
4. Shri Balin Kuli
5. Shri Manphool Singh
6. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak
7. Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil
8. Shri Nawal Kishore Rai
9. Shri A. Prathap Sai
10. Shri Chinmaya Nand Swami

SECRETARIAT

Shri Murari Lal—*Director*

Shri Joginder Singh—*Deputy Secretary*

Shri K.K. Ganguly—*Under Secretary*

WITNESSES

Dr. T.S. Papola — Advisor (Labour Employment Manpower) Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation.

Shri C.S. Arora — Director (Electronic Data Processing) Office Of Registrar General of India.

Shri R.K. Puri — Joint Director Office of Registrar General of India.

2. The Committee took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation and the

Registrar General of India (Census) in connection with the assurance given on August 5, 1992 in reply to USQ No. 4305 regarding educated and uneducated persons as per the 1991 census.

3. At the outset, the Chairman drew the attention of the witnesses to Direction 58 of the Directions by the Speaker, and clarified to them that their evidence was likely to be treated as public and was liable to be published unless the witnesses specifically desired that all or any part of the evidence given by them was to be treated as confidential. It was further explained to the witnesses that even though the evidence was desired to be confidential, such evidence was liable to be made available to the Members of Parliament.

4. Thereafter, the Committee desired to know the reasons for the delay in fulfilment of the assurance. The representative of the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation submitted as follows:—

“the question specifically related to the number of educated and uneducated unemployed persons in the country as per the 1991 census. The answer given was that, this information was not yet available as data collected in this regard in the course of the 1991 census and are still under process.

The census which is undertaken once in ten years is a very huge process and the data becomes available over a period of almost the whole decade. This phasing is decided on the basis of an approved tabulation plan and a number of things have already been completed by the Registrar General Census.

So far as the data on educated and uneducated unemployed are concerned, this is collected in the census on the basis of one particular sequence. That is, the total population is classified into three categories: main workers, marginal workers and non-workers. The main workers are those who have worked for the major part of the year. The marginal workers are those who have worked for less than six months a year. Then there are the non-workwers.

The data on employment and unemployment is derived from non-worker category. Further we ask whether they are available or seeking for work and if yes, they are categorised as unemployed. This is broadly what unemployment would mean according to the 1991 census.

Now the 1991 census data are being processed in the computers in a phased manner and according to approved tabulation plan. All individual slips and data are coded. This is a huge task which takes almost two to three years. According to the plan of tabulation that

the Registrar General of India has prepared, the data on this specific aspect on the unemployed of educated and uneducated is likely to take something about two more years because the current tabulation plan is going on and it will be throwing up certain kind of data. In fact, in the first phase the tabulation is done partly on a sample basis. All the individual slips of all the Union Territories and the States which have less than one crore of population are taken. All the slips are analysed, coded and tabulated and from all the States which have more than one crore of population, a 10 per cent of population is taken. On that basis it should be possible to get an estimate of the total unemployed persons but this tabulation is not done by educational categories. So in the first phase all the tabulation that have been planned and which is likely to take another one year we will get the figure of total unemployment. But we will get the unemployment of different educational categories, only after the entire 100 per cent individual slips are tabulated."

5. When the Committee desired to know the special steps taken to make available the data relating to educated and uneducated persons with which the Committee are concerned, at the earliest, the representative explained as follows:—

"Regarding the first part of the question, I may tell you that population census is only one source of a data on this particular aspect. We have two other sources of data. One is the National Sample Survey, run by the Department of Statistics, which conducts all India Sample Survey once in a period of five years and gives detailed data on unemployment including educated and uneducated categories. The last survey that was undertaken was in 1987-88. The next survey is due during the current year. I think the preparations are already on to conduct that survey. At the moment we have tried to make certain kind of estimates on the basis of what we have got in 1987-88 and what have happened since then.

The another source is the Ministry of Labour, which run employment exchanges throughout the country. People who are seeking jobs register themselves in employment exchanges. From this source, we have information State-wise and by educational categories. The only problem is that all those who are registered with the employment exchanges are not necessarily unemployed and therefore that figure cannot be taken as that of the unemployed, though we have details of how many are educated and uneducated. But taking the National Sample Survey data on the one hand and the trend shown by data from the Director-General of Employment and Training, we try to make estimates as to what should be the total educated and uneducated unemployment .

In the beginning of Eighth Plan, we have estimated that 7 million educated persons were unemployed.”

6. The Committee further asked from the representatives as to whether any expert opinion for processing the data on computers existed.

7. The representative of the Registrar General of India replied as follows:—

“The sequence of tabulation is decided by two formal sources. One is a technical advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India, which has come out with various aspects relating to conduct and processing of the census. This is as per the recommendations of the technical advisory committee. There are various stages which have been outlined in terms of priorities and sequences.

This is the first part. In addition, other formal mechanisms are there in the census such as the Data Users' conferences. There were two such Conferences which involved the various data users like the various Ministries, Planning Commission, the State Governments, the Universities, research organisations, etc. It was through these Data Users' Conferences that the contents were decided by way of a formal document which is known as “Tabulation Plan”. This is a reference base which the people downstream have adopted for data processing. Within these premises, under the work instructions given, the crucial stage before the computer processing starts, constitutes the editing and coding operations.

...I would like to supplement what my colleagues has said. One of the pre-requisite stages is that computerisation work can be taken up only after the editing and coding is done. Then the work-flow starts off, data entry validation, reconciliation, software development and the generation of various tabulation through the stages shown in the processing charts—which itself is a complex system—and there is a flow diagram for it. To make it simple, all these things are done in 15 geographically different locations. So, the work-flow in terms of logistics also is important because editing and coding is also done at the State capitals.

Lot of data comes at this stage from different locations and a reconciliation of data is necessary to finalise it till the quantity controls are assured. Then the next stage is in terms of technical stages meant for the master file creation and computerised editing which is another important thing. After that we come out with a clean master data file. That is the data which is the raw material for the main computer to generate the tabulating programme. Actually the software development exercise involves around 120 tabulations. Once the software testing is over, the process starts.

Then there is another second level of check of the computer

tabulations by the Subject Matter Division and that is what completes the computerised process.”

8. The Committee then enquired from the representatives whether the computer technology being used in other countries was also adopted in India also. The representative of the Registrar General of India stated as follows:—

“Obviously the data processing for population is done in other countries but the methodology, the technique and technologies are different. In the developed countries, for example, in United States, in European countries and also in Japan and some other countries, they have experimented and also successfully used some of the new technologies for data capture.”

9. When the Committee further desired to know whether the foreign countries are fully dependent on computers or they also undertake data processing manually, the representative stated that by and large most of them have switched on to computers and within computers there are various levels of technologies.

10. The Committee further sought clarification on the following points mentioned in para 4 of the note furnished by the Ministry to the Committee:—

“Kindly make it clear, as you have stated in your note para 4: Census Commissioner, India has so far released following data:

- (i) provisional population figures including literacy rates, upto district level, were given within 20 days;
- (ii) rural-urban distribution of the population (Provisional figures) was given in August, 1991;
- (iii) the number of workers and their distribution (Provisional figures) was supplied in November, 1991;
- (iv) the primary census abstract (PCA) was released on January 14, 1993.

5 PCA

That data on PCA relates to residential houses, households, total population, children (0-6 age) population, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes population, literates, number of main workers as per the industrial categories and marginal workers and non-workers. All these figures up-to village/townward level are now available at the district and State NIC computers and also with officials in the Government of India, Ministries and Departments.”

11. While giving clarification, the representative of Registrar General of India stressed on the following:—

“This is called Primary Census Abstract. There are two schedules, individual slips and household schedule. Most of the entries are transferred to household schedule and total is derived from there. Immediately after the Census was over we opened 163 Regional Tabulation Offices throughout the country. These were wound up in 1992 and this was done manually in the Regional Offices and then later on with the help of NIC this data was computerised and the very purpose of the computeres was that. Earlier what happens when the PCA was ready the publishing took lot of time and we computerise the data so that the data is available right down to the district level to the district planner and to the Government of India. These are the basics only and does not give the details. The is all done manually.”

12. The representative of Registrar General of India further added that this is collected manually but they have used electronic transmission through NIC and the entry is done through computers.

13. The Committee further desired to know the basic on which the Ministry of Planning had been working to get the information required. In reply the witnesses explained as below:—

“It takes time in finalised the data even though the planning Commission will itself desire that such dates be made available immediately. Some difficulties such as problems related to means and technology come in the way, therefore, it takes time. We obtain many datas from the Registrar General immediately. The Primary data would be available only after twenty days after the census.

We have received most of the data but the remaining are delayed. The datas in details are found in other sources. Census is such a big operation that it is difficult to enquire from each and every person in detail. The Survey done by NSS is more useful, its information is available with us. A plan was prepared in 1992. The data till 1990 were available from NSS. Therefore, the datas afterwards 14 were based on imagination”

14. When the Committee enquired whether the existing staff is sufficient to cope up with such a voluminous work or there is a need to increase the existing staff. The representative of Ministry of Planning stated that since the Government had issued orders not to make any fresh recruitment, they were helpless. That was the difficulty faced by Registrar General of India too to complete the census work.

15. The Committee further enquired when the first census was conducted prior to and after independence and how many times so far. Whether data processing on all these occasions were done manually. The

witnesses replied that the census was for the first time conducted in 1872 and after independence in 1951. There after it is being conducted after every ten years. The last census was conducted in 1991 which was the fifth one after the independence. He further added that prior to 1991 census the data compilation work was done manually but it is for the first time that the data collected are being fed in the computer.

16. When the Committee asked why not to change the present system and take figures from Gram Panchayat, Municipal Corporations and Teachers, the witnesses explained that although civil registration system was already in vogue, but through that and from source complete information was not available. However, since 1967 sample registration system had been started. Under which 200 sample blocks were established in the country to do sample survey from whom every month the information was gathered and after every six months a supervisor used to check it. Many countries had also adopted this system.

17. The Committee felt that if a regular chart was maintained, it would not have taken much time to finalise the datas and Ministry would not be required to approach the Committee for dropping the assurance. The representatives affirmed that and also added that there could not be Cent per cent accuracy through Civil Registration System even in developing countries.

18. The Committee further enquired the steps taken to obtain correct data as the manual survey was a stupendous task and lot of time and money was spent to verify the data that has been collected and still figures are not correct.

19. The witness from Registrar General of India stated that immediately after the census is over, verification on sample basis are done. Experience uptill now is that 1.8 per cent of the population are under counted. He further added that this not only prevalent in our country but also in other developed countries such as U.S.A., U.K. etc.

20. The Committee further asked how the priorities like age-wise, qualification-wise etc. are fixed in tabulation in terms of priority.

21. The witness stated that in tabulation plan 120 kinds of tables are there and all sorts of information eg. age, qualification and employment etc. are collected. He further added that in all 9 categories of education such as primary, secondary, matriculation, technical engineering and teaching etc., age-wise and sex-wise are there and the information about all these upto district level of whole country is available. In case of cities whose population is over one million such information is available barring the State of J&K where census could not be held in 1991. On being asked by the Committee whether there is any proposal before the Government to issue identity card in order to avoid hurdles in collecting information. The witness replied that there is no such proposal at present because the detailed informations that are collected would not be possible through

issue of Identity Cards. The Committee further desired to know the steps taken to prevent double counting as it has generally been seen that at the time of census, some members of the family lives in cities or some other in villages.

22. Explaining the census procedure, the witness stated that a scheduled period for census was fixed for 20 days. The last census started on 9.2.1991 and was completed on 28.2.1991. After that five days were given for verification. The census is based basically on the actual availability of a person on the last day of the census. The State, place of birth etc. were not incorporated in the census. Two schedules are made in this regard. First of all the Head of the family was contacted and record of his total family members is recorded. After that, enumerators used to take details of Head of the family then wife then sons/daughters according to their age, marriage and sex-wise that way it can be checked whether the particular person is residing at particular place or not also whether he does any work or not and where he is working. There were about 23 columns in the 1991 census. Nine categories of education, like Primary, Higher Secondary etc. was also included. Individual slips were also prepared, simultaneous by the enumerators. It was called field information. After it three stages were there through which this process had to undergo before reaching to a final stage where one could get information in various type as per the requirements. In the second stage Table work involved where editing work was to be done. Then we fed it in the computer. The last stage is called the dissemination. Thus broadly it was called—field enumeration, computer network, data entering and processing and dissemination. It could produce results in 120 various tabulation form for use in the country even district-wise and city-wise.

23. In the last census 1.6 million enumerators were employed. It was undoubted a big work. It involved both manual as well as Table and computer work.

24. The Committee further enquired that the Government is depending on the information collected by Primary School teachers and Secondary School teachers. Based on this information the District Collector is submitting a Report. Whether you are comparing this information given by the District Collector with any other information collected by you, like, by conducting a survey at your own level.

25. Secondly, some of the developed countries are using advanced technology in this regard. Are you having any specific time bound programme to import this technology so as to get correct information? This matter has been neglected since long though it is a very important matter. The entire developmental activities depend on this information. In some cases, I find, it has taken some three to four years to get the census done.

26. The witness replied:

"So far as the question of comparison is concerned, we undertake two types of comparison. Post enumeration check is made almost in all the States. The total figures missed in the Post enumeration. We have the figures of 1971, 1981 with us. On the basis of demographic test between 1981-91. There is poor population in the reverse survival check age group 0-9 and age group 10-19 is now consistent with that area. This is one of the demographic method of checking the data. Otherwise there is no check as such."

27. When further being asked by the Committee about importing of advanced technology as used in some of the developed countries to get the correct information whether any time bound programme has been fixed.

28. The representative stated as follows:-

"...about the technology upgradation. There are four stages of census. It starts from field enumeration. Then there is certain amount of office work where we do editing then this information is fed into computer where the information is processed. Last stage is that of dissemination. Broadly we can say the entire census involves four stages; field enumeration, computer network, processing and dissemination.

In the field, we work with the Primary and Secondary school teachers. In the last census about 1.6 million enumerators were employed. Then comes the next stage of editing. In Singapore an advanced technology is used in this regard which is called Pump type hand computer. Instead of filling big forms the information can be straightway fed into these computers. Later on at certain collecting point this memory can be transferred to a bigger magnetic media and then it is processed. In this way we can eliminate all the manual work involved in filling of forms and so on. But, in the Indian context this technology cannot be used because this would be a very costly affair. The cost involved in this is of the order of Rs. 6000 to Rs. 8000. As I already mentioned, we employ about 1.6 million enumerators and if we multiply this number by Rs. 6000 or Rs. 8000, you can imagine how costly it will be.

The next stage is that of editing and coding. It requires a certain amount of understanding of these codes. So, it involves the experience and knowledge. It also involves the error of misinterpretation. We explored the possibility of adopting the advanced technology being used in the United States in this regard. But, it has not so far been probably used at one separate level. We can possibly explore this possibility after some years.

Third stage is that of data entering and processing. Entering data is the most time consuming job. There is one new technology called

Optimal Mark Read which is already being used in some of the smaller statistical examinations like the banking recruitment examinations, SSC and UPSC examinations. We are exploring the use of this technology in the field of census. We have already taken up a pilot project. Government has taken up this matter with the international funding agency for exploring the use of this technology.

The last stage is that of dissemination. There is a sea change in making the results available to the users. Electronic transmitters had already been deployed in this census. You will be happy to know that data relating to primary census, including the 9-fold internal classification up to village level is available on demand at any of the NIC terminals. In addition we are also exploring the possibility of giving data on magnetic media. We have already taken certain steps in these directions."

29. On seeking further information on miscellaneous matters by the Committee, the representatives stated that all the enumerators had to take census of all those who were homeless on February 28, 1991. The issue of nationality is not taken into consideration after 1951 census in the Indian census. The census was useful because most of the Indian population was in rural area and there was no other authentic and more reliable procedure to obtain census figure in the remote corners.

30. The Committee then asked if atleast the total percentage of unemployed persons in the country alongwith the information of States which are having maximum unemployed persons and what was their percentage in comparison to the total population of the States could be given. It would be helpful in implementing the assurance partly keeping in view the main thrust of the Question. The representatives replied as follows:—

"...As Dr. Popola said the data processing in regard to the major States having more than one crore population, is 10 per cent and in Union Territories and small States it is done on hundred per cent basis. We can provide data regarding the total unemployed persons in the next year i.e. First part of 1994, age-wise data could be provided in the first part of 1994. As far as, the second part is concerned, we have already said about education that those data would be available only after their second phase of processing in 1995 is over.

...We can provide the information about Part-B of the question to the Committee only in 1994 - both educated and uneducated (total unemployed) and about complete composition, only by 1995. For that, break-up would be required as who is educated and who is not.

...We can give the information about the total unemployed in 1994, a year after that the State-wise data of both the figures would

be available with us. Not only that city or district-wise datas would also be available with us.

As far as only the names of the States are concerned, perhaps the information would be available with us according to the 1991 census. We know about such States which have maximum unemployment. The States, placed in the order according to the 1951 census, are today in the same order in which the States would be on the basis of unemployment. For example Kerala is in the first place in the list even today since either in total or in regard to figures of educated members. Kerala is on the top till date. It is followed by West Bengal in the second place and Tamil Nadu in the third. If all the States are ranked like-wise then probably it may differ upto some extent from the ranking based on the 1991 census, but it may not make much difference. Some change may reflect in two, three or four States. We do not have the latest figures with us so that we can say anything comprehensively in this regard but this is certain that Kerala is in the first place in the matter of literacy. If this question would not have been based on the 1991 census, and it would have been of general type then we would have already given the reply to it. Then would not have been a chance for any assurance."

31. The witnesses further submitted as follows:-

"As far as the estimated number of unemployed persons is concerned, it is available with us but it is difficult to give the State-wise details thereof. We can give the State-wise details of 1987-88. We can say on that basis that how many unemployed persons were there in which State, what was the number of educated and uneducated persons. We have no problem in providing any information in this regard. We have the information regarding 1987-88 with us."

32. The witnesses however promised to the Committee to furnish whatever data are available with them to get the assurance partly implemented.

The witnesses then withdrew.

The Committee then adjourned.

MINUTES

NINTH SITTING

Minutes of the Committee on Government Assurances held on August 17, 1993 in Committee Room No. '62', Parliament House, New Delhi.

The Committee met on Tuesday, August 17, 1993 from 15.00 hours to 16.05 hours.

PRESENT

Dr. Laxminarain Pandey—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri B. Devarajan
3. Smt. Saroj Dubey
4. Shri B.K. Gudadinni
5. Shri Prabhu Dayal Katheria
6. Shri Balin Kuli
7. Shri Ajoy Mukhopadhyay
8. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak
9. Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil
10. Shri A. Prathap Sai

SECRETARIAT

Shri Murari Lal — *Director*
Shri Joginder Singh — *Deputy Secretary*
Shri D.L. Kapoor — *Under Secretary*

2. At the outset, welcoming the Members, the Chairman apprised the Committee of the appointment of two of the members of the Committee, Dr. Krupasindhu Bhoi and Smt. Pratibha Devishingh Patil as Chairman of the Estimates Committee and House Committee respectively. The Committee expressed their happiness and congratulated them.

(Vide para 2 of the Minutes dated December 28, 1992)

Inaugural Speech by Dr. Laxminarain Pandey, M.P., Chairman, Committee on Government Assurances, Tenth Lok Sabha (1992-93) at the First Sitting of the Committee on December 28, 1992.

Esteemed Friends,

I feel great pleasure in welcoming you all to this first sitting of the Committee on Government Assurances of Lok Sabha appointed by the Hon'ble Speaker for 1992-93. My special greetings and welcome are to those Hon'ble Members who have been nominated to this Committee for the first time.

Before the Committee takes up the formal business, I consider it my prime duty to say a few words about the working of this Committee, which may be of interest to those friends who have joined us this year.

The Committee came into being for the first time in 1953 with the object of keeping a track on the implementation of assurances given by Ministers from time to time in the House. The Committee is required to examine and report to the House on the extent of implementation of assurances and also ensure their timely implementation. The Committee have laid down that an assurance should normally be implemented within a period of three months from the date on which an assurance was given in the House. Undoubtedly, this period is an outer limit and Government should try to implement the assurance as quickly as possible after these are given, not necessarily awaiting the expiry of three months' time. Where the Government find it difficult to adhere to the stipulated period of three months, it is open to them to submit to the Committee a request for extension of time and the Committee is to give its earnest consideration to such a request. You would be called upon to consider such requests quite often.

Another kind of cases which you would be called upon to consider in the Committee are where Government come forward with a request for dropping of the assurance. We shall consider such requests today also. You will find that the Committee consider each assurance separately on its own merits and agree to drop the assurance only when the Committee are convinced that the Ministry/Department has approached the Committee with genuine difficulties in the implementation of assurance.

The Committee do not agree to drop the assurance when it is found that the Government are adopting bureaucratic inaptitude and insensitivity to Parliamentary privileges.

Friends, may I remind you of an established Parliamentary convention

about which I am sure all of you being experienced parliamentarians are well aware of. This Committee, like other Parliamentary Committees functions on non-party lines in its deliberations. I do not think there has been any occasion in the past since inception of the Committee when any decision in this Committee was not unanimous. I need not over-emphasize that unanimity in the Committee's deliberations lends great strength to the Committee and also adds to its prestige. I wish and hope that you will uphold this convention.

I would also like to inform you in brief about the work done by the Committee in the previous year. During the last year, 16 sittings of the Committee were held and all the pending assurances pertaining to Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Lok Sabha were reviewed. The Committee also considered as many as 47 requests received from various Ministries/Departments for dropping of assurances and out of them, 22 requests were acceded to. A report on it will be placed before you in course of time. The Committee considered and presented to the House eighth Reports. The Committee also undertook three study tours during the year 1992.

Friends, I take this opportunity to add that the on-the-spot study visits of the Committee were very effective and purposeful and helped in the fulfilment of many long pending assurances. No doubt, this was the first time when Hon'ble Speaker was kind enough to accord permission to undertake three study tours during the tenure of the previous Committee, whereas generally only one study tour had been permitted by the Hon'ble Speaker during the previous Lok Sabhas (Sixth to Ninth).

The Committee also examined the witnesses of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) to know the reasons for the delay in formulating a National Communication Policy on which an assurance was given in 1984 and is still pending for implementation. A report on it will be placed before you soon for consideration alongwith other agenda. Another important issue on which the Committee took oral evidence was that of the representatives of the Ministry of Railways for treating the reply given by the Minister of Railways in response to a point raised by Shri Basudeb Acharia, M.P. during the course of General Discussion on Railway Budget on July 25, 1991 regarding retrenchment of workers handling coal and ash. The issue is still pending and this Committee will pursue the matter.

I seek your constructive cooperation and also assure you of my own. I hope that you will take a very active and keen interest in the working of the Committee despite your busy schedules and I am also confident that your cooperation and thoughtful consideration would yield fruitful results.

Thanking you,

We may now take up the agenda.

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