

Title: Need to establish youth service centres and sports stadium in each district of the country.

* SHRI D. VENUGOPAL (TIRUPPATTUR): In a vast country like ours which has several ethnic races, promotion of sports and nation-building, involving youth, needs to be given more of thrust still. More than 75% of our population are in the age group of below 35 years. About 34% of about 102 crore people of our land are in the age group between 15-35 years. It is disheartening to note that this year's allocation for sports scholarships is less than last year's. This may not help us to prepare our youth for the next Asian Games or Athens Olympics. Similarly the allocation for National Service Corps and recently established National Reconstruction Corps is also less this year. At a time when we go for globalization allowing more role for private sector, we need to train our youth to take leadership in both social and community service sector. Even the report from National Youth Commission is delayed now. There is an urgent need to rope in responsible youth leaders and sportspersons who can help formulating an action plan for the youth in the new millennium. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to go in for establishing and setting up youth social service centres and a sports stadium in every district of the country.

* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.