

>

Title: Need to protect the rights of the disabled in the Country.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (PALANI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, as the hon. Speaker informed earlier today, 3rd December is observed as 'International Day for Disabled Persons'. As per 2001 Census, India's population of disabled persons stood at 2,19,06,769. Among them, males are 1,26,05,635 and females are 93,01,134, which account for nearly 6 per cent as per the conservative estimates. Further, a recent report quotes that India's population of disabled persons is 8 per cent.

Sir, 75 per cent of the persons with disabilities live in rural areas; 49 per cent are illiterate and only 34 per cent are employed; and among them very few are only gainfully employed. Our Government is taking all steps to create an enabling environment for the disabled persons for their rehabilitation and empowerment through the adoption of National Policy for Disabled Persons. However, that is not seemed to be sufficient. Lots of disabled persons are poor. They are not getting adequate opportunities in education and employment. The private and corporate sectors are not willing to come forward to give them more employment. Moreover, the employment opportunities for disabled in the Government Departments are very meager and insufficient.

I shall, therefore, urge upon the Government to take further necessary steps for the upliftment of disabled persons and adequate funds should be allocated for their welfare, and opportunities should be created for them in all spheres. Further, the Government of India has to direct the State Governments and local authorities to strictly implement the Guidelines, to promote and sponsor research in the areas of prevention of disability, rehabilitation including community-based rehabilitation, job identification and on-site modifications in offices and factories and development of assistive devices including their psycho-social aspects.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can put it in a few words, without reading it, and wasting time.