

[Translation] *Sc/Sc 10/10*

Pecuniary Difficulties to the Weaker Sections

2047. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of widows, divorcees infirm old men and women are facing pecuniary difficulties and are compelled to lead a miserable life in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to provide pension simplify the pension procedure or increase pension in view of price hike under the financial protection scheme to the said infirm, poor and neglected people; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) Recognising the vulnerable condition and the income security needs of older persons including those of widows, divorcees and infirm old men and women and government provides old age pension to destitute elderly under the National Social Assistance Programme. Old age pension is also provided by State Governments to the needy persons. Simplification of pension procedures as well as enhancement of amount payable is considered by the Government from time to time with a view to ameliorating the condition of the beneficiary target groups.

Improvement of Gene of Plants

2048. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to improve the genes of plants which are important from medicinal point of view and for the traditional vaccines; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Some Central Ministries/

Departments/Institutes (Department of Biotechnology, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Ministry of Environment and Forests and Universities) are implementing several research and development schemes on genetic improvement of plants which are important from medicinal point of view. These include: traditional breeding, micropropagation, somaclonal variation, molecular characterization and genetic transformation with a view to develop desirable clones/varieties of important medicinal plants. The Department of Biotechnology has also initiated projects on edible vaccines—i.e. production of vaccines in crop plants for cholera (in tomato and tobacco) and rabies (in cabbage). These projects are at the initial stage of development.

[English]

Human Rights Department

2049. DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a separate Human Rights Department as reported in the Ahmedabad based 'Times of India' dated December 17, 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to convene a conference of the Education Ministers of States in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Houses Constructed by DDA

2050. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of houses constructed and allotted by Delhi Development Authority during each of the last three years, category-wise; and

(b) the target fixed for construction and allotment of the houses during 1999-2000 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) The number of houses constructed and allotted by DDA during each of the last three years category-wise is as under:

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
<i>Houses Completed</i>			
SFS	173	3666	1781
MIG	1665	3372	116
LIG	460	705	890
Janta	—	—	948
Total:	2298	7743	3635
<i>Houses Allotted</i>			
SFS	676	3022	526
MIG	1864	4668	79
LIG	2602	1731	107
Janta	791	3667	107
EWS	—	8405	43
Total:	5933	21493	292

(b) DDA has reported that that 5379 houses are targetted to be completed during the year 1999-2000. Allotment of houses, however, is a continuous process and depends upon availability of power and water.

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SC/ST Community Residing in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

2051. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of people belonging to SC/ST community are residing in Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(b) if so, whether no list of SC and ST has been prepared so far in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and people belonging to these communities have not been getting the benefit of reservation in the administration of Government;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the Government is likely to prepare the list of SC and ST and provide the benefit of reservation in the Government jobs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) As per census of 1991 the population of Scheduled Tribes in Andaman & Nicobar Islands is 26,770. Population of Scheduled Castes is Nil.

(b) No community has been specified as Scheduled Castes and in respect of Scheduled Tribes, six communities have been listed in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Benefit of reservation in Government is given to Scheduled Tribes in accordance with the policy of the Government.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise.

[English]

Model Villages

2052. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages developed as model villages under the Centrally Sponsored Rural Sanitation Programme in the country, State-wise;

(b) the amount earmarked for this purpose during the last three years;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh has sent any specific Projects to the Government for approval and release of funds under the programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?