

request the hon. Member not to be very unkind to the police in future.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You have not said anything about general amnesty. You have not said anything about the specific point I raised about under-trials.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Bosu, you have had enough of your say. And the Home Minister has answered most of your points.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA (Begusarai): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am only on a point of clarification. The hon. Home Minister was not pleased to refer to the number of Naxalites in Bihar.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think the statement is here.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Would he be pleased to give us the figures of Naxalites? (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, no more questions please. I have already called the hon. Minister Dr. Chunder.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM (Tiruchirapalli): Sir, I have given notice to raise an important matter under Rule 377.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You have given the notice which is being looked into. You cannot raise it on the floor of the House. Nobody else will take the floor excepting Dr. Chunder whom I have already called.

12.26 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. GOVERNMENTS POLICY ON UNIVERSALISATION OF LITERACY, IMPROVEMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION, RESEARCH, POLITICAL VICTIMISATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIONS ON ELECTIONS TO STUDENTS' UNIONS

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE

(SHRI PRATAP CHANDRA CHANDER): I am grateful to the Speaker for having given me this opportunity to make a statement in this august House.

The Government would like to give the highest priority to the universalisation of literacy in the country. I am informed that 87 per cent of the children in the age group 6—11 and 39 per cent of the children in the age group 11—14 have facilities for primary and middle school education in our country as at present. The present Fifth Plan envisages enrolment of 96 per cent of the age group 6—11 and 46 per cent of the age group 11—14. In regard to adult literacy, according to the 1971 census, 34 per cent of the population above the age of four are literate. In terms of numbers, I understand, more than 200 million adults above the age of 15 are still illiterate. The dimensions of this problem are truly gigantic. However, the present Government are extremely anxious that urgent steps should be taken to achieve substantial progress in the matter of universalisation of elementary education and promotion of adult literacy. We have not yet had time to study in detail the various aspects of the problem and also consult the States who are primarily concerned with this. However, we would take the earliest opportunity to study this question in detail and prepare a time-bound plan of action for universalisation of elementary education and promotion of adult literacy. We shall also make earnest efforts to reduce the existing gap between the world of work and world of education keeping in view the principles of basic education as enunciated by our Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.

The secondary education sector especially the curriculum, syllabus and text books may all require to be looked into to lighten the academic burden on the students to enable them to turn their attention to sports.

[Shri Pratap Chandra Chander]

recreation, cultural aesthetic pursuits and social work. At the level of higher education fundamental and applied research deserve greater emphasis. I should also like to state here that we are not in favour of undue interference in the field of education.

Many Hon'ble Members of this House and other friends are approaching me and also writing to me about complaints of political victimisation in the Departments of Education and Culture. I asked for details of premature retirements and reversions in the Departments of Education and Culture. I find that as far as the Department of Education and its attached and subordinate offices are concerned, there has been no case of premature retirement during the last 2 years. There has been one case of reversion, but it would appear that this reversion was based on entries in the confidential records. However, this case is also under review.

In the case of Department of Culture, while there was no premature retirement or reversion in the Department at the Secretariat level, three cases of premature retirement in the attached offices have been reported. I have directed that these cases may be reviewed and submitted to me. I have also issued directions that a thorough check should be made in the attached and subordinate offices, under the Departments of Education and Culture, to verify whether there has been any case of victimisation on political grounds. I have also issued similar instructions to obtain the same information in regard to the autonomous organisations attached to the Departments of Education and Culture. I hope to secure the information urgently and complete the review within a few days. I should like to assure the Hon'ble Members that all cases which involve political victimisation will be reviewed.

We shall write to the State Governments and universities requesting them to review the action taken against the staff in the educational organisations on political grounds, in the changed circumstances. I am hoping that the State Governments and Universities will respond to our request.

I have learnt that instructions had gone from the Ministry suggesting temporary postponement of elections to the various student unions in the Universities. I have directed that revised instructions may issue removing these restrictions. I am also taking up a review of instructions issued during the last 20 months in the wake of emergency imposing similar restrictions. (*Interruptions*).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Bostu, do not interrupt now. That subject-matter is now over. You will have enough opportunities to raise it again. Let the Home Minister introduce the Bill. Then you can have your objections and points of order.

12.33 hrs.

GOVERNMENT OF UNION TERRITORIES (AMENDMENT) BILL\*

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (CHAUDHURI CHARAN SINGH): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963."

*The motion was adopted.*