

Unemployment

*289. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the unemployment of educated and uneducated is rising at an alarming rate and that the employment targets in private and public sectors have remained largely unfulfilled over the past three years;

(b) whether Government have formulated an integrated and coordinated plan of action on the recommendations of Bhagavati Committee to meet unemployment problem; and

(c) if so, the facts and achievements thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Precise estimates of unemployment in the country are not available. However, the number of job-seekers borne on the Live Register of Employment Exchanges (all of whom are not necessarily Unemployed) has been on the increase over the past few years but the rate of increase has slowed down since 1973. No employment targets, as such, were fixed for the public or private sectors over the past three years.

The recommendations in the final report of the Bhagavati Committee were examined by an Inter-Ministerial Working Group set up by the Planning Commission and the recommendations of the Committee alongwith the views of the Working Group thereon were forwarded to the concerned Ministries/Department for necessary action. So far the final views of the concerned Ministries on the recommendations and details of action taken on the recommendations have been received in respect of 173

out of a total of 221 recommendations made by the Committee in its report. It has been reported that the steps being taken or proposed to be taken as part of the Fifth Plan are generally in line with the recommendations of the Committee, subject to the availability of financial resources.

The remaining recommendations are being vigorously followed up with the concerned Ministries by an 'Empowered Committee' consisting of representatives of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Industry and Civil Supplies (Department of Industrial Development), Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (Department of Agriculture), Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs) and the Ministry of Labour.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I would like to know this. In view of the fact that unemployment both of educated and uneducated categories is growing, what are the steps taken particularly in view of the 20 point programme to have agro-service centres? This was the scheme which was thought of for some time, agro-service centres, where educated people could be employed as well as uneducated people, but skilled personnel, which would provide service to the people in the rural areas, provide employment as well as serve as catalytic agent. What are the measures taken in this regard?

SHRI RAGHUNAHTA REDDY: One of the points in the 20 point economic programme is to find employment for these apprentices and now about one lakh and odd places were found for them and more than 96 per cent of the seats are being filled up by this apprentice programme. This is one of the aspects of relieving unemployment in respect of educated young men. The hon. Member is fully aware about the general problem of unemployment. While there is increased economic activity in deferent sectors as a result of execution of various development schemes in successive 5 year plans,

we have taken steps to provide more and more employment to apprentices in various categories.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I asked about agri-service centre schemes, aimed at providing employment to both educated people, people in technical spheres as well as uneducated, but skilled people. What has happened to that?

SHRI RAGHUNAHTA REDDY: I will collect the information.

MR. SPEAKER: You now ask your second question.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: My second question is: in the light of the experience which the Maharashtra Government had in providing the employment guarantee for the unemployed people which was so highly successful even during the drought-affected period, I would like to know whether he will take some advantage of that pattern and extend it to the other States also? If so, what is your opinion about this?

SHRI RAGHUNAHTA REDDY: No doubt, Maharashtra Government has come forward with a very well-meaning scheme. But this scheme cannot, immediately, be implemented in the other States. This is a matter to which government's attention has been drawn.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: To the Minister the question that was put was whether unemployment is rising at an alarming rate but the reply given in his statement simply says that a precise estimate of unemployment figure is not available. The number of job seekers is increasing. This is all that he has to say. I would like to know why is it that he has no idea whatsoever regarding the quantum of unemployment in the country. Is it not running in terms of millions and is on the increase? Is that not alarming? If so, how rapid is the rate of the increase?

SHRI RAGHUNAHTA REDDY: Why I said that precise figures are not available are because of these reasons—the Unemployment Committee which had been appointed for the purpose to go into this question said that the Committee could not ascertain the figures precisely; in the same manner, even the Dantwala Committee said that it was not possible to ascertain the figures in terms of mathematical exactitude. Therefore, I do not like to make a statement which would go contrary to the very learned statements made by various Committees. Nevertheless, in the year 1972, the number of employment exchanges was 453 and 68.96 lakhs were on the live register; in 1973, the number of employment exchanges was 464 while 82.18 lakhs were on the live register; in 1974, the number of employment exchanges was 481 while the number of the live register was 84.23 lakhs. In 1975, upto June, the number of employment exchanges was 500 while the number on the live register was 87.92 lakhs. These would give an indication of the figures. If the figures are needed by the hon Member, I can give them.

श्री श्रीकार लाल बेरवा में
मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ केन्द्रीय सरकार की तरफ से राज्यों के ग्रन्दर टेक्नीकल ट्रेनिंग सेन्टर, पोलिटेक्नीक और आई० टी० आई० चल रहे हैं और उन में लडके शिक्षित हो कर बेरोजगार फिर रहे हैं, तो क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार ऐसा आदेश देगी कि पहले जिन्होंने परीक्षा पास की है उन को लगाया जाय ? और यदि नहीं, तो बेकारी भत्ता उन को दिया जाय ?

SHRI RAGHUNAHTA REDDY: Of the technical training centres, very few are under Central Government; quite a number of them are

under the State Governments. Nevertheless, as I submitted in the beginning in my reply, one of the important points in the 20-point economic programme is the apprenticeship scheme and the employment for apprentices was considered and these people have been trained in the technical institutes and are being given places in various factories as apprentices and we have done a good job of it.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: As far as this information is concerned, the magnitude of unemployment is assuming such a position that it has now gone over one crore. Even in the Employment Exchange it has gone up to 40 lakhs. I would like to know one thing. Whenever we raised a question about unemployment doles, we were told that a huge amount was required and Government was not in a position to do so. I wish to know whether the Labour Minister would recommend to government that at least a portion of the money—the huge amount of black money—which they have unearthed now—should go towards solving the unemployment problem if given as unemployment doles.

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: At present there is no such proposal with Government

SHRI M RAM GOPAL REDDY: I want to know from the Government whether the unemployment number is rising or the number of new persons that are entering this field is rising: the population is rising and, if the population is rising at this present rate, is he in a position to solve the unemployment problems at least in his lifetime?

MR. SPEAKER: He has answered that question.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Not answered.

MR. SPEAKER: Next question.

Eye Diseases in the Rural Areas of the Country

*240. **SHRI P. GANGADEB:** Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been high incidence of eye diseases in rural areas of the country, particularly in children;

(b) if so, whether any fresh steps have been taken recently to fight blindness; and

(c) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (DR. KARAN SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A statement containing the required information is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

Steps taken to fight Blindness and the salient features thereof

1 In order to reduce the incidence of blindness in children due to nutritional deficiencies, a programme for the distribution of Vitamin 'A' has been launched. It will cover about 8.7 million of the 100 million children at risk by the end of March, 1976.

2. A national Trachoma Control Programme has been in operation since 1963. About 140 million population in 1805 blocks of the various States and Union Territories has already been covered under that Programme. The programme has eliminated about 5 per cent of blindness in the population covered by avoiding blinding complications of Trachoma.

3 Government have been successful in bringing Smallpox to the 'zero' level in July, 1975. This has taken care of about 3 per cent of the blinds.

4. Cataract operations have been conducted by various medical institutions. About 5-6 lakh operations are being done annually.