

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:128
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2006
RESERVATION IN PRIVATE SECTOR
Gudhe Shri Anantrao;Surendran Shri Chengara

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

:

- (a) whether the Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted to examine the issue of reservation in jobs for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the private sector has submitted its report to the Government;
- (b) if so, the recommendations made by the GoM and follow-up action taken by the Government thereon;
- (c) whether the Government has constituted now another panel/committee on private sector reservation as reported in The Times of India dated October 17, 2006;
- (d) if so, its composition, terms of reference and likely time of submission of its report; and
- (e) the progress made so far in regard to reservation in jobs for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the private sector?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SMT. MEIRA KUMAR)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No.128 for answer on 30.11.2006 by S/Shri Anant Gudhe and Chengara Surendran, MPs regarding reservation in Private Sector.

(a) and (b): As a part of the Government's dialogue with industry, the Group of Ministers held extensive discussions with Chambers/Federations of industries. The industry broadly accepts the desirability of affirmative action though it is opposed to the concept of reservation as prevailing in government.

(c) to (e): To take forward and supplement the ongoing endeavours on this issue for a fruitful national dialogue leading to a time bound action programme, a Co-ordination Committee has been constituted on October 9, 2006. The Committee is chaired by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and comprises Secretaries of Ministry of Personnel and Training, Tribal Affairs, Social Justice and Empowerment and Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion as its other members. The Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion is the convener of this Committee. The Chairman of the Committee may also co-opt other members of official as well as non-official, if considered necessary. The Committee is expected to submit its interim report within six months followed by a final report within one year. The terms of reference of the Co-ordination Committee are as follows:

- i) to ensure time bound examination of the suggestion and action points received from various stakeholders;
- ii) to evolve/identify the concrete steps arising out of (i) and their implementation;
- iii) to suggest ways and means of Government assistance and support to the implementation process.

In course of these interactions with the industries, a distinct attitudinal shift on this issue is being noticed. The earlier emphasis on merit, global competitiveness and non- interference in the right of management seems to be giving way to a recognition on the part of the industry that merit is not a natural phenomenon but is shaped by social circumstances. They are now acknowledging the need for social equity and a more constructive role on the part of the industry for complementing the ongoing efforts of government towards achieving it.

The industry has reiterated its support for voluntary affirmative action with a thrust on enhancing employability of the SC and ST candidates. A multi-pronged strategy with PPP model is being advocated through support to selected schools, vocational training measures, scholarships, skill and entrepreneurship development among others. The Associations are also in favour of preparing their own Code of Conduct on Affirmative Action and evolving their monitoring mechanisms to ensure observance by the members.