

I belong to Uttar Pradesh and the Standard of education is abysmally low. My sole demand is that the Government should at least implement the Directive Principle of state under which children upto the age of 14 are to be provided free compulsory education. As per the statistics published by the Human Resource Ministry, out of 5 crore children, 25 per cent children never attend any school. Referring to child labour shortly before, Shri Reddy had said that anybody employing children below the age of 14 will be punished. Shri Reddy further added that to achieve this objective both persuasion and threat would be used. But Government is blissfully oblivious of the fact that they would be punishing the people who do not have the means of livelihood and depend on the earnings of these small children. Further, the statistics reveal that the percentage of students from standard I to standard V is 93 and it drops down to 48 from standard VI to Standard VIII. Does it not denote an alarming dropout rate?

What we have to contemplate is not the real wealth of the nation is going waste.

The population of our country is increasing by leaps and bounds and is likely to touch 100 crores. May be in the coming years India may beat China and occupy the top position as far as population is concerned. We will have to mould our system of education to meet the challenge posed by this staggering population. I would like to quote from the great poet of Bengal Rabindra Nath:

[English]

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where the knowledge is free..."

[Translation]

Pershaps our comrades from Bengal would agree with it.

SHRIMATI GETTA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : "*Chitta jatha bhaje shutri, uchcha jatha sheer*"

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Thanks, I could not understand but you have supported me, therefore, I give thanks to you. One should try to understand what one does not know... (Interruptions) How can I make you understand the situation of Bihar...

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADVA (Patna) : The situation of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is the same. We are brothers.

SHRI STAYA DEO SINGH (Balrampur) : Rabindra Nath Tagore had imagined a world :

[English]

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where the knowledge is free...."

[Translation]

Our brothers from West Bengal are not prepared to listen to the line written by the National poet.

Knowledge is free and is without an element of compulsion. He had further added.

[English]

"Where the knowledge is free, where the world is not divided into narrow domestic walls..."

Sir, This country is being divided every day and every hour into narrow domestic walls. We have to eliminate and bring down these artificial wall which are being created by misutilisation of funds and public exchequer. The growth of the country is being put to question. If we do not check this, we shall fail everybody. Our fore-fathers have given us the Constitution.

They have given us this authority to speak. It was correctly said that the youth might not be one hundred per cent in the population of the country, but they would be one hundred per cent in the future of the country.

I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that this is a very important Bill. He should apply his mind to it. I think, he must have applied his mind. Let the Government come out with a comprehensive Bill and see to it that everybody is given compulsory free education upto VIII class.

[Translation]

It is my conviction that it will be the most valuable service towards the nation. God has blessed you with an opportunity to run the Government. Along with your administrative duties you must fulfil your duties towards nation i.e. elimination of poverty and tension which can be possible only through the spread of education. With these words I express my gratitude to hon. Speaker for providing me with an opportunity to express my views.

MR. SPEAKER : We will now take up the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 1996.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The discussion on the previous Bill will resume after this. We will take up further discussion on the Employee's Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment) Bill, 1996. Justice Lodha may speak now.

(Interruptions)

18.51 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Detention of 14 Indian Girls at Yemen Airport - Laid

[English]

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : Sir, before that, I seek your

permission to lay on the Table of the House a Statement regarding the detention of 14 Indian girls at the Yemen Airport. This issue was raised by Prof. Kurien in the House on 22.07.1996.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, I lay the Statement on the Table of the House.

Sir, the moment is came to the notice of my Ministry that 12 Nurses and 2 Laboratory Technicians, all females, were stranded in Sana'a as their actual sponsor/ employer in Yemen could not be located, my Ministry established immediate contact with the Indian Embassy, Sana'a on phone and through fax to ensure that these girls are provided boarding, lodging and other facilities. Our Embassy sent an intimation saying that the 14 girls who were recruited by M/s. Shepra Tours and Travels, had reached Sana'a in two batches on 3rd and 4th July, 1996. It was intimated that since the Yemeni sponsors could not be traced in spite of the assistance sought through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Defence of Yemen, the Embassy had accommodated them in the Embassy premises and was providing them food and other facilities. It was reported that all of them were in good health and none of them was suffering from any illness. It was further intimated that some together local employers had approached our Embassy in Sana'a for recruiting these girls in local hospitals/clinics. Our embassy sought clearance from my Ministry of these girls could be allowed to take up employment. My Ministry immediately accorded the clearance subject to the condition that the salary and other facilities offered by the local employers were reasonable and the agreement was acceptable to these girls.

Sir, I am happy to inform this House that according to the information received from our Embassy, six staff nurses and two laboratory technicians have already got employment in two private hospitals in Yemen. One nurse has returned to India on 31.07.1996 as she was not interested in working in Yemen. The remaining five nurses had also got some offered but the salary offered was not found reasonable by the Embassy. Efforts for finding employment for them are on and we hope to find suitable employment for them soon. In the meantime we have suspended the registration certificate of M/s. Shepra Tours and Travels who had recruited these girls for employment in Yemen.

[Translation]

SHRI G.L. KANAUIA (Kheri) : Please read it out.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : He has already laid it on the Table of the House.

18.52 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION
RE: DISAPPROVAL OF THE EMPLOYEES'
PROVIDENT FUNDS AND MISCELLANEOUS
PROVISIONS (AMENDMENT) THIRD
ORDINANCE, 1996

AND

EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUNDS AND
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS (AMENDMENT)
BILL - Contd.

[English]

JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA (Pali) : Sir, it is a very happy coincidence that this Bill was sought to be piloted by your honour as early as in 1993 and it bears your signature. But it is surprising, if not shocking, why, from 1993 till 1996, in an age where we can go to the Moon, it took three years even to take a start. It is something which the Minister would have to explain. But it appears to me that there was lack of political will or there was opposition from the labour and the matters could not be sorted out or whatever it might be.

This legislation is an enabling piece of legislation. The real heart and soul of this legislation is the Pension Scheme. How Pension Scheme is framed, what are its provisions, in what manner the employees' are benefited or not benefited, these are the matters on which depends the fate of 1.60 crores employees' who are in the organised sector. Therefore, I would like the hon. Minister to mention, when the Ordinance were issued, as to why this Pension Fund Scheme was not debated in this House because there is a provision in this, under clause 5 (7), which says :

"A Pension Scheme, framed under sub-section (1), shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the scheme or both Houses agree that the scheme should not be made, the scheme shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be no effect..."

So, Sir, the legislative sanction to the Scheme is to be taken from this House. Three Ordinances have been passed...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI (Howrah) : Ordinances have been issued and not passed.