

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Lucknow Package is there.

PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Member has raised a question with regard to an area which is the most neglected area of Rajasthan. It is a desert area. I do agree with him that we have not launched any special scheme for the development of this area as we have done for some other areas. He has given a very good suggestion. It will be taken into consideration and action will be taken in this regard (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Q. No. 103, Shri Mukul Wasnik

.... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have already allowed eight hon. Members to put their supplementaries. The next question is also more or less on the same subject. Shri Mukul Wasnik.

..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats. A discussion under Rule 193 is also going on, on the same subject, even then I have allowed eight hon. Members to put their supplementaries. Please understand the position and take your seats.

..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats.

..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down first.

[English]

Anti Poverty Programme

*103. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of people living below poverty line ;

(b) whether the Government have conducted any study to assess the effectiveness of the on going anti-poverty programmes ; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) As per the latest available information 320.37 million persons are estimated to live below the poverty line in 1993-94. This is 35.97% of the total population.

(b) and (c) The Government reviews the implementation of rural poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes, namely the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), and the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) from time to time in the Central Level Coordination Committee (CLCC), State Level Coordination Committee (SLCC) and at the district level by the Governing Body of the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs). These programmes are also reviewed through regular progress reports from the states on key indicators and through an intensive regimen of field inspections by officers of the centre, state and implementing agencies. Periodic review meetings with State Secretaries incharge of Rural Development and Conferences of Project Directors of DRDAs are also held to review the progress in the implementation of these schemes. Monitoring and Vigilance Committees have been set up at the State, district and block levels in which elected representatives of the people have been associated to monitor the implementation of these schemes.

Furthermore, to assess the overall impact of various poverty alleviation programmes, in relation to their specific objectives, the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment undertakes periodic concurrent evaluations of their major schemes through independent recognised institutions/ organisations.

Some of the positive points listed among the main findings of the latest Concurrent Evaluation Report on IRDP (September 1992- August 1993) were that : (a) While 15.96% families assisted crossed the poverty line of Rs. 11,000 per annum, the additional annual income of more than Rs. 2,000 was generated to a large percentage (57.34%) of families. The Annual income from the assets was more than Rs.6,000 in 29% cases (b) 95% of the beneficiaries felt that the type of assets provided to them were according to their choice. A large number of beneficiaries also found the assets to be of a good quality. The areas of concern reported were : (a) a very poor linkage of IRDP with Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA); and that (b) In 45% cases the settlement of claim preferred by the beneficiaries for perished assets remained unsettled.

Similarly some of the positive points revealed in the Concurrent Evaluation of JRY (1993-94) were that (a) Construction of rural link roads received the highest priority by the Village Panchayats at the all India level. Besides linking villages to other parts of the country, rural roads created more employment opportunities for the rural poor. (b) In almost all the States/UTs barring Punjab, the average wage paid per manday to the unskilled workers were more or less equal to the minimum wages prescribed under the Act. (c) In 86.87% of JRY works, Muster rolls were

maintained and were available with the village panchayats. (d) The JRY workers were almost unanimous in reporting that the assets created were useful for the poor people. The Areas of Concern reported were that : (a) Only 42.56 % heads of elected panchayats were imparted training for implementation of JRY works. (b) The share of women in the employment generated was only 16.59%; and (c) Only 35.7% panchayats had displayed the details of works undertaken on the notice boards for the information of public.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to have some information (Interruptions)

Please listen for a minute (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. Please do not waste the time of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not asking any question (Interruptions)

I am saying that

MR. SPEAKER : This is Question Hour and you can ask only questions during it.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take it easy.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : I would like to make a submission that when all this was going on between India and Pakistan then we were quite close to Nepal (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : At that time attention was not paid towards it and even now no attention is being paid towards it (Interruptions)

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question relates to farmers (Interruptions) so far no committee has been sent to Maharashtra even after the assurance given by the hon. Prime Minister..... (Interruptions) You are not allowing me to raise my point (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you a chance.

..... (Interruptions)

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : What are you talking (Interruptions) How is it that only you will speak here? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you a chance later on. Please take your seat .

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Sir, the hon. Member has raised a very important question and the Prime Minister must reply to it (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have already called Question No. 103.

..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Chavan, I have already called Question No. 103 and the hon. Member is on his legs.

SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : From the reply tabled by the hon. Minister, it seems that the Government is conducting a regular review of the poverty alleviation programmes and employment generation programmes of the Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation Department. Moreover, from the reply, it seems that the Government is very much satisfied with the implementation of the various programmes. I personally would like to state that I am absolutely not satisfied with the implementation of the poverty alleviation programmes. The implementation has been extremely poor. We are dealing with questions regarding those people who live below the poverty line. As per the information submitted by the hon. Minister, even now we have 320 million people who live below the poverty line. That is the latest information which the hon. Minister could furnish.

I have the Report of the Standing Committee which went into the Demands for Grants of the Department of Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation. I would just like to quote some of the figures. The schemes were opening with unspent balance or accumulated amount, as reported in 1996-97 on the various poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes, are :

IRDP	- Rs. 376.91 crore
DWCRA	- Rs. 19.81 crore
TRYSEM	- Rs. 36.4 crore
Improved tool kits to rural artisans	- Rs. 11.31 crore
Jawahar Rozgar Yojana	- Rs. 832.27 crore
Indira Awas Yojana	- Rs. 198.44 crore
Million wells Scheme	- Rs. 228.09 crore
Employment Assurance Scheme	- Rs. 959.55 crore
DPAP	- Rs. 106 crore
DDP	- Rs. 35.73 crore

The amount which has not been spent come to Rs. 2700 crore. It is an accumulated amount. I am not blaming anybody. It is an unspent amount of the poverty alleviation programmes.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister the efforts planned by the Government to ensure that all the funds which are earmarked for the poverty alleviation programmes and employment generation programmes are utilised and utilised properly.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, it is true that there have been many deficiencies in the implementation of the poverty alleviation programmes. If you read my reply carefully, you will find that I have said like this which you have also stated: "The areas of concern reported were (a) a very poor linkage of IRDP with TRYSEM and DWCRA." Even in our evaluation programme, we have observed that these are the areas of concern. I am giving you the information based on facts. So, it is true that the amounts are not spent; we will try our best to ensure that these programmes are improved. On the basis of their experience, even the hon. Members can suggest the improvements needed these schemes, wherever they are required. The schemes can be improved and we are open for improvement. But I must tell you the fact that whatever has happened was based on the report of the evaluation. So, it does not mean that we are satisfied. When 35 per cent of our country are below the poverty line, it definitely is a concern of all. We will try to improve their lot.

SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : The Parliament, through the Constitution (Seventy-third) Amendment had mandated the Government to delegate substantial administrative and financial powers to the Panchayati Raj institutions. Several poverty alleviation programmes are run and implemented by the Panchayati Raj institutions at the district, block and village levels. But it has come to our notice that in several States, the powers have not been sufficiently delegated to the Panchayati Raj institutions. This has adversely affected the implementation of the poverty alleviation programmes.

I would like to give an example from Maharashtra State. Even in Maharashtra, today - after so many years - we see that the powers are more with the officials than with the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The Centre had given directions that Presidents of the Zilla Parishads will be the Chairmen of the district-level committees under the DRDA. But in many States, even today, the chief executive officers of the Zilla Parishad and in some States, the Collector is the Chairman of the DRDA district-level committee.

I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what are the steps which the Government plans to take to ensure that the Constitution (Seventy-third) Amendment is fully implemented in letter and spirit and the Panchayati Raj institutions get their powers so that the poverty alleviation programmes are implemented properly.

I would like to appeal specifically to the Prime Minister that we are entering into the 21st Century and the state of

affairs is not satisfactory. Several million people live below the poverty line. Therefore, an all-out effort should be made to ensure that we are able to uplift the people who live below the poverty line. So, I would like to have intervention of the hon. Prime Minister in this regard.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, it is certainly true that the programme implementation agencies are still having a sort of bureaucratic hold on them. This issue was discussed by the last Lok Sabha in detail. It was decided that even the Members of Parliament should play a meaningful role. Instructions were issued in 1997. But from my experience, I would say that the instructions are not followed in letter and spirit. It will be the responsibility of this Government that the scheme is followed in letter and spirit.

I would urge upon the hon. Members that if they find in their areas that the officers concerned with Panchayati Raj system and the Zilla Parishad are not functioning properly, complaints against such individuals can also be given. But it should be the responsibility of the Government. We will see that the bureaucracy works accordingly.

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Members of Parliament are not associated with all these Programmes. MLAs are given full powers in it.

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Sir, in the reply that has been given about the areas of concern, I thought that at least Shri Ram Naik would read the next sentence. There is a mention about no coordination and also about rural youth, self-employment and development of women and children.

Then, on page 2 of the reply, it is stated that under the JRY, the share of women in the employment generated was only 16.59 per cent. We are 50 percent of the population. But the work is available only for 16.59 per cent. Is this the way to empower women? If not, may I know what steps are being thought about by the Government to improve this situation in this particular context?

SHRI RAM NAIK : I think, you are aware of the position and you also had been a Member of the Study Group that was constituted for this purpose. That is why, I have clearly said in my reply that it is an area of concern. I have not said, as the hon. Member Shri Wasnik tried to say, that I am satisfied or the Government is satisfied with the progress of the scheme. The Government is certainly not satisfied with the progress. That is why we have said that the share of women in employment generation was only 16.59 per cent.

If you refer to the first paragraph of the reply, I have mentioned about that area of concern and I quote:

"A very poor linkage of IRDP with training of TRYSEM and DWCRA".

DWCRA, as you know, was a scheme intended for giving benefits to the women. That is an area of concern.

and that is what we have said. I am saying that we will ensure that the scheme is effected properly. At any place if you find any fault with the operators, we will take your suggestion and act accordingly.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Minister has told that 320.37 million persons are living below poverty line. Sir, through you, I would like to say that people living in areas below poverty line are compelled to migrate to other parts of the country every year due to non-availability of work. I would like to know whether the government propose to formulate any special programme to check such migration? Besides, I would like to know

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please ask your supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : I am asking the supplementary. Primitive tribals of Madhya Pradesh like Kamar, Gunjhiya, Bega, Korba, Korbu and Beerhor are living below poverty line and due to lack of employment opportunities even today they live in utter poverty and face starvation. Has any special programme been formulated for them?

SHRI RAM NAIK : In response to the issue raised by the hon. Member, I would like to say that the Employment Assurance Scheme has been launched for this purpose and efforts are being made to provide employment for 100 days. As I have mentioned in the reply given to other questions that if people are ready to work and they are not getting it, they can send their proposals through District Council or Panchayat Committees. Then it could be done.

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : PMRY had been a total failure in Madhya Pradesh and millions of people are migrating from Chhatisgarh every year.

[English]

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very important question. Firstly, I would like to request the Government to review this programme. There are so many programmes that we do not even remember them when we go for the meetings. Our Government did review these programmes during our regime but we could not shorten the number of programmes.

The second part of my question is that the State Governments construct the *Kutcha* roads, because rural roads are one of the outcomes of the JRY and rural roads are a prime requirement in this country. If rural connectivity takes place then further development of the country will certainly take place. Now, is the Central Government ready to accept the suggestion that if the State Governments construct a *Kutcha* road then the Central Government would

convert it into a cement or a *Pucca* or a bitumen road by providing funds from the Centre? It should be as a matter of general policy for the whole country that if a State Government constructs a rural road from out of their funds then the Central Government would get it converted into a *Pucca* road. By this process, rural connectivity would pick up faster and your utility of funds, which my colleague just now said was Rs. 2,700 crore, could be utilised for better purposes. Is the Government ready to accept this suggestion?

SHRI RAM NAIK : We are ready to accept this suggestion. But I must say that when the JRY was evaluated it was found that most of the provisions in the JRY was utilised for constructing our village roads. Now, these provisions are made from the Central grant. So, further improvement can be done in the JRY.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : You make it a policy.

SHRI RAM NAIK : On the second part of your question about the review of the schemes, I would like to submit that there are a plethora of different schemes and we find it difficult to remember them. So, if, we at our level, tend to forget them, then at the administrative level it becomes more difficult. But we would certainly review the schemes where these could be integrated in a proper way. I also must state that the Finance Minister in his Budget speech has indicated that the Government would integrate such schemes.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to the question, hon. Minister has stated that as per the latest figures of 1993-94, 320.37 million people are living below poverty line. It is 1998-99 now and if figures of 1993-94 are considered latest, then what are the old figures, the Government should consider this matter seriously. Why the latest figures are not available? Main reason behind it is that Union Government spends money on conducting such survey but it does not have proper control on state Governments and as a result thereof the whole money is wasted. For example the funds allotted for Indira Awas Yojana, Jawahar Rojgar Yojana and Employment Assurance Scheme are being wasted. This amount runs into crores of rupees but actually not even five per cent is being utilised properly. The people living below poverty line are not at all benefitted by it.

A provision has been made under Indira Awas Yojana that houses should be constructed for people living below poverty line. So far as the position of this scheme in my constituency is concerned, I may tell you that persons already having *pucca* houses are getting houses under this scheme and not the poor people living below poverty line. The same may be the situation in other areas also.

The second point is that the role of MPs is negligible in executing any scheme for which Union Government provide funds(Interruptions) State Governments being the executing authority for these schemes are responsible to MLAs. They pay no heed to suggestions or recommendations made by MPs. I would like to know whether the Government

will issue a white paper on it stating the amount of funds allocated by the centre to states and how much money out of it is meant for SCs, STs and weaker sections of society.

[Translation]

How much of it is actually utilised? Is it even utilised or not? The funds provided by the Union Government are given under the custody of the Collectors and M.Ps have no say in this regard. Hence my submission is that the M.Ps. should be given due recognition, they should also be given certain powers and their recommendations should also be considered (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as for the Hon'ble Member's contention about furnishing latest figures and that these are the figures pertaining to the year 1993-94, it is true that these are the figures for the year 1993-94. Statistical survey is held after five years just as the Census survey is held only after ten years. The Statistical survey is going to be held in 1998-99 and we will be able to gather the latest information on that basis. As for the issue raised about the poor, it takes some time to collect all such data at national level and analyse it and furthermore, we are going to conduct a survey in 1998-99. I have already stated in this context that keeping in view the role of the M.Ps. and taking into account the complaints made by Hon'ble Members, whatever improvements are required, to be made, will be made after the Hon'ble Prime Minister holds a meeting with all the leaders and discusses it with them ... (Interruptions)

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is indeed quite an interesting experience that now after coming into power, the same complaints are being repeated before us as we used to make in this House while sitting in the Opposition benches (Interruptions) All the complaints made are genuine complaints. All of us have experienced such problems. We have been raising this issue for years together but still have not been able to make the situation favourable in this regard. I feel that there is a need to take concrete steps in this regard. This matter does not pertain solely to all the parties or any particular party and it is not a question of the Government or the Opposition. So long as the representatives of the people do not have any say with regard to the manner of utilisation of funds released by the Union Government and so long as the Members of Parliament are not given the powers to supervise it, either the funds will not be properly utilised or they will not be utilised at all.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : The funds are not utilised at all.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : I agree with your suggestion and I will be holding an all party meeting very soon and such a policy will be laid down after seeking the suggestions of all so that the Members of the Parliament and the representatives of the people are able to participate

actively in case of decentralisation of power. I do admit that the funds released by the Union Government under MPLADS....

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : You had also signed it.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : This money is sent directly to the District Officer. We submit our proposals to the District Officer and thereafter the representatives of the people do not have any say in the development work or implementation thereof. The Members of Legislative Assemblies are not involved either. Such is the situation in the villages and it will have to be changed. A provision will have to be made to involve the Members of Parliament in a proper manner.

As for the data, Shri Paswan has raised the matter of old data being furnished. The latest data available with the new Government is being furnished.

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully endorse the views expressed by Shri Mukul Wasnik regarding decentralisation of power.

MR. SPEAKER : Ask your pointed supplementary, please.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Sir, the area of jurisdiction of a Zilla Panchayat is same as that of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). The DRDA's power is totally confined to the rural sector. So, there is no need of such a DRDA. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the powers conferred upon the DRDA will be transferred to Zilla Panchayat which is having the same jurisdiction.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, we passed a constitutional Amendment in this regard and it was converted into an Act. Whatever decisions we take now will have to be in consonance with the Constitutional (Amendment) Act which we passed, under which we gave more powers to Gram Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat and Taluka Panchayat. We will have to examine it from that angle. As the hon. Prime Minister has assured, when we consider all these issues, this issue also will be taken into consideration (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will come to you.

..... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to tell the Hon'ble Minister that the funds are released by the Union Government and the State

Government is the implementing agency and I would especially like to raise the matter pertaining to Bihar and the Secretary in the Department of Rural Development, Shri N.C. Saxena had also written thrice to the Chief Secretary of Bihar and the Government of Bihar and the Government of India that all the funds being released by the Union Government, whether they are being released under the Employment Assurance Scheme, Indira Awas Yojana or Jawahar Rojgar Yojana are ultimately being plundered in Bihar and not even five per cent work is being done in Bihar.

Through you, I would like to know from the Government as to whether the Union Government will take any action with regard to looting of public money and the financial irregularities being committed in Bihar. Besides, in case of the funds being released by the Union Government and I am not talking about the entire country, but whether the Government propose to constitute District level implementation Committees under the chairmanship of the Members of Parliament to supervise the utilisation of funds in Bihar.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I have stated in my reply that we keep on evaluating the implementation of this scheme. Whatever the Hon'ble Member has stated about Bihar is broadly well-known but we will definitely ensure that whatever evaluation has to be made in case of funds released for the year 1997-98, and it has to be carried out in all the states of the country separately. However we will undertake the evaluation work in Bihar first so as to find out the actual state of affairs there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have called Shri Mohan Singh.

..... (Interruptions)

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Two questions are being covered in an hour's time and I have been affected. My right is being affected (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you a chance.

..... (Interruptions)

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Only two questions are covered in an hour's time. The two questions have taken the whole time (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please allow him to speak.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : This is most unfortunate (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Do not waste the time of the House.

..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have called Shri Mohan Singh.

..... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the number of people under the poverty line has risen by 12 per cent in 1994 as compared to 1990 figures, the reason being that the State Government deducts as administrative expenses about 18 to 30 per cent of the funds allocated by the Union Government. Another reason is that whereas the expenditure should be incurred as daily payment for providing work to those under poverty line, the work is instead handed over to the contractors and thus the money is being looted by the mafia and the administration. Will the Union Government try to ensure that the objectives with which the scheme was started, are met. The money reaches the poor; they are given work and work is not handed over to contractors. Apart from this, the vigilance Department of the Central Government should look into it and give an assurance that all this work is done directly by the poor and not through the contractors.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Member's contention that the percentage of people living below poverty line has increased by 12% in the past five years, is not correct. For your information, I have got figures of planning and statistical organisation. According to those figures, what you had said is not correct. I would like to tell you that in 1993, 44% and in 1987-88, 49% of people were living below poverty line. But at present 35.96 i.e. 36% of people are living below poverty line. You have said that it is increasing but I would like to say that it is not increasing rather it is going down. Perhaps you would have seen old statistics which is not correct. On this issue an expert committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. Lakkarwala to determine the poverty line. I had given these figures according to the poverty line, determined by them. Old statistical figures have been revised because the source of information getting was not correct. Therefore, those figures were revised. These are the upto date figures.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Relation with China

*104. SHRI SURESH KURUP :
SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the stage at which efforts to improve relations with China stand at present ;

(b) whether any discussions are in progress between India and China on the outstanding issues; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :
(a) to (c) With a view to promoting mutual understanding