

some labour that will be entrusted to the Labour Ministry. You can table a separate question.

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY : They have already submitted a petition to the Petition Committee of Rajya Sabha. The Rajya Sabha's Petition Committee is there. The Minister should know it.

MR. SPEAKER : If he has any answer he can give it. If it is to be referred to Labour Ministry it will take time.

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY : Generally questions are sent to them. The Minister should be ready.

MR. SPEAKER : It is concerning Labour Ministry. You have to ask Labour Minister.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, they must consult beforehand because it is a collective responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER : I think you can collect the information and pass it on.

SHRI VIR SEN : That, I will do.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : Labour is always our interest. We look after labour. I don't have the exact figures in front of me; but, if I remember rightly, the labour that was working there was not an absolutely local labour; they have come from outside and have been working there. But we have taken steps to protect the labour and we have put aside Rs. 25 lakhs under the Rural Development and N.R.E.P. to help employment of workers.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : The question as it appears in the Question List is clear. There are no lime mines in the country, either lime-stone quarry or domomite quarry. The Minister has been very kind enough to give the answer. This particular thing, how to maintain the eco system of this particular area, has been debated in the last Parliament, in your presence, Mr. Speaker, several times. Has the Minister taken up the matter with Ministry of Labour that under Clause 4 of Mines and Minerals Regulation Act of 1964 the provisions can be enforced for

closure of the mines detrimental to eco system in that area ?

SHRI VIR SEN : Supreme Court has set up a High Power Committee. That Committee will be reporting and recommending what should be done. The Supreme Court will decide whether the mines will be closed or kept open.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Government can take over any mines whenever it likes in the interest of the public if mine-safety is not there, if there is environmental pollution which is detrimental to the people. The Mines and Minerals Regulation Act clearly says that the mines can be taken over.

SHRI VIR SEN : I think we can take any decision after the Supreme Court has come to a decision.

SHRI C.P.N. SINGH : Sir, this question of closure of these mines has been debated in Dehra Doon for a long time. Fortunately, it is not the Government, but the Supreme Court which came to the aid and the limestone mines were closed. What is happening is this. Certain roads are constantly springing up where the mining has been stopped. Under the 'head' of road, lime-stone is being removed illegally. Will the Government kindly look into this aspect also ?

SHRI VIR SEN : Yes, we can look into it.

Relaxation to Females in Government Jobs

***754. DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO :
SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY :**

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether female participation in jobs has considerably declined from 28 per cent in 1961 to 21 per cent in 1981;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to give some relaxations to female candidates as in the case of SC/ST in appointments in all the Government Departments; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Female work participation rates of 1961-Census and 1981-Census were 27.91% and 19.76% respectively. The lower percentage in 1981-Census was not due to actual decline in the female work participation but because of very liberal definition of "worker" adopted in 1961-Census. A person having regular employment in trade, profession, service or business was treated as a worker if he was employed even for one day during the 15 days preceding the date of Census enumeration. A house-wife who was generally engaged in household duties but if she engaged herself in any economic activity regardless of the period during which she worked, was also considered as a worker. In 1981-Census, however, main worker was one who had worked for more than 183 days in a year preceding the date of enumeration. This criterion was far more vigorous than the criterion adopted in 1961-Census.

For purposes of appointment to Group 'C' and Group 'D' posts under the Central Government filled by direct recruitment, the upper age limit in the case of widows, divorced women and women judicially separated from their husbands but are not remarried is relaxable upto the age of 35 years (upto 40 years for members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes).

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : Sir, more than 50% population of this country consists of women.

MR. SPEAKER : Are you referring to this percentage position in the country or in the Parliament ?

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : Sir, even this 27% or 19% as given in the statement is very less, far below our expectation. In Andhra Pradesh, the State Government has fixed 30% of the jobs for women. Will the hon. Minister kindly tell us whether the Central Government is going to adopt the same principle as that of the

State Government of Andhra Pradesh and what is the percentage of women's participation among the SC and ST quota ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : Sir, I am not aware as to what percentage of jobs the Government of Andhra Pradesh has reserved for women. But we went into this question and found that it would not be constitutionally valid to do so because it would mean discrimination on the ground of sex.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : I would like to know the percentage of women's participation in SC and ST quota.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : I do not have the figures of women employees in SC and ST.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : I would like to know women employees in SC and ST quota.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : Those figures are not readily available. I am trying to get even the percentage of women in Central services and other services. Actually, this work has not been completed. That way, I have the latest figures for I.A.S. For I.A.S. of 1983, it is 10.9% and for 1984, it is 11.2%.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI : I would like to ask the hon. Minister if Government would accord priority to women's education up to the primary level as a woman could be a good mother ?

MR. SPEAKER : Are you satisfied with that only ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : It is correct that the ratio of girls up to the Primary level of education is less and as the level of education goes up, many girls leave the educational institutions and that is why they do not get higher education.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI : Why do they leave ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : There are many reasons for that. In the rural

areas even the boys leave the school at an early stage. Keeping in view all this, it is the definite policy of Government that dropouts of the primary level should be reduced and to increase their ratio it is essential that women's education must be emphasised and that is the policy of Government.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Basudev Acharia also wants to contribute something.

[English]

SHRI BASUDEV ACHARIA : There is a growing unemployment among the women and the job opportunities for them are also declining. There was a debate also in regard to this very session. In view of this will the Government consider raising the age limit for entry in regard to Government jobs for female candidates ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : There are some constitutional problems in raising the age limit for women in general under the clause which says that there shall be no discrimination on the ground of sex. But we are looking into how we can do this and we will do something.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : The question which I wanted to ask has been raised by Basudev Acharia.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : I am glad that a male Member has asked this question and the Prime Minister has answered it. But I want to know another thing. In view of the fact that the participation by women in economic activity is still much less than participation by men, will the Government make it a special point to identify each areas of employment for women in which Government itself is concerned directly so that they are dealt with as a special target group. And what is done in regard to that should always be monitored and presented before the House because data is not very often available. What is happening in regard to this ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : For most posts under the Government, I

thought women were as qualified as men and that is what is really happening. As regards specific areas, for example in my Ministry, we have certain telephone exchanges which are manned only by women...(Interruptions). But I am not relating this to the functioning of our exchanges. I just wanted to give an instance how we are doing this.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI : I would like to add a word to that. The hon. Member has a very valid point and we are looking into this. Like I answered in the last question, we are trying to see how we can pay this matter special attention so that women can get much more opportunities to do better. But like the hon. Minister has said a little earlier, the basic question is of education and as the hon. Member is aware, one of the first steps we took after this Government took over was to make education free for women.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : Sir, I have seen specifically in Gujarat and Maharashtra that the number of woman workers in dropping down. One of the reasons is that you cannot employ female workers after the sun set ; for second and third shifts, the female workers are not available. In the Britannia Biscuits and pharmaceutical companies, they have given strict instructions that no lady worker should be recruited. The Government has given another facility to the lady workers, that is maternity benefits. All these benefits you have given to the lady workers. I appreciate that.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : That cannot be given to men.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : But taking advantage of this facility, the employers have given strict instructions as far as textile industries are concerned, not to employ female workers. In Maharashtra and Gujarat, the number of female workers last year has gone down by seventy-five per cent. I have got detailed figures. There are strict instructions not to employ female workers.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Did you make any contribution for creating such a situation ?

[English]

DR. DATTA SAMANT : As I said, in the textile mills, there are strict instructions that no female worker should be employed because of the shift difficulties, and because of the maternity benefits that they are supposed to extend to them. Employers are, therefore, wise enough not to employ female workers. I can give you hundred names of factories, where such instructions are given. They are in my union. Considering this, is Government taking any steps to instruct these employers to take positive measures and see that there should be so much employment for female workers? Or, to compensate, in either the government machinery or in other places are you going to reserve the number of lady workers, upto a particular percentage, say 40 or 50?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : The number of lady workers as well as their percentage in the total working force is increasing. I will give some figures. In 1962, the percentage was 10.9 in the organised sector. In 1984, the provisional figures say that it is 12.5 per cent. So, it is not correct to say that the number of women workers in the organised sector is decreasing. On the other hand it is raising.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI VIDYAWATI CHATURVEDI : I would like to express my thanks to the hon. Prime Minister that he is taking keen interest in the progress of women in every field. But the answer to the question shows that the strength of women in the services during 1961 to 1981 has gone down from 28 per cent to 21 per cent. It is a matter of great regret...

MR. SPEAKER : He has said that it has increased.

SHRIMATI VIDYAWATI CHATURVEDI : If it has increased, it is a matter for happiness.

MR. SPEAKER : You have reversed your reaction very soon.

SHRIMATI VIDYAWATI CHATURVEDI : But despite that there are many widows who do not get the protection in the

services which they should have got. Their spouses die but despite their being qualified, they do not get an opportunity to work. I do not want any quota or reservation for them, but I want this much that the women who are eligible and qualified must be given an opportunity in the services to work on a post for which they are eligible on a priority basis. Is the hon. Minister thinking of something on these lines and what steps is he contemplating in this direction?

[English]

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : In my question itself, I have replied and with your permission I will repeat it. For purposes of appointment to Group 'C' and 'D' posts under the Central Government filled by direct recruitment, the upper age limit in the case of widows divorced women and women judicially separated from the husbands but are not remarried is relaxable upto 35 years and upto 40 years for members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As regards getting the job of the husband after his death, we have definite rules in that respect, under what circumstances, the dependent of the deceased government employee gets the job and we act accordingly. There are certain rules whether the son should get it or as to how many sons are working, and things of that nature. We have rules and we want to implement them.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI VIDYAWATI CHATURVEDI : The rules are there, but these are not being followed.

[English]

Robot Technology

***755. SHRI S.L. MURMU :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether robot technology has been developed indigenously or imported ;

(b) in what fields and at what place the robots are presently employed in the country ;

(c) whether the performance of the robot technology is satisfactory; and