

RAJYA SABHA

*** SUPPLEMENT**

TO

SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Friday, February 09, 2024/ Magha 20, 1945 (Saka)

GOVERNMENT BILLS - *Contd.*

- # (i) The Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024**
- # (ii) The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024**
- # (iii) The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI NITYANAND RAI), replying to the debate on the Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, said: This is a Bill to give rights to OBCs in the Panchayati polity and in municipal elections. When the Mandal Commission was formed again and its recommendations were brought here, the Congress, being in the opposition at that time, had strongly opposed it. More than 35 percent ministers from the OBC community were given portfolios in the cabinet and the OBC Commission was granted constitutional recognition. Under the All India Quota Scheme, provision for OBC reservation in MBBS and MD admissions was made. The OBC community is getting the facility of 27 percent reservation in admissions in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya and Sainik Schools. In the last 9 years, enrollment of OBC students has increased by more than 33 percent. A provision has been made to waive tuition fees of students from OBC families with income up to Rs. 1 lakh in IITs. Arrangements have been made to provide concessional finance to OBC entrepreneurs under the Venture Capital Fund. Arrangements have been made to provide full financial assistance to OBC students. Jammu and Kashmir Government has taken many steps for the welfare of OBCs. Direct recruitment and admission reservation policy is also strictly followed in the educational institutions of Jammu and Kashmir. This policy ensures that OBCs get fair representation in both employment opportunities and educational institutions. In this, four percent reservation has also been given to the hill community and to the residents of villages near the international border. With the abrogation of Article 370, Kashmir has not only joined the national mainstream, but its development has also gained momentum. Article 370 was an obstacle and a disgrace to the unity and integrity of this country. Compliance and accountability have been ensured in IT, technology, online services in Jammu and Kashmir. For industrial development, local products have been promoted in such a way

***This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.**

Discussed together.

that due to many initiatives, production has increased, and tourism has also increased. 3,362 proposals have been received for industrial sector in Jammu and Kashmir and investment proposal worth Rs. 90,182 crores have been received. The Government has zero tolerance against terrorism. After the removal of Article 370, security measures have been greatly strengthened to maintain peace and stability in Jammu and Kashmir. This is the reason why there has been unprecedented improvement in the security scenario in Jammu and Kashmir. Stone pelting and organized strikes have become a thing of the past there. From 2004 to 2010, the number of civilians injured by stone pelting was 6,235, which has now reduced to zero, that is, there has been a 100 percent reduction.

Till now there was no reservation in Panchayati Raj system and election of public representatives in Municipal Corporation in Jammu and Kashmir, but today with this provision there will be reservation. There is a provision of 30 percent reservation for women. Apart from this, according to the Constitution, the responsibility to conduct municipal elections should rest with the State Election Commissioner, whereas in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, this right is with the Chief Electoral Officer. But with this amendment, this right has been given to the State Election Commissioner. There is a provision in the Constitution that the procedure for removing the State Election Commissioner from the post is similar to the procedure prescribed for a High Court judge, whereas in Jammu and Kashmir this power rests with the Lieutenant Governor. Through this amendment it will be made in accordance with the Constitution. The government is committed to provide justice to Other Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR), replying to the debate on the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, said: This bill has been brought to include the Valmiki community in the list of Scheduled Castes of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. In today's discussion, members of both the sides participated in large numbers and expressed their views. The welfare schemes made for the welfare of the Scheduled Caste category in the last nine years under the able guidance of the Prime Minister of the country have brought about a huge change in the social, economic, educational conditions of the Scheduled Caste category. With the passing of this bill today, the people of Valmiki community will get the benefits of all the schemes not only of the state government but also of the central government. Our brothers from the Scheduled Caste category have a huge contribution in this journey of development of India. From cleanliness to security, in every sphere of social life, Scheduled Caste people have contributed in taking the resolutions of making India a developed nation with their hard work, faith and strong will. It is requested do not protest just for the sake of protesting. The good work of the government should also be appreciated; this is a hallmark of democracy.

The government takes initiative to provide justice to the most deprived people of the society, for which both the ruling party and the opposition present their views in democracy. Supporting this bill to include the Balmiki community in the list of Scheduled Castes of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir gives even more energy and enthusiasm to our working abilities. Dr. Ashok Kumar Mittal understood the plight of our Balmiki community brothers of Jammu and Kashmir and has supported this amendment bill. The Valmiki community of the Dalit class in Jammu and Kashmir was deprived of the benefits of government schemes only because of the difference in the spelling of 'B' and 'V'. The Valmiki community had been struggling for more than 60 years and was waiting to get equal rights like other communities. After the removal of Article 370 in Jammu and

Kashmir, there is now a hope in the minds of the people of this community that they will get equal rights, new opportunities and new employment opportunities will also be available. Due to lack of permanent certificate, people of Valmiki community were not able to buy property there and students of Balmiki community were not able to get admission in medical, engineering and technical courses of the state government colleges there. People of Valmiki community were able to vote in the Lok Sabha, but they did not get the right to vote in the Legislative Assembly elections. Sanitation workers do the work of cleanliness even during the toughest conditions. Our Valmiki community brothers have never lagged behind in contributing towards cleanliness in Jammu and Kashmir. After passing this bill, they will get many rights in future, they will get benefits of many schemes and they will be socially, economically and educationally empowered. They will get the benefit of Prime Minister's Aawas Yojana, reservation in Legislative Assembly elections and Panchayati Raj institutions and municipalities as well as pre-matric and post-matric scholarships. In addition they will get the benefit of National Overseas Scholarships as well as the benefit of scholarship for higher education. The Prime Minister of the country has taken the initiative to give respect to Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar by making his Panchteerth..

Among these, the first place is his birthplace 'Mau', the second place is 'Shiksha Bhoomi' located in London, the third place is 'Diksha Bhoomi' of Nagpur, the fourth place is 26 Alipore Road in Delhi and the fifth place is 'Chaitya Bhoomi' where his memorials have been constructed. Initiatives were taken to economically empower the Scheduled Caste class through 'Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana', 'Svanidhi' and 'Venture Capital Fund'. Arrangements for mechanized cleaning were made under 'Namaste Scheme' in 'National Safai Karmachari Finance and Development Corporation'. The budgetary allocation of our Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has increased by Rs 6,782.2 crore in 2023-24, which is approximately 111.82 percent more than that of 2013-14. Similarly, the schemes for the Scheduled Caste category have increased by Rs 5,430 crore. Scholarship schemes for Scheduled Caste students has been increased by 183.63 percent in 2023-24. Similarly, post-matric and pre-matric scholarship was brought into DBT mode through which the money will go directly into the student's account. After 2013-14, a new scheme called 'Top Class Education' for Scheduled Castes has been added. Efforts have been made for the welfare, upliftment of Scheduled Castes and their social, economic and educational empowerment. Due to these efforts, the people of 'Balmiki' community of Jammu and Kashmir, who were deprived of them till now, will get the benefits of all these schemes. Whether it is scholarship or their economic empowerment, they will get the benefits of all these schemes. Jawahar Sarkar ji had said one thing that our brothers who get converted to Christianity and Islam should be considered for awarding them Scheduled Caste status. The list of Scheduled Castes is specified by President's Order which *inter alia* states that no person who professes any religion other than Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste.

Neeraj Dangi ji had said one more thing. He had talked about atrocities. Whenever there was an adverse order on reservation by the court, our government's stand on it has always been in the interest of these classes. The government did not allow the interests of the Scheduled Castes to be ignored anywhere. The 81st, 82nd and 85th amendments to the Constitution are examples of this. He had talked about manual scavenging. I want to tell him that the practice of manual scavenging has completely abolished and they are being shifted to the mechanized system through the government's 'Namaste' scheme.

This bill is going to protect the interests of the 'Balmiki' community of Jammu and Kashmir, who have been struggling for years for the hope of justice. Therefore, I request you to pass it unanimously.

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ARJUN MUNDA), replying to the debate on the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Bill, 2024, said: These three bills were presented keeping in mind the local bodies of Jammu and Kashmir, backward classes, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

After the abolition of Article 370, it is being ensured through these three bills that all the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir get justice. Today, the draft of this bill has been presented in the House so that all these communities get a chance to move ahead with their constitutional rights. It is being ensured that this law is implemented there. Earlier, when such laws were enacted for the country in the Parliament, it was mentioned therein, that the Act would be applicable in the entire country except Jammu and Kashmir. But now when a law is being enacted in this country, this law will be applicable from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. The entire population will come along with the people of Gaddi, Bakarwal and Gujjar communities belonging to the Scheduled Tribe category residing there. Without making a compromise with the reservation available to them in education and jobs, they will be additional reservation. This bill is ensuring that no one's reservation is harmed.

For a long time, the people there did not get political reservation. Political reservation will be ensured after this bill is passed. Similarly, the Acts that we have enacted till now, especially the Acts of the Tribal Ministry, the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, will now be applicable in Jammu and Kashmir also. The local people there will get community forest rights. Along with this, individual rights will also be available to them. Teachers are being appointed to teach in Eklavya Model Residential Schools across the country. On the coming 12th, the Honorable Prime Minister will provide 10 thousand appointment letters for the Eklavya Model Residential Schools opened for tribal students. Today the enrollment of children of tribal community has increased by more than 65 percent.

At the same time, continuous efforts are being made to find out how this community can move forward with self-respect and how the community of the country which is backward today can come forward to the front line. Today we can proudly say that the woman President of this country belongs to the tribal community. The country has resolved to celebrate the birthday of Lord Birsa Munda as *Gaurav Diwas*. Today there is a fear-free environment in Jammu and Kashmir. This work is being done to ensure that justice is provided to all tribes, scheduled castes, backward classes in Kashmir. Therefore, by passing such a bill unanimously, rising above the parties and opposition, it should be ensured that no part of the country, no society, no class is left behind. With these words I request all of you to pass this bill.

The motions for consideration of the bills were adopted.

Clauses etc. were adopted.

The Bills were passed.

(iv) The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL,

PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY; AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH), moving the motion for consideration of the Bill, said: The Bill has already been passed in the Lower House. We had an extensive discussion and it received support across the lines and it has now come to the Upper House. This legislation is the first of its kind in the history of Indian Parliament, because this legislation seeks to address a very recent phenomenon. This Bill essentially deals with those who manipulate the examinations, be those for the selection examination for recruitment of Government jobs or be those for the competitive examinations for higher education. But the *bona fide* candidate or the student or the job aspirant has been kept out of the purview of this Bill. This is only meant to serve as a deterrent against those who tend to cause injustice in the competitive processes and for them, as of now, we did not have a specific law in place. Time and again we have been facing such issues, we had three or four such scams in Rajasthan in the last three years. We had the police scam, we had the teacher's selection scam, and then we had a series of scams from West Bengal. So, there have been occasions when this has not only led to loss of valuable merit, but it has also caused huge amount of disillusionment, frustration, disenchantment among the young students and their parents. She left a note, 'Mummy, Papa, please forgive me. I cannot do it. I am the worst daughter.' None of us would ever wish that any of our children would have to face such a fate. This Bill, in a single sentence, is dedicated to the youth of this country, to the students of the country and to the young job aspirants of this country whom we hail as the builders of India.

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH: I fundamentally support the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024. In the last few years, the examinations have become a big business rather than being fair. Paper leaks and tampering are done in online examinations. It has become a medium of huge corruption. Education is a subject of the concurrent list. The biggest scam among the states has happened in Vyapam in Madhya Pradesh. Those who recruited children by paying money were sent to jail. Those who recruited illegally by taking money are still out of jail. We do not have sufficient number of computers etc. to conduct online examinations. One question paper cannot be conducted in a single day. The examination is conducted on the basis of different questions on different days. Therefore online examination has become a huge cause of corruption. Blacklisted companies get contracts in other states. Such business is being done openly. I request that online exams be stopped in all examinations. Exams should be offline. Sir, I have some amendments to this Bill. The First amendment I have in clause 1(2), page number one 1-2 is that its scope will extend to the commission recruitment institutes of the Centre, States and Union Territories. The Second amendment is regarding the fourth line of clause 10(2) page no. 6 that the company, which is found guilty in this, should be banned not only for four years but for life. The Third amendment is that after the word *Examination Authority*, the words *Commission* and *Selection Board* should also be added. My last amendment is regarding clause 11, page 6. In that, Sub-clause 11(3) should be added this mentions that if a scam in the examination is proved, the examination should be cancelled immediately. Along with this, the culprits should also be punished and the time limit for the second examination should be fixed immediately. Also, this is a Concurrent Subject so, if there is a demand from the states, then either they themselves should bring such a law in their state or since you can be empowered, you should be authorized to implement this law.

SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Sir, from paper leaks to corrupt examinations, it does not happen only in government recruitment examinations but there is a sequence to

it. Recently *12th Fail* movie has been released. This is a real life story. 12th Fail student becomes an IRS officer. There was complete copying and everyone was failing. When I was the Education Minister, Dinesh Sharma was the Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister of Uttar Pradesh. He completely eliminated copying. He strictly enforced the provisions of the law. All the children who copied got scared. 60 lakh applications were received for the examination, but only 49 lakh children sat for the examination. Later everyone came to know that one can pass only by studying. Earlier there was no technology. There was only paper. Students used and throw it away. Now technology has come. Now they listen answers by putting a small mic in ears and the gangs sit outside. As soon as the gangs outside receive the question paper they start sending answers immediately. There are irregularities in the recruitment examinations of state services. Exams have to be cancelled. Due to non-examination a generation of students and youth suffers. We constituted the National Testing Agency (NTA) for the Sanctity of examinations. Such provisions have been made that electronic gadgets cannot be tampered with. Society which does not worship merit cannot progress. The society should teach students to work hard from school itself. Papers are being leaked in all the states. People are being arrested. People are taking money. Modi ji has always insisted on good education to nurture good citizens.

SHRI ABIR RANJAN BISWAS: Sir, I rise to speak in support of the *Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024*. This bill seeks to prevent paper leaks and malpractices in NEET, JEE and other entrance examinations. In this bill, apart from UPSC, SSC, Railway recruitment examinations, banking and government departmental examinations, all the online examinations conducted by the National Testing Agency are also included which is a very good thing. We are all against unfair means as it is against the welfare of the country and also harms the future of youth. The problem of use of unfair means in examinations has become very prevalent nowadays. Recently, the state of Bengal has used technology to work towards eliminating such malpractices which has proven effective. This is a positive example from my state and I believe that other states and the central government will also use technology in innovative ways for a better future. Sir, merely passing the Bill and making a new law will not solve this problem. The real challenge lies in its implementation for which we will have to change the entire ecosystem and our way of thinking. A recent report has revealed that these leaks have affected the future of around 1.5 crore candidates. When something like this happens, years of hard work of the candidates go waste and some students even commit suicide. All this is happening at a time when the country is already facing an unprecedented job crisis. On one hand, unemployment is increasing, while on the other hand, there are many vacancies in government departments. Therefore, in order of priorities we must also address the more serious problem of unemployment in this country.

SHRI P. WILSON: Sir, my question is why should there be an entrance exam for professional courses when students are already qualified through board exams? Competitive examinations can be conducted for recruitment but as far as professional courses are concerned, there is no need to conduct entrance examinations. Coaching centers under the guise of exams like NEET have become an emerging business that cashes in on students' dreams of becoming doctors which only rich people can afford. It has been made impossible for SC, ST and OBC students to pursue medical education. Some students commit suicide due to despair and the feeling that their dream of becoming a doctor will never be fulfilled. I would like to bring to your kind notice that the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly has passed the Anti-NEET Bill and the Bill was reserved for the assent of the Honorable President in February, 2022, the future of which is still

unknown. I had asked about the status of the Anti-NEET Bill under a Parliamentary Question No. 405 on February 6, 2024, to which no response was given from the Hon'ble Minister. This is a violation of Rule 12 of Procedure and Conduct of Business of Rajya Sabha. It is a very important Bill. It affects the students across the country. I would suggest that the words 'monetary or wrongful gain' in Clause 3 of the bill should be removed. So far as Clause 4 is concerned, the language employed is very vague. Instead, word like 'commission of any such unfair means' would be more appropriate. Regarding Clause 12, the power of the Central Government is not there to refer the matter to a Central investigating agency. The power is only vested with the State. The subject 'law and order' belongs to the State List. Therefore, they cannot say that they will refer it to the Central agencies.

SHRI SANDEEP KUMAR PATHAK: This Bill is being discussed on the last day of the last session of this term, which shows that the lackadaisical approach of the government on this subject. I would like to tell you that 70 papers have been leaked in the last seven years. In this, the future of about 1.5 crore to 2 crore children was at stake and a deal was done to leak the papers of these candidates. Let me make it clear to everyone that this paper leak is not a technical error, instead it is a big racket through which it is carried out. There are politicians involved in it, there are powerful businessmen and many other people who are involved in making it a business. We will have to think about the ways to stop theft and the ways to protect the future of the children.

SHRI MUJIBULLAH KHAN: The widespread irregularities are seen in the competitive examinations conducted for various posts in the country. Due to this, unqualified candidates get selected and qualified people do not get employment or admission. This tendency has always been considered bad in our society. But, due to decline in moral values, the ability to struggle among the students has reduced. Despite various laws in the country, people find new ways to commit fraud. The present Bill has been brought to curb this evil practice. This will be useful for our children and the future of this country. Hence, I support this Bill.

SHRI AYODHYA RAMI REDDY ALLA: I support the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024. It represents a crucial step towards ensuring integrity and fairness in public examinations across India. This Bill extends to a various important examinations conducted by UPSC, SSC, RRB, NTA, IBPS and other Central Government Departments. It paves the way for standardization of measures and protocols to prevent the usage of unfair means. It aims to promote the integration of technology and capacity building. It will use artificial intelligence for fool-proof digital surveillance system. It will also strengthen the overall cyber security apparatus. The issues like data analysis and evaluation will be taken care of in a better way. It aims to make the examinations affordable and accessible for maximum people across the country. The invigilators and administrators also will be made aware of proper procedures and protocols. Hence, this Bill, through new training protocols and certifications, will make the system more productive and transparent. To ensure that these training programmes are adhered to, certification from these programmes could be made mandatory for all individuals wishing to serve as invigilators. While technology has been a boon, its ever-changing nature also means new innovating ways of utilizing technology to engage in malpractices are always coming up. A simulation of exam scenarios could also be provided to invigilators with necessary experience, which is required to administer the actual exam.

DR. V. SIVADASAN: The words in the Bill say that the Central Government shall have power to refer the investigation to any Central investigation agency. This legislation will promote another type of raids. This is the power grab of the Central Government. Prevention of malpractices is good. You should conduct discussions with the State Governments. Don't grab the power of the States. This Bill will affect the entire educational sector and the federal structure of the nation.

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI: Most of the Members said that 'Education' was a State subject earlier and was encroached upon by the Central Government. In the Emergency period, former Prime Minister of India, took it from the State List to the Concurrent List. If they are so sincere, let them make efforts to support bringing 'Education' once again in the State List. NEET examination was also introduced by the UPA Government in 2010. Now they are blaming this Government. They are giving wrong information to the House.

DR. AMEE YAJNIK: The last ten years have seen a spate of paper leaks that have happened. Almost about 1.5 crore students have suffered. When the present Government rides on that wave of 'Digital India' - it should have made corresponding arrangements and platforms to see that these menaces are curbed. The Bill is very exhaustive. But for the investigation required for these kinds of unfair practices we need specialized investigative personnel who would look into these specialized investigations. It is a very specialized offence and that is why we are unable to nab these offenders. This very detailed investigation required is in the digital space. The digital space means that you are talking about having surveillance cameras in the examination centres. You need to have certain kind of very specialized service providers for that. This is a very unique and specific arena where an investigation of a very specific kind is needed. I am pained to see that the youngsters and the students go to the centres and suddenly find that the examination is cancelled because of the paper leak. It is strange to see it happen in the age of Digital India. We cannot promise our youngsters a modern India, if we do not have particular set-ups for digital offence and have a regulator and a mechanism in place. I think these aspects are missing in the Bill. Also, we need to have more stakeholders come to the meetings when drafting the rules for every State. As this is a Central legislation and an observation has been made that the States may adopt this Bill at the State level and make their own Bills. Also, keeping in view of the backlog of cases in the judicial system, special courts and a timeline for the investigation and the trial should also be provided. Otherwise, cases will remain pending, and no benefit would be gained. Here the ultimate goal is not to punish the offender but to make our youth feel protected that their papers will go on as per the rules and norms. Also, I would like to know whether examination centres will have surveillance cameras etc. and very stringent monitoring systems for the digital space. The Bill is a very laudable step in curbing the menace of paper leaks, I am glad that the candidates are not in its purview. I would request the hon'ble Minister to plug the loopholes which are there in the Bill.

DR. DINESH SHARMA: This Bill has been introduced after careful examination and detailed assessment and all previous drafts of this nature are included in it. The Bill has been brought with the intention of removing the apprehensions of paper leaks and cheating in examinations like UPSC, SSC, NEET, JEE, CUET. It includes 15 activities. There is a provision for fine as well as attachment and confiscation of property of defaulters. Many things have been included in the Bill, like leaking the question paper of the examination in a planned and organized manner or indulging in the activities of leaking the question paper with malicious intent or giving away the solutions of the questions or helping the candidates in any way in writing the answers during the examination or bringing changes in the evaluation of the answer sheet, without any authority. The Bill also

has a provision for strict punishment for any deliberate tampering with technology related to examinations, such as computers or networks. Threatening or pressurizing any person or institution in conducting the examination has also been made punishable. If the seating arrangement of the candidates or the examination centre is changed with the intention of rigging the examination, then also there is a provision of punishment. I think that people using fake tactics will definitely be discouraged by this. Just now an Hon'ble member was saying that this would encroach on the rights of the States. This is not encroachment at all. This is a Central law, and it has provisions for action against people involved in organized crime, mafia and collusion. Joint examinations as well as entrance examinations of Central universities will also come under the purview of this law. Officers below the rank of Deputy Superintendent or Assistant Commissioner of Police will not be competent to investigate crimes under this law. It has been brought keeping in view the increasing number of such incidents across the country. Once this Bill becomes law, it will be a model for the States. If they want, they may adopt it as per their discretion. I support this Bill.

SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P: It is a matter of deep concern that cases of frauds related to exams are on a rise in the country. So, this is a welcome step. But, it should not be a problem to the States. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, it is clearly mentioned that the Bill shall serve as a model draft for States. That part is okay because this time Centre did not try to snatch away the rights of the States. We have every right to formulate rules and regulations related to the exams. But, in the name of investigation, it should not be a problem for the States. Clause 2 is a worrying point. Anytime any Central agency can intervene in this matter and that will be a problem for the States. It should be taken into account. My worry is that we are living in a world of Artificial Intelligence and Chat GPT. So, it should be taken into account while dealing with exam-related frauds. Unemployment is on the rise. These types of cosmetic changes cannot solve the real issue of Indian youths and students.

DR. FAUZIA KHAN: I welcome the Bill aimed at curbing unfair practices in examinations. I emphasize the critical need to combat such unethical behaviour, not just in education but across all facets of life. However, I express a wish for a more comprehensive definition of 'public examinations', as integrity should be a cornerstone of education. Punitive measures alone won't suffice; we must delve into the root causes. I lament the declining moral values in society and the lack of focus on value education in schools, which are pivotal for instilling honesty and integrity. I want to highlight disproportionate penalties and ambiguous definitions in the Bill could lead to confusion. I also draw attention to the issue of plagiarism in research, urging its inclusion in the discussion.

The hon'ble Minister, replying to the debate, said: I emphasize our commitment to prioritizing sections of society, particularly the youth. Over the past decade, under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, significant strides have been made towards youth-centric reforms, particularly in the realm of transparent selection processes for government jobs and higher education institutions. One notable decision early in the Government's tenure was the abolition of the century-old rule mandating document attestation by a gazetted officer. The abolition of interviews in the recruitment process further underscored our commitment to fairness and meritocracy. We modernized recruitment processes, such as transitioning from paper-based exams to online platforms, to enhance transparency and expedite selection timelines. The introduction of Rozgar Mela, under the Prime Minister's vision, facilitated mass recruitment events, ensuring vacancies were filled promptly and transparently across the country. Now, with the introduction of the current Bill, we aim to further enhance the fairness and integrity of selection procedures, marking a historic

milestone in the Indian Parliament's legislative history. Our youth whom we call the architects of the new India of the next 20 years will determine the face of India in 2047. We have to reach that pedestal which we have envisaged for ourselves as Viksit Bharat. Each and every citizen of India will have to contribute as much as possible, depending on his might, his potential and his capabilities. We cannot allow any of the potentials of this collective nation getting squandered away. In the Global Innovation Index we were 81. Today, we have jumped 41 places and reached 40. In the bio-sector, we had just 50 StartUps. We are now having 6,000 StartUp. We are ranked one of the top five bio manufacturing countries of the world. We were almost one-and-a-half decades behind the other countries as far as technology is concerned! Television started in the USA in 1950s. Whereas, we got the first glimpse of TV somewhere in 1970. Same is the case with computer. Emergency is known for a series of amendments that were brought in. Congress took so many decisions which were reversed. Even the Lok Sabha term was increased to six years, which was again rolled back when Shri Morarjibhai came. Amongst those dubious decisions, this was one of them. It was a State List. The Government had visualised and planned that when it will frame rules it will have 'National Technical Committee with experts from all those domains. This is going to be a dynamic phenomenon. The issue of technological problems today may not be there tomorrow. It may be something else with the advent of Artificial Intelligence and other things. We need to have a Committee in place, a system in place which will help us in surveillance; keep us updating and also help us in creating uniformity.

We have kept the *bona fide* candidate out of the purview of the law, so that the message does not go that this new legislation is meant to harass the youths of this country. It is only meant to deter those who are playing with their future, and, thereby the future of the nation. I am sure the entire House will support this. This is one step towards that direction. It is a dynamic journey that we have started. It will move on from one level to the other.

The motion for consideration of the Bill was adopted.

Clauses etc. were adopted.

The Bill was passed.

P. C. MODY,
Secretary-General.

rssynop@sansad.nic.in