



Achyutananda Samanta

Member of Parliament, Biju Janata Dal (BJD), Kandhamal, Odisha

Parliamentary Performance Report

17th Lok Sabha, Session 1
(17th June 2019 – 31st August 2019)

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Personal Message to the Chief Minister

A big thank you, Shri Naveen Patnaikji, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha for giving me the opportunity to contest for the Lok Sabha election from Kandhamal, and to represent Biju Janata Dal in the Lok Sabha. It is a great honour for me. Earlier, you had given me the opportunity to become MP, Rajya Sabha.

Thank you for showing your interest and love for the people of Kandhamal and its all-round development. Thank you for your constant support towards me, and constant focus for the growth and development of Odisha as a whole. I am humbled by the faith you have shown in me, and will seek to repay this faith by trying my utmost to further Odisha's cause in Parliament, and give my best to develop the constituency of Kandhamal.

As a parliamentarian, it was a great experience and a learning process for me to hear the views of others representing the nation, and participating in debates on behalf of the party. This session has been a historical session in terms of productivity, the number of Bills passed, and I am happy to be a part of it. The BJD had a firm stance on all issues in Parliament, and contributed to the furtherance of this historic session. Also, a big thanks to the party leader in the Lok Sabha, Shri Pinaki Mishra- who gave all MPs, including first timers, equal opportunity to have their say on the floor of the House.

Thank you once again for this opportunity, and your trust and faith in me. I promise that I will give the best for Biju Janata Dal, Odisha and my constituency of Kandhamal. I will make this constituency as a model constituency by focusing on Education, Healthcare, Employment and Tourism for Phase-I of my work with your guidance and support.

Thanking you,

Sincerely,

Achyuta Samanta

Oath

The oath was taken in Lok Sabha on the 17th of June, 2019 in Odia language.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guUNsQFLZio>

Debates

Participated in Lok Sabha

17 July 2019: Demands for grants under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

29 July 2019: Discussion on National Medical Commission Bill, 2019

6 August 2019: Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2019

Details, summary and points of argument raised in each individual debate follow from the next page

No	Date	Bill Name and Topic	Summary / Points of Argument
1	17 July 2019	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for 2019-20	<p>Demands for grants under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports</p> <p>Participated in the discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for 2019-20, presented the stand on increasing budget allocation to Sports Infrastructure, promoting ICU (Identification of existing sports facilities in urban and rural areas, Consolidation of information on status and condition of sporting facilities and upgradation of sporting facilities) encouraging PPP and CSR and facilitating sportspersons' academic pursuits by encouraging both Government as well as Private Universities to create additional seats and scholarships for ace sportspersons for ensuring job opportunities as a backup after their retirement from sports or in case their career is cut short by injury or any other reasons.</p>
2	29 July 2019	National Medical Commission Bill, 2019	<p>Discussion on National Medical Commission Bill, 2019</p> <p>Expressed that the bill is a praiseworthy step and if passed, it will transform medical education in India. It will ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages as proposed by SDG 3 of UN. Suggested amendments on Fee structure and NEXT in this Bill. Whatever route the NMC takes, it is critical that its members are professionals of high integrity, something that is ensured in the current Bill.</p>

3	6 August 2019	Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2019	<p>Appreciated the welfare schemes and programmes explained in the bill which are transgender sensitive, non-stigmatising and non-discriminatory. Submitted few suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The definition of Transgender is prone to ambiguous and illiberal interpretation. A person with intersex variation may be satisfied with the gender assigned at time of birth, or can choose to be a transgender. To assume, all persons with intersex variation are transgender persons is absurd. It is important to add “choose to be” 2. The bill empowers the district magistrate to judge the “correctness” of the application and decide whether to issue the change in gender certificate but does not give guidelines on how this decision should be made. 3. The Transgender Bill does not mention any punishments for rape or sexual assault of transgender persons as according to Sections 375 and 376 of the Indian Penal Code. 4. National Council for Transgender Persons should have representation from Women and Child Ministry at Union and State level and ratification from the representative of Transgender in the Council. Their representation should be increased. 5. Rs. 1 crore is not sufficient for welfare provisions as earmarked by the bill. 6. Replacement of the word like rehabilitation with reintegration.
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Questions

Raised in question Hour

No.	Q.No.	Q.Type	Date	Ministry	Subject
1	5658	UNSTARRED	26.07.2019	TEXTILES	Protecting the Handloom Trade
2	5493	UNSTARRED	26.07.2019	ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE	Ban on Plastics
3	5346	UNSTARRED	25.07.2019	JAL SHAKTI	Irrigation in Kandhamal District
4	5186	UNSTARRED	24.07.2019	COMMUNICATIONS	Mobile Network in Eastern Ghats
5	422	STARRED	23.07.2019	FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING	Increasing Productivity of Dairy Animals
6	4700	UNSTARRED	22.07.2019	LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	Settlement of dues by ESIC to Empanelled Hospitals
7	393	STARRED	19.07.2019	HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE	Health Infrastructure in Tribal Areas
8	4210	UNSTARRED	18.07.2019	JAL SHAKTI	Drinking Water to Tribal Areas of Odisha
9	3997	UNSTARRED	17.07.2019	RAILWAYS	Khurda-Bolangir Railway Project

Details of Questions Framed and Answers received from the respective Ministries is enclosed as Appendix- I

Questions

Raised in zero Hour

Question 1 (27 June 2019)

Raised the issue of rail connectivity to Kandhamal, especially the connectivity between Phulbani and Purunakatak, which can be done by an annex thereby connecting it to Balanagir-Khurda line. Conveyed to the Minister of Railway that the Khurda-Balangir route is getting delayed which poses problems for the passengers as the only means of public transport is via buses. Additionally, requested the Honourable Minister to lay an annex from Purunakatak to Phulbani since it is vital to connect Phulbani as it is the district headquarters and also serves as a nerve center of the region.

Stressed on the importance of such connectivity since Kandhamal is one of the poorest districts in India and lack of railway connectivity hampers the development programmes. Requested the Government to take up the issue at the earliest as it will not only boost development but lead to economic prosperity and will ensure growth in tourism.

Question 2 (18 July 2019)

Conveyed to the House that the current List of Iconic Tourism Sites (List) does not contain any site from the state of Odisha. Odisha is home to both the majestic beauty of nature as well as ancient monuments. For this purpose, requested the Minister of Tourism to include at least two sites into the List of Iconic Tourism Sites. As Odisha is home to a diverse variety of destinations it is pertinent to have at least some tourism sites in Odisha to be included in the List. Tourism will have a positive effect on the state's revenue and therefore requested the Government to consider the inclusion of at least two sites as it will greatly benefit the region.

Question 3 (6 August 2019)

Raised the demand for setting up a Gandhi circuit to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhiji. Also, requested building Gandhi-Gopabandhu statue as a tribute to these two legendary leaders.

Letters to Ministers

The following letters have been written to different ministries by me during the first session of the 17th Lok Sabha

No.	Ref No	Date	Minister/ Ministry	Subject
1	ASLTR/2019/07/011	19.07.2019	Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of Tourism	Omission of Odisha from list of 17 Iconic Tourism Sites to be developed by the Government of India
2	ASLTR/2019/07/012	24.07.2019	Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Hon'ble Minister of Communications	Lack of Telecom Network Connectivity in Kandhamal District
3	ASLTR/2019/07/013	24.07.2019	Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Minister of Railways,	Lack of Rail Connectivity to Phulbani and Request for Annexe

Letters to the ministers are enclosed in [Appendix- II](#)

Kandhamal Constituency - Efforts and Roadmap

Health:

- Conducted a Health Camp in all the blocks of Kandhamal Parliamentary Constituency
- This health camp would be organised by doctors, nurses, paramedical staff from KIMS every month in all the blocks of Kandhamal simultaneously

Natural Calamities:

- Reviewed the flood situation in Kandhamal, especially Tumudibandha and Kantamal which was severely affected
- Interacted with ground staff and field workers to know about the roots of several chronic problems and sorted solutions related to the flood situation
- Extended helping hand to the family of the missing Dinabandhu Majhi and his son Purendra during heavy floods in Kandhamal and admission to the children at KISS, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- Reviewed and supervised the rescue and relief in Boudh district

Education:

Addressed the students of Subhas Chandra Bose school where 1500 students didn't have functioning toilets. Offered assistance to construct a toilet complex for students

Youth:

- Celebrated International Youth Day at Phulbani by addressing the youth and making them realize their potential in social service
- Announced arrangement of a Job Fair for the employment of the youth of Kandhamal
- Announced facilitation of Skill Development Programme for the Youth to increase the prospects of employment

Industry:

The MDH Company, a well-known spice making firm, will set up a spices and food processing unit in Kandhamal district

Infrastructure:

In talks for setting up small industrial units, including food processing to absorb the trained workforce

Bag of Happiness:

An Art of Giving Campaign celebrated all over Kandhamal, wherein people gifted stationery and education materials to the needy

Kanya Kiran:

In line with the PAREE Campaign, Kanya Kiran was organised in all the villages, Panchyats and blocks of Kandhamal Constituency for spreading the message of zero tolerance against gender based violence

Visits:

Kantamal, Boudh, Tumudibandha, Nayagarh, G. Udaygiri, Linepada, Kotagoda, , Tikabali, Nuagon, Khajuripada, Duteepada, Barikumpa

Meeting People:

Youth, Women, Gauda Samaj, Collector, PRI Officials, Party Karyakartas, Collectors, Sub Collectors, JE and so on

Inauguration:

Interstate cricket tournament in Phulbani and airconditioned gym at Phulbani Municipality

Future Roadmap:

The main issues associated with Kandhamal revolve around poor health infrastructure, lack of drinking water, tourism. These will be my focus for the constituents of Kandhamal, and with the support of the party and the Hon'ble Chief Minister, I will work hard to bring these into fruition.

Highlight Odisha In the Parliament

1. Discussion on Demands for Grants in Sports and Youth Affairs:

Under the leadership of Shri Naveen Patnaik ji, Odisha has become the Sports Capital of India. The state government has created world-class infrastructure to host many global events. Odisha is a template for nourishing the budding talents with exposure to the international players. Odisha Government gifted Dutee Chand 3 crores on winning 2 silver medals in Asian games 2018.

In order to promote hockey, the Odisha Government announced a five-year deal with Hockey India to sponsor of all the national teams – junior and senior, men and women. The state government has also signed memoranda of understandings (MoUs) with several leading industrialists to develop 10 world-class high-performance centres in various sports disciplines. The centres will provide international standard training facilities to potential sportspersons for the Olympics and other international events. For Example- Reliance Industries, JSW Group , Dalmia Bharat Group, Ahluwalia Group, Aditya Birla Group, Tata Group, Xavier - Emlyon Business School , Rungta Mines Ltd and Abhinav Futuristic Pvt Ltd will set up an advanced centres.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF), with the Odisha Sports Development and Promotion Company (OSDPC), will establish a high performance centre to boost football in the state. Earlier, the state government partnered with the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) and the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) for establishment of a highperformance academy for athletics. Bhubaneswar has earlier hosted Asian Junior Women's Rugby tournament, the 22nd Asian Athletics Championship, Men's Hockey World League. It had also hosted the 2014 Hockey Champions Trophy.

Odisha also owns the Kalinga Lancers franchise in the Hockey India League. Within two months of cyclone Fani causing damage to sports infrastructure in the Twin City of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, the state government put in all efforts to renovate stadiums and is now prepared to host international events. Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack which was also affected

in the cyclone is ready to host the 21st Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships from July 17 to 22.

Odisha is hailed as sports capital of the country after successfully hosting some of biggest sports events in the world. With impetus on encouraging sportspersons through incentives and high performance centres, Odisha is shaping future of sports in India.

2. National Medical Council Bill 2019

In my home state of Odisha, the Honourable Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik Ji has always given importance to medical care and has implemented many schemes to implement this, including i) Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana ii) KHUSHI iii) Mukhya Mantri Swasthya Seva Mission iv) Odisha Sahaya Scheme, Odisha Nidan Scheme, Sunnetra, Anmol Yojana, etc.

3. Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2019

My Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik has always empowered transgender persons. In Odisha, we have believed in the principle of Equity and Diversity. Many important political portfolios of Biju Janta Dal are handled by transgender persons. Ms. Meera Parida is the case in the point.

Apart from the discussions on the bills, all the questions during Question Hour and Zero Hour were dedicated to Odisha. The copies of the questions and the debates during the Zero Hour are separately attached.

Media Reports

An excerpt from Times of India dated 20.8.2019

“Tucked right inside Odisha’s belly, Kandhamal offers a picture of contrasts. Bountiful nature has gifted it with enchanting hills, meadows, waterfalls and streams, but hidden beneath the scenic beauty is one of mankind’s toughest battles against hunger.

For men, women and children alike, travelling to places hundreds of miles away, mostly for menial jobs, has been an age-old tradition. Those who cannot leave home make their ends meet mostly with the help of meagre government doles and whatever little they earn from farming, poultry and cattle rearing. “

Such abject poverty is one of the chief reasons for people’s alienation from education, the ultimate barrier between poverty and modern society,” remarks Achyuta Samanta, Kandhamal’s new representative in the Lok Sabha. “Without education, we cannot enhance our purchasing capacity (ability to lead a decent life),” says the educationist turned-politician, who runs two of India’s biggest institutions of learning — KISS and KIIT.

The principal challenge for this backward region, which now features in Niti Aayog’s list of aspirational districts, and the reason why development eludes it is perhaps lack of communication. There is no railway connectivity even today. “This is one of my dreams... to establish a rail link in my constituency. Though how soon I can do it, I do not know. Clearing the land for railway tracks is a huge task,” says Samanta.

Nearly 66% of the land area is under dense tropical vegetation. The tribals form nearly 75% of the population and live here in their natural heritage, depending largely on their land for survival. “My constituency is the poorest in the country,” says the MP. “But I want to bring about a sea-change in the district in the next five years,” he promises. A landscape that is riddled with Left wing insurgency — the dense forests and inaccessibility of the region have helped the rebels flourish — and ethnic clashes, though in the past, needs to address certain core issues to transform the region.

“The last 30 years I spent on social work in the region has helped me understand where the fault lies,” says Samanta. Skill development is one of the first steps towards making the economically-vulnerable families self-reliant. A centre has been set up to train tribal men and

women to make them job-ready. Small industrial units, including food processing, have been invited to absorb the trained workforce. “Giving the people subsidies like one rupee rice is not enough. They should be able to earn for themselves. Communication and computer skills are being given to children,” he says. “If I have to uplift the people, then I should first give them education and proper healthcare. I am trying to set up a medical college here. Talks are on,” he says.

Details of media reports are attached in Appendix- III

Appendix-I

Questions raised during Question Hour and Answers received from the respective Ministries.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3997
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.07.2019**

KHURDA-BOLANGIR RAILWAY PROJECT

3997. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there has been inordinate delay in completion of the railway project work from Khurda to Bolangir;**
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to accelerate the said project and if so, the proposed timeframe within which the project would be completed and if not, the reasons therefor;**
- (c) whether by an extension of the track by another 99 kms only, the entire district of Kandhamal would be connected with this railway network;**
- (d) if so, whether the Government is planning for the same and if so, the details and plan chalked out for this purpose; and**
- (e) whether the Government plans to introduce any special or express trains from the district headquarters in its route to Kolkata and Visakhapatnam to boost tourism and revenue and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (e) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3997 BY SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 17.07.2019 REGARDING KHURDA-BOLANGIR RAILWAY PROJECT.

(a) & (b): Khurda Road-Bolangir New Line was sanctioned in 1994-

95. The total length of the project is 289 Km. and the sanctioned cost of the project is ` 3798.80 crore. So far Khurda Road-Nayagarh Town (65.38 Km) and Bolangir-Bhainsapalli (14.58 km) sections of the project have been completed and commissioned. The expenditure incurred upto March 2019 is `1057.25 crore and an outlay of `350 crore has been given during 2019-20. The work of balance land acquisition has been taken up and construction work has also been taken up wherever land is available.

The timely completion of any Railway project depends on various factors like quick land acquisition by State Government, forest clearance by officials of forest department, shifting of infringing utilities (both underground and over ground), statutory clearances from various authorities, geological and topographical conditions of area, law and order situation in the area of project site, number of working months in a year for particular project site due to climatic considerations, cooperation and zeal of State Government for early completion of project, encountering unforeseen conditions like earthquake, flooding, excessive rains, strikes of labour, orders of Hon'ble Courts, situation and conditions of working agencies/contractors etc. All these factors affect the completion cost and time of the project. Since

complete land including forest clearances has not been handed over to Railway, no confirmed time-frame can be given for completion of project at this stage.

In the overall interest of the nation and to ensure that projects are completed in time without cost overrun, lot of monitoring is done in Railways at various level (field level, divisional level, zonal level and Board level) and regular meetings are held with the officials of State Government and concerned authorities to resolve the pending issues obstructing the progress of projects.

To ensure that projects are completed even before time, Railway has adopted the concept of incentives to the contractor in the form of bonus clause in contracts which will further enhance the pace of execution of projects.

(c) & (d): At present there is no proposal to extend the track by another 99 Kms.

(e): At present, there is no proposal to introduce any special or express train for Kolkata and Visakhapatnam through Balangir- Khurda Road section. However, presently on the

commissioned portions of the section viz. Khurda-Narayangarh Town and Balangir- Bhichhupali section, 2 pairs of passenger train services each are being operated.

2

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4210
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.07.2019**

Drinking Water to Tribal Areas of Odisha

4210. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) the funds sanctioned towards provision of safe drinking water supply to tribal areas of Odisha;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) is drastically lagging behind in achieving its 2017 target of 35 per cent household piped water coverage and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government proposes to promptly implement the NRDWP in the districts of Kandhamal, Boudh, Nayagarh and Ganjam of Odisha so that the residents can have access to clean drinking water and if so, the details thereof and the time-frame fixed for such implementation?

**ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI
(SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA)**

(a) & (b) Water is a State subject. Under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), this Ministry provides technical & financial assistance to the states to improve the coverage of safe drinking water in rural areas. As reported by State Government of Odisha an amount of Rs. 47.57 Crore has been sanctioned for the tribal areas of Odisha. As on 01.04.2018, out of population of 357.87 lakhs rural population in the State of Odisha, 165.58 Lakhs (46.27%) of rural population have been covered by Piped Water Supply (PWS). However, only 3.5 % of the rural households have piped water connections.

Under NRDWP, States are empowered to plan, design and execute schemes. State Governments have been directed / advised to provide access to safe drinking water at various places through stand-post of piped water supply schemes in rural habitations of the country to cover maximum number of households through this. Further, as announced in the Union Budget Speech

2019-20, it has been envisaged to ensure piped water supply to all rural households by 2024 under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

(c) The number of PWS projects taken up in the districts of Kandhmal, Boudh, Nayagarh&Ganjam of Odisha are as detailed below:

Sr. No.	District	No. of Project sanctioned	Project cost (In Crore)
1	Ganjam	22	18.21
2	Boudh	7	4.25
3	Nayagarh	8	22.62
4	Kandhamal	12	221.00
	Total	49	266.08

3

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 393
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 19TH JULY, 2019
HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE IN TRIBAL AREAS**

***393. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:**

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to launch any specific schemes towards development of health infrastructure in tribal areas and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government is aware that Kandhamal district of Odisha which

is covered with dense forests and hilly terrain is deprived of any advanced medical facility;

(c) if so, the details of the funds sanctioned and utilized for development of health facilities in this region during the last five years; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to build a super-speciality hospital and medical college in Kandhamal region, if so, the details thereof and time frame fixed for the same?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 393*
FOR 19TH JULY, 2019**

(a) Public health and hospitals being a State subject, the primary responsibility of development of health infrastructure in tribal areas lies with the States/UTs. However, under National Health Mission, financial and technical support is provided to States/UTs for strengthening the public healthcare system including development of health infrastructure in tribal areas based on the priorities, felt need and context projected by the States/UTs in their annual Programme Implementation Plans.

For schemes/parameters available for development of health infrastructure, preferential treatment and relaxed norms exist for tribal areas, which are as under:-

i. The population norms for setting up Public Health Facilities in tribal areas are relaxed. Against the population norms of 5000, 30000, and 1, 20,000 for setting up of Sub Centre, PHC and CHC respectively, in tribal and desert areas its 3000, 20,000 and 80, 0000, respectively. A new norm of “time to care” has also been adopted for setting up sub health Centres in tribal areas, which can be set up within 30 minutes of walk from habitation.

ii. All tribal districts whose composite health index is below the State average have been identified as High Priority Districts (HPDs) and State Governments/UTs are advised to allocate 1.3 times more resources per capita as compared to the rest of the districts in the State. These districts also have enhanced

monitoring, focussed supportive supervision, and are encouraged to adopt innovative approaches to address their peculiar health challenges.

iii. Approved norms for Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) is one MMU per district with a normative population of 10 lakh, with a cap of five MMUs per district. This can be further relaxed for hilly and tribal areas, where the populations are widely dispersed and the geographical terrain is difficult.

iv. States have been provided with the flexibility of relaxing the norm of one ASHA per 1000 population to one ASHA per habitation in Tribal/hilly and difficult areas.

v. Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) is a dedicated source of funds for tribal development across the country. Ministry of health allocates 8.6% of the total Scheme budget under different schemes towards TSP as per norms fixed by Ministry of Finance. A statement showing allocation of funds under Tribal Sub-Plan in respect of various schemes/programmes, for the last three years, is attached as per Annexures I to III.

vi. Ministry of Tribal Affairs through its schemes 'Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSS)' and Grants under Article 275(1) of the Constitution, provides funds to the State Governments as an additive towards development of various sectors including health, based on their proposal after approval of Project Appraisal Committee in the Ministry.

vii. Since North-eastern States have a higher percentage of tribal population (>25%), North-Eastern Council has been established to improve the healthcare infrastructure in these states to ensure greater availability & accessibility to good quality public health services.

(b) & (c) Kandhamal district has been identified as one of the Aspirational districts for giving focused attention for development. As per Rural Health Statistics, 2018, as on 31.03.2018, there are 172 Sub-centres, 40 Primary Health Centres, 14 Community Health Centres and 1 each of Sub-District Hospital and District Hospital functioning in Kandhamal district.

As intimated by the State Government, the details of the funds sanctioned and utilized for development of health infrastructure (civil works) under NHM in this district during the last five years from 2014-15 to 2018-19 are as under:

Sl No	Financial Year	Approved Budget (In Lakhs.)	Expenditure (In Lakhs.)
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1	2014-15	309.05	425.56
2	2015-16	215.60	429.61
3	2016-17	892.26	400.78
4	2017-18	268.53	66.59
5	2018-19	570.26	564.11
Total		2255.70	1886.65

The State has further intimated that due attention has been given for provisioning of advance medical facilities in all districts including Kandhamal. Various steps are being taken for establishment of different critical healthcare units like Cancer Chemotherapy, Free Dialysis, Free diagnostic including high-end pathology test, digitalisation & reporting of X-Ray, MCH wings, Digital Dispensaries etc. at Kandhamal district. Funds to the tune of Rs. 16179.97 lakhs have been allocated under NHM and State budget from 2014-15 to 2018-19 towards

improvement of healthcare facilities in the district. The year-wise details are as under:-

Rs. in lakhs

Years	Release under NHM	Release under State Budget	Total
2014-15	1,760.68	171.94	1,932.62
2015-16	2,100.56	210.54	2,311.10
2016-17	3,589.51	875.88	4,465.39
2017-18	2,067.88	392.19	2,460.07
2018-19	3,738.26	1,272.52	5,010.78
Total	13,256.88	2,923.08	16,179.97

(d) There is no such proposal for establishment of any Super speciality Hospital and Medical College in Kandhamal. However, the State Government is always free to propose advanced medical facilities for the district under any of the schemes of

Annexure-I

DEPARTMENT OF OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

STATEMENT SHOWING SCHEMES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES 2016 - 17

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	Details of the Schemes	ST Allocation (BE) 2016-17	ST Allocation (RE) 2016-17
A	National Rural Health Mission		
1	RCH Flexible Pool including Routine Immunization Programme, Pulse Polio Immunization Programme, National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme etc.	702.67	795.57
2	Health System Strengthening under NRHM	625.49	667.05
3	Flexible Pool for Communicable Diseases	138.36	159.70
4	Flexible Pool for Non-Communicable Diseases, Injury and Trauma	62.16	62.16
5	Infrastructure Maintenance	596.54	550.11
6	Forward Linkages		
7	Strengthening of State Drug Regulatory System		
8	Other Health Schemes (PILOT)		
9	Human Resources for Health		
10	Prime Minister's Development Plan for Jammu and Kashmir		35.50
11	Strengthening of National Programme Management of the NHM		
	Total - National Rural Health Mission	2125.22	2270.09

B	National Urban Health Mission	109.18	25.15
C	National Health Protection Scheme	212.50	59.35
D	Tertiary Care Programme		
1	National Mental Health Programme	4.12	4.12
2	Capacity Building for Trauma Centres	22.16	22.16
3	National Programme for prevention and control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardio-vascular Disease and Stroke	30.58	31.56
4	National Programme for Health Care for the Elderly	2.50	2.50
5	National Programme for Control of Blindness		
6	Tobacco Control Programme & Drug De-addiction Programme		
7	Telemedicine		
	Total - Tertiary Care Programme	59.36	60.34
E	Human Resources for Health and Medical Education		
1	Upgradation/Strengthening of Nursing Services (ANM/GNM).		
2	Strengthening/upgradation of Pharmacy School/Colleges.		
3	District Hospitals-Upgradation of State Govt. Medical Colleges (PG Seats)		
4	Strengthening Government Medical College (UG Seats) and Central Government Health Institutions	12.94	12.94
5	Establishing New Medical Colleges (Upgrading District Hospitals)	52.99	144.32
6	Setting up State Institutions of Para-Medical Sciences in States and Setting up of Colleges of Para-Medical Education.		
	Total - Human Resources for Health and Medical Education	65.93	157.26
	Grand Total	2572.19	2572.19

Annexure-II**DEPARTMENT OF OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE****STATEMENT SHOWING SCHEMES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES 2017 - 18****(Rs. in Crores)**

Sl. No.	Details of the Schemes	ST Allocation (BE) 2017-18	ST Allocation (RE) 2017-18
A	National Rural Health Mission		
1	RCH Flexible Pool including Routine Immunization Programme, Pulse Polio Immunization Programme, National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme etc.	483.22	551.86
2	Health System Strengthening under NRHM	932.16	932.16
3	Flexible Pool for Communicable Diseases	179.56	158.04
4	Flexible Pool for Non-Communicable Diseases, Injury and Trauma	110.66	112.66
5	Infrastructure Maintenance	589.51	589.51
6	Forward Linkages		
7	Strengthening of State Drug Regulatory System		
8	Other Health Schemes (PILOT)		
9	Prime Minister's Development Plan for Jammu and Kashmir	37.17	37.17
10	Strengthening of National Programme Management of the NHM		
	Total - National Rural Health Mission	2332.28	2381.40
B	National Urban Health Mission	24.15	20.40

C	National Health Protection Scheme	107.40	63.16
D	Tertiary Care Programme		
1	National Mental Health Programme	4.12	4.12
2	Capacity Building for Trauma Centres	20.42	13.55
3	National Programme for prevention and control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardio-vascular Disease and Stroke	27.92	31.72
4	National Programme for Health Care for the Elderly	6.12	5.06
5	National Programme for Control of Blindness		
6	Tobacco Control Programme & Drug De-addiction Programme		
7	Telemedicine		
	Total - Tertiary Care Programme	58.58	54.45
E	Human Resources for Health and Medical Education		
1	Upgradation/Strengthening of Nursing Services (ANM/GNM).		
2	Strengthening/upgradation of Pharmacy School/Colleges.		
3	District Hospitals-Upgradation of State Govt. Medical Colleges (PG Seats)		
4	Strengthening Government Medical College (UG Seats) and Central Government Health Institutions	51.55	51.55
5	Establishing New Medical Colleges (Upgrading District Hospitals)	398.90	401.90
6	Setting up State Institutions of Para-Medical Sciences in States and Setting up of Colleges of Para-Medical Education.		
	Total - Human Resources for Health and Medical Education	450.45	453.45
	Grand Total	2972.86	2972.86

Annexure-III

DEPARTMENT OF OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
STATEMENT SHOWING SCHEMES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED
TRIBES 2018 -19

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	Details of the Schemes	ST Allocation (BE) 2018-19	SC Allocation (RE) 2018-19
A	National Rural Health Mission		
1	RCH Flexible Pool including Routine Immunization Programme, Pulse Polio Immunization Programme, National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme etc.	547.88	776.20
2	Health System Strengthening under NRHM	1161.13	1125.31
3	Flexible Pool for Communicable Diseases	217.89	204.14
4	Flexible Pool for Non-Communicable Diseases, Injury and Trauma	107.75	51.02
5	Infrastructure Maintenance	622.15	718.69
6	Forward Linkages		
7	Strengthening of State Drug Regulatory System	22.24	22.24
8	Other Health Schemes (PILOT)		
9	Prime Minister's Development Plan for Jammu and Kashmir	32.59	32.59
10	Strengthening of National Programme Management of the NHM		
	Total - National Rural Health Mission	2711.63	2930.19
B	National Urban Health Mission	26.06	26.33
C	National Health Protection Scheme	205.00	25.80
D	Tertiary Care Programme		

1	National Mental Health Programme	4.00	
2	Capacity Building for Trauma Centres	14.43	
3	National Programme for prevention and control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardio-vascular Disease and Stroke	30.03	14.95
4	National Programme for Health Care for the Elderly	6.12	
5	National Programme for Control of Blindness		
6	Tobacco Control Programme & Drug De-addiction Programme		
7	Telemedicine		
	Total - Tertiary Care Programme	54.58	14.95
E	Human Resources for Health and Medical Education		
1	Upgradation/Strengthening of Nursing Services (ANM/GNM).		
2	Strengthening/upgradation of Pharmacy School/Colleges.		
3	District Hospitals-Upgradation of State Govt. Medical Colleges (PG Seats)		
4	Strengthening Government Medical College (UG Seats) and Central Government Health Institutions	85.76	85.76
5	Establishing New Medical Colleges (Upgrading District Hospitals)	299.29	299.29
6	Setting up State Institutions of Para-Medical Sciences in States and Setting up of Colleges of Para-Medical Education.		
	Total - Human Resources for Health and Medical Education	385.05	385.05
	Grand Total	3382.32	3382.32

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4700 TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.07.2019

SETTLEMENT OF DUES BY ESIC TO EMPANELLED HOSPITALS 4700.

SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the rules for settlement of dues by ESIC to its empanelled hospitals including the minimum and maximum duration in terms of days and whether there is any penalty provision in case of failure by ESIC in complying with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with such empanelled hospitals;**
- (b) the number of empanelled superspecialty hospitals that have outstanding dues pending with the ESIC for more than the maximum duration allowed in the MOUs; and**
- (c) whether the Government is aware that, as per its last report, the ESIC received contributions of over Rs. 20000 crore and disbursed benefits (including Medical, Cash and Other Benefits) of a mere Rs. 7513 crore, thus resulting in a huge disparity between money collected from employees and employers and the amount spent on benefits, if so, the Government's proposed measures to reduce the aforementioned disparity?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)

(a) : As per prevailing rules, after submission of medical treatment bills to "Employees' State Insurance Corporation hired Bill Clearing Agency" in a prescribed format, bills are to be processed and recommended to ESIC for payment within 10 days. Further, ESIC makes the payment to Empanelled hospital after due scrutiny. As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Empanelled Hospitals, there is, as such, no provision of penalty in case of failure by ESIC in complying.

Contd..2/-

:: 2 ::

However, there exists a provision wherein either of the party can exit from agreement after giving due notice for the same.

(b) : None.

(c) : During the financial year 2017-18, the contribution Income was Rs. 20,077 Crores and the total expenditure of ESIC was Rs. 8,544 Crores (including administrative expenditure of Rs. 1,031 Crores) which forms about 42 per cent (Approx.) of contribution income. During the financial year 2018-2019, the contribution income was Rs.22,279 Crores (unaudited) and the expenditure of ESIC was Rs.11,050 Crores (including administrative expenditure of Rs.1,155 Crores) (un-audited) which forms about 50 per cent (Approx.) of contribution income. In the current year 2019-20, effective from 1-07-2019, the rate of ESI contribution has been reduced from 6.5 per cent to 4 per cent of wages (Approx. 38% reduction).

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**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING DEPARTMENT OF
ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING
LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No. *422
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD JULY 2019 INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY OF DAIRY
ANIMALS**

***422. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:**

Will the Minister of FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

मत्स्यपालन, पशुपालन और डयरी मंत्री

be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes any scheme to increase productivity of dairy animals, as India has the highest number of dairy cows in the world but has a low average annual milk yield of cattle (1172 kg per cow), which is only about 50 per cent of the global average and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government proposes a Union Government-sponsored Cattle Insurance Scheme for the benefit of cattle rearers who are forced to pay high premiums to private insurance companies at present; and

(c) if so, the details thereof including the time by which this is likely to be achieved?

ANSWER

Achyuta Samanta | Parliamentary Performance Report

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THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

(SHRI GIRIRAJ SINGH)

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

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (C) OF THE LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *422 INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY OF DAIRY ANIMALS TO
BE ANSWERED ON 23rd JULY 2019.**

(a) As per Food and Agriculture Organization Statistics (FAOSTAT) for the year 2017 the average productivity of Indian cow is 1643 kg/animal/year and Indian buffalo is 1997 kg/animal/year. Combined average productivity of cattle and buffalo is 1806 kg/animal/year. Against this, world average productivity of cattle is 2430 kg/animal/year and buffalo is 1810 kg/animal/year and total average productivity of dairy animals is 2310 kg/animal/year. In order to complement and supplement the efforts made by the States and Union Territories to increase productivity of dairy animals Government has been implementing following schemes:

(i) Rashtriya Gokul Mission

(ii) National dairy Plan-I

(iii) Breed Improvement Institutes comprising of seven Central Cattle Breeding Farms, four Central Herd Registration Units and Central Frozen Semen Production and Training Institute.

(b) & (c) Government has been implementing Risk Management and Insurance as a component of National Livestock Mission since 2014-15. The indigenous/ crossbred milch animals, pack animals (Horses, Donkey, Mules, Camels, Ponies and Cattle/ Buffalo Male) and other livestock (Goat, Sheep, Pigs, Rabbit, Yak and Mithun) are under the purview of 'Risk Management & Insurance. Benefit of subsidy is restricted to 5 animals per beneficiary per household for all animals except sheep, goat, pig and rabbit. In case of sheep, goat, pig and rabbit the benefit of subsidy is restricted based on 'Cattle Unit' and one cattle unit is equal to 10 animals.

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5186

TO BE ANSWERED ON 24TH JULY, 2019 MOBILE NETWORK IN EASTERN GHATS

5186. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that many areas of the district of Kandhamal and many other regions in the hilly terrain of the Eastern Ghats do not receive adequate mobile network connectivity from either the Private Telecom Service Providers or Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL);
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (c) the time by which the telecom connectivity and network coverage are likely to be improved in the aforesaid areas and the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, LAW & JUSTICE AND
ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)**

(a) to (c) Yes Sir, Some villages in Kandhamal and hilly terrains of Eastern Ghats do not have mobile network connectivity from either the Private Telecom Service Providers or Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). As per Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), the difficult geographic terrain, sparsely populated villages with very low population size, lower level of economic activities etc. pose techno-commercial challenges in making available mobile services on universal basis. Further lack of feasibility of cost-effective back-haul transmission is also a barrier against provision of the services. Major portion of Kandhamal district is covered with forests. Out of 2587 villages in the district of Kandhamal, 768 villages are covered by telecom services and 1819 villages are uncovered. As per the data collected from the telecom service providers in year 2018, total number of uncovered inhabited villages in the States constituting the hilly terrains of Eastern Ghats, namely Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu & Kerala (including the information received from field units of the department) is attached at **Annexure –I**.

Mobile coverage in the uncovered villages in the country, is being provided in a phased manner by the Government and TSPs. Following projects are being implemented for providing/facilitating telecom services in inhabited uncovered villages:

- (i) Under Left Wing Extremism affected areas Phase-II project, Government has approved installation of 3465 mobile towers (total outlay of Rs. 5024 Crore) for providing mobile

connectivity including 252 mobile towers in Odisha. Under Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Phase-I project, 23 towers have been installed in Kandhamal District.

(ii) BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (approx. 2,50,000) in the country, including Kandhamal and hilly terrain of the Eastern Ghats. As on 04.07.2019, by laying 3,45,779 km Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), a total of 1,31,392 GPs have been connected, out of which 1,20,562 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been made Service Ready. In addition, 854 GPs have been made Service Ready on satellite media.

Kandhamal District has about 160 GPs. As on 04.07.2019, 141 GPs have been connected on OFC, out of which 136 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been made Service Ready.

As part of this project, the last mile connectivity, through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology, is being provided at all the GPs in the country. Further, the Digital Communications Commission (DCC) on 13.06.2019 has approved to award the work of provisioning of 2 Wi-Fi Access Points (APs) in each of the 90,000 GPs of BharatNet Phase-I in all the States (including Kandhamal District of Odisha and hilly terrain of the Eastern Ghats), except where Wi-Fi APs are provided under USOF schemes.

Annexure referred to in reply of para (a) to (c) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5186 to be answered on 24th July, 2019 raised by Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shri Achyutananda Samanta regarding "Mobile Network in Eastern Ghats"

No. of inhabited villages without mobile services & information related to the states of Eastern Ghats

Sl. No.	State/UT	No. of inhabited villages without mobile services	Information related to Eastern Ghats
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2745	There are 2562 uncovered villages in the Eastern Ghats area of Andhra Pradesh (9 districts)
2.	Karnataka	869	The Eastern Ghats are not prominent in Karnataka
3.	Kerala	Nil	-
4.	Odisha	9940	Major portion of Kandhamal district is covered with forests. Out of 2587 villages in the district of Kandhamal, 768 villages are covered by telecom services and 1819 villages are uncovered.
5.	Tamil Nadu	83	In Tamil Nadu Easter Ghats, three hilly regions viz. Jawadu Hills, Kalrayan Hills and KolliHills are available with 104 inhabited villages and out of these 31 villages are not provided with mobile coverage.

MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER
DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5346
ANSWERED ON 25.07.2019

IRRIGATION IN KANDHAMAL DISTRICT

5346. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the access to irrigation in the district of Kandhamal is very low, with the area under irrigation for the Tumudibandh block and a majority of the Kandhamal district being only around 5%, which is in stark contrast to the Odisha average of 27.58%;
- (b) if so, whether the Government proposes to allocate funds for developing irrigation facilities and addressing the irrigation needs of the people and farmers in the said region; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor and the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI & SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
(SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA)**

(a) to (c) Water resources projects are planned, funded, executed and maintained by the State Governments themselves as per their own resources and priorities. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Government of India provides technical and financial assistance to encourage sustainable development and efficient management of water resources through various schemes and programmes.

As reported by Government of Odisha, irrigation potential of 42789 hectares has been created in Kandhamal District (including 3130 ha. in Tumudibandha block) through various projects which is 33.48% of cultivable area of the district.

The State Government has also informed that special thrust is being given for construction of Community LIPs, Deep Bore Wells, Check Dams etc. so as to develop additional irrigation potential in Kandhamal district. For this, beneficiary farmers are provided subsidy in the range of 94 to 97% of the project cost under *Deep Bore Well Scheme*; whereas BPL category farmers and other farmers are receiving subsidy of 90% and 80% of project cost respectively under Community Lift Irrigation Projects. The on-going projects (101 no.) as well as proposed ones (454 no.) target

to add irrigation potential of 4640 ha. during 2019-20. Additionally, feasibility study of two irrigation projects namely Khadaga Barrage and Brahmani Padar have been completed. Execution of these projects depends upon statutory clearances from the concerned departments.

Further, Department of Land Resources, Government of India has sanctioned 20 projects at a cost of Rs 130.92 crore for implementation of various activities in the Kandhamal district under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana- Watershed Development Component under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana(PMKSy)-Per Drop, More Crop component, an area of 946.95 ha has been covered in last four year in Kandhamal district.

8

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 5493
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26.07.2019

Ban on Plastics

5493. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to adopt a uniform policy applicable to all States on plastic ban and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government is aware that many daily products like toiletries contain plastic and are toxic to the environment;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to impose restrictions on use of plastic in such products, and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)

(a) and (b) The Government has notified Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. As per the Rules, the carry bag made of virgin or recycled plastic less than fifty microns in thickness has been prohibited. There is complete ban on sachets using plastic material used for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala. The Rules are uniformly applicable to all the States. Further, Hon'ble Prime Minister has announced India's pledge to Ban all Single- Use Plastic by Achyuta Samanta | Parliamentary Performance Report

2022. In this regard Ministry has issued guidelines and written letters to offices of Central Government, State Government and its departments, major PSUs, corporates, etc to prohibit single-use plastic products in their offices.

(c) to (e) Microbeads which are often used in cosmetic and toiletries are made of plastic and are not bio-degradable/soluble in the water. For this, BIS has published an Indian Standard, IS 4707 (Part 2): 2017 'Classification of cosmetic raw materials and adjuncts: Part 2 List of raw materials generally not recognized as safe for use in cosmetics' as per which 'Plastic microbeads: 5 mm or less, water insoluble, solid plastic particle used to exfoliate or cleanse in rinse-off personal care products' must not form part of the composition of cosmetic products.

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**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5658
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26-07-2019**

PROTECTING THE HANDLOOM

TRADE 5658. SHRI ACHYUTANANDA SAMANTA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES वस्त्र मंत्री

be pleased to state:

- a) whether any steps have been taken by the Government towards protecting the handloom trade in Odisha and popularising the indigenous patterns and fabrics of Odisha;
- b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years;
- c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- d) whether there is any scheme of the Government to reduce the plight of the weavers by protecting them from private players from India, abroad and duplicate products from outside the State; and
- e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

उत्तर

ANSWER

वस्त्र मंत्री (श्रीमती स्मृति त जुबिन इरानी)

MINISTER OF TEXTILES
(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (e): The Government has introduced 'Handloom Mark' to identify products woven on handlooms. Awareness creation activities are carried out from time to time to popularise these measures. Out of total 21328 registrations issued under 'Handloom Mark' Scheme, 668 registrations are in the State of Odisha. Further, 09 handloom products out of 65 handloom products registered under GI (Geographical Indications) Act are from the State of Odisha. Registered users of GI products have rights under the Act to approach the respective police authorities to safeguard their interests against illegal manufacturing / marketing of GI registered handloom products.

Govt of India has been implementing Handloom Marketing Assistance, a component of National handloom Development Programme (NHDP) for popularising sale of handloom products from district to national level. State of Odisha has been sanctioned handloom marketing assistance of Rs 232.37 Lakh during the last three years for organising 17 National Handlooms Expos, Special Handlooms Expos and District Level Events which generated sale of Rs 25.07 Crore and benefitted 37000 handloom weavers. Besides, out of 1232 registrations issued under 'India Handloom Brand', 32 registrations are from Odisha. 'India Handloom Brand' products are of high quality and these authentic traditional designs have popularised indigenous patterns and fabrics of Odisha.

The Government has been implementing the Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 for production of reserved items only on Handlooms. 11 textiles articles with some technical specifications are exclusively reserved for production on handlooms. Inspections are carried out in the field to enforce the provisions of the Act.

Appendix-II

Letters to Ministers

1. ASLTR/2019/07/011 (19.07.2019)

Prof. ACHYUTA SAMANTA, Ph.D.
Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)
Chief Whip, Biju Janata Dal (BJD)
Parliamentary Party



Ref No: ASLTR/2019/07/011

Date: 19th July, 2019

To,

Shri Prahlad Singh Patel,
Hon'ble Minister of Tourism,
Government of India,
New Delhi.

**Subject: Omission of Odisha from list of 17 Iconic Tourism Sites to be developed by the
Government of India**

.....

I am writing to inform you about a matter of which has come to my attention. The Hon'ble Finance Minister in her Union Budget Speech of 2019-20, announced that 17 Iconic Tourism Sites will be developed into world class tourist destinations. What came as a shock to me was that this List of Iconic Tourism Sites (**List**) did not contain any site from the state of Odisha.

As mentioned by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Naveen Patnaik ji, in his letter to you on this topic, Odisha is a state which is home to both the majestic beauty of nature, as well as several ancient monuments, across a number of different cultures.

Several states and Union Territories have multiple sites on the said List, which while deserving, fails to correctly portray the multiple cultures and the diverse variety of tourist destinations which can be found all over the country. I request you to kindly include at least two sites from Odisha into the existing List, as per your choice. Developing such sites as world class tourist destinations will bring much needed infrastructure to the surrounding regions, boost local income, as well as improve the overall contribution to the tourism industry.

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Suggested Inclusions into the List

For your convenience, I am listing some examples of great marvels the state of Odisha is home to, which can be included in the List:

1. **Konark Sun Temple:** Awarded the UNESCO World Heritage tag in 1984, the Sun Temple at Konark is an ancient marvel of architecture and culture. However, inspite of efforts by the Archaeological Survey of India, the temple as well as its surroundings is in urgent need of help that being a part of a 'world-class tourism' List will provide. Not only does it promise tourists a wonderful insight into India's past, it is also near the clean and pristine, Blue Flag certified Chandrabhaga Beach, which can make this region a hotbed for domestic and international tourists.
2. **Chilika Lake:** Irrawaddy dolphins, magnificent sunsets, and home to spectacular variety of migratory birds, the Chilika Lake is Odisha's pride and the largest brackish water lake in Asia. It is known for its rich biodiversity, and was designated as a Ramsar wetland in 1981 to afford better protection.
3. **Bhitarkanika National Park and Gahirmatha (Marine) Wildlife Sanctuary:** Odisha houses the beautiful yet fragile ecosystem of the Bhitarkanika National Park and Gahirmatha (Marine) Wildlife Sanctuary (which is also home to the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtle). Declared as Eco-sensitive Zone by the Ministry of Environment and Forests and as a Ramsar site in 2002, tourism can be promoted here, while stressing on the safety of the ecosystem through protective measures, while also ensuring the livelihood and sustenance of locals and small scale industries.
4. **Simplipal National Park:** The Simplipal National Park is home to both tigers and elephants, being both a tiger reserve as well as part of the larger Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserve. Notified as a Biosphere Reserve in 1984, it is famous for the best care for tigers in India. The national park can be modelled as a eco-tourism centre, as there already exists several nature camps managed by the local community who cater to the needs of the tourists.
5. **Diamond Triangle Buddhist Circuit (Ratnagiri - Udayagiri - Lalitgiri):** At a distance of around 100 kms from Bhubaneswar lies the Ratnagiri - Udayagiri - Lalitgiri complex, which houses ancient Buddhist archaeological sites, remains of monasteries and stupas from as far back 1st century. Being in close proximity to the well-connected state capital, this can emerge as a

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Prof. ACHYUTA SAMANTA, Ph.D.
Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)
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Parliamentary Party



destination for tourists and backpackers who are often interested in culture and history which influences a region.

Tourism can contribute heavily to a state's revenue, especially one such as Odisha which is home to a diverse variety of destinations. Further, it is important for the Government to understand that India has many different regions with a host of different ancient cultures, as well as areas of vast natural and ecological beauty. Keeping this in mind, I request the Government to consider inclusion of at least two of the aforementioned sites into the List of Iconic Tourism Sites, as it will greatly benefit the region.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Achyutananda Samanta,

Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Kandhamal.

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2. ASLTR/2019/07/012 (24.07.2019)

Prof. ACHYUTA SAMANTA, Ph.D.
Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)
Chief Whip, Biju Janata Dal (BJD)
Parliamentary Party



Ref No: ASLTR/2019/07/012

Date: 24th July, 2019

To,

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad,
Hon'ble Minister of Communications,
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Subject: Lack of Telecom Network Connectivity in Kandhamal District

.....

I am writing to you to inform you about a pressing problem in a large part of my constituency – Kandhamal, which seems to be completely against the achievement of the national goal of a 100% Digital India. Kandhamal is a region, located 250 kms from the state capital in Bhubaneswar and is blessed with dense forests, scenic waterfalls, towering mountains and hospitable people. However, one of the primary problems is the **lack of proper telecom network connectivity**.

Inadequate Network Coverage by both BSNL and Private TSPs

As one moves more and more towards the interior areas of Kandhamal, the network bars on phones slowly start disappearing, till a point where in some places there is no network coverage at all. Both the private telecom service providers (TSPs) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) networks are erratic in Kandhamal. For instance, in a place called Daringbadi (also known as Kashmir of Odisha), there is phone network in one half of the town and not existing in other half. **People climb trees and talk just to get network**. Some electric poles have been marked as 'network areas' where people go just for connectivity. BSNL works at times but the network goes often, and coverage is very erratic.

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Associated Problems including Reduced Access to Emergency Services

More than **8,000 villages** in Odisha, and 35,000 villages across India are deprived of proper mobile and telephone network connectivity. In many of the districts of south Odisha, including Kandhamal, **more than 50 per cent** of villages suffer from the lack of mobile network connectivity especially because of the hilly terrain. According to recent data, villages in Odisha, especially those in areas which require high security presence, have little to no network coverage, resulting in several problems both to the local populace as well as the security forces and leads to lack of quick access to emergency services. Without proper network connectivity, in the modern era, these areas are especially vulnerable to falling back from the rest of society.

State Government Support, but Inaction from Centre

Even with a firm policy in place by the State government namely the '**Odisha Mobile Towers, Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) and Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2017**' which encourages TSPs to setup towers and facilitate network building, and inspite of **repeatedly requesting Niti Aayog** for assistance, neither the private players, not BSNL have expanded their mobile network or broadband connectivity to these zones, some of which are left wing extremism-hit districts of the state.

When the whole country is moving towards 100% Digital India and TSPs have been giving internet data nearly free, Kandhamal should not lag behind. Keeping this in mind, I urge the Government and your Ministry to take swift action to ensure that districts such as Kandhamal receive adequate network coverage at the earliest so that they can move ahead with the same developmental pace as the rest of new India. If there are no policies or schemes in place, I request the Government to promptly propose a plan to ensure that nearly 100 per cent of the country is under mobile network coverage.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Achyutananda Samanta,

Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Kandhamal.

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3. ASLTR/2019/07/013 (24.07.2019)

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Chief Whip, Biju Janata Dal (BJD)
Parliamentary Party



Ref No: ASLTR/2019/07/013

Date: 24th July, 2019

To,
Shri Piyush Goyal,
Hon'ble Minister of Railways,
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Subject: Lack of Rail Connectivity to Phulbani and Request for Annexe

.....

This is with reference to my requests during the Zero Hour in Lok Sabha on 27 June, 2019 regarding lack of railway connectivity in my constituency - Kandhamal in Odisha.

Kandhamal is a region, located 250 kms from the state capital in Bhubaneswar and is blessed with dense forests, scenic waterfalls, towering mountains and hospitable people. However, as mentioned by me on the floor of the House, one of the primary problems is connectivity - of the district headquarters (**Phulbani**) with the rest of Odisha and between the ports and important productive areas.

To give you a clearer picture, the only means of public transport for passengers to reach there is via buses and for movement of goods is via trucks. Many of my constituents haven't seen a railway line in their lifetime, just on television. The long standing dream for a railway link to Phulbani in Kandhamal district is yet to turn into a reality for the people.

Existing Network and Delays

The 298 km Khurda-Balangir railway line project is getting delayed. The deadline has been set for 2021. The rail link has reached till Nayagarh, (at a distance of 66km) which is 99 kilometers from

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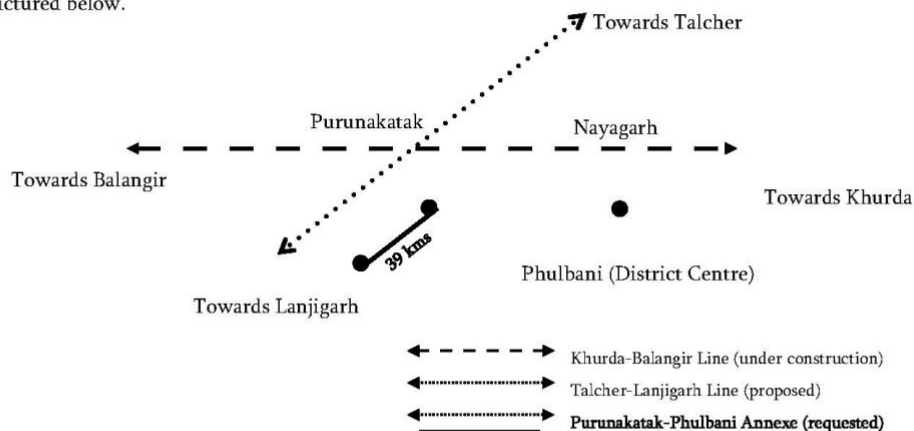
Phulbani. 2 passenger trains run from Nayagarh and that is all, even though passenger movement is ever-increasing. Further connectivity to Dasapalla, Banigochha, Purunakatak and on to Balangir has to be expedited.

The State government is partnering with the Ministry of Railways and is bearing 50 per cent of the construction cost. While I understand that construction has challenges like forest terrain, land acquisition, and environment clearances, there still seems to be an inordinate delay in completion of this construction and connection to Phulbani.

Requirement of an Annexe

As the tracks are getting laid till Banigochha, Purunakatak upto Balangir, it is important to lay an annexe from Purunakatak to Phulbani at the earliest. Purunakatak is the nearest railhead from Phulbani and lies merely 39 kms from Phulbani. **It is vital to connect Phulbani as it is the district headquarters and a nerve center of the region.**

This extension can later connect with the Talcher Lanjigarh line, as per existing plans. A rough sketch of the under-construction Khurda-Balangir line, the proposed Talcher-Lanjigarh line, and the **annexe construction** from Purunakatak to Phulbani, which I am currently requesting for, is pictured below.



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Importance of improved railway connectivity in Kandhamal

As you may already be aware, Kandhamal is one of the poorest districts in India, with approximately **70 per cent** of its population belonging to the Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes. Even while being part of NITI Aayog's "Transformation of Aspirational Districts" programme, Kandhamal ranks a lowly **90th** and among the **20 Least Improved districts** in the programme. The development of many areas has been **seriously hampered** due to the lack of railway connectivity. This project can **boost the market** for forest and organic agricultural produce (including Kandhamal Haldi, which has recently obtained a GI tag) of tribal people and dalits. It is vital that these areas are connected directly to a port or to urban areas via Khurda. The proposed track can **improve prospects of tourism and eco-tourism** in places like Daringbadi, known as the Kashmir of Odisha, as well as give an impetus to industrial growth in southern Odisha. Further, better railway connectivity can also **ensure reduction of Left Wing Extremist (LWE)** activities in the area.

It is very saddening to know that Kandhamal does not have a railway link even after 70 years of independence. Connectivity is the cornerstone of development and it seems to be a far flung dream for my Kandhamal. I would urge you to take note of this and request you to expedite the current construction of the Khurda-Balangir line, as well as help Phulbani connect through an extension rail line for passenger movement to Purunakatak or add it to the proposed Khurda-Balangir line, if feasible.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Achyutananda Samanta,
Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Kandhamal.

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Appendix-III

Picture Gallery

Health:

- Conducted a Health Camp in all the blocks of Kandhamal Parliamentary Constituency
- This health camp would be organised by doctors, nurses, paramedical staff from KIMS every month in all the blocks of Kandhamal simultaneously



Natural Calamities:

- Reviewed the flood situation in Kandhamal, especially Tumudibandha and Kantamal which was severely affected



- Interacted with ground staff and field workers to know about the roots of several chronic problems and sorted solutions related to the flood situation

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MP Samanta on Kandhamal visit

EXTENDS HELP TO DISTRESSED FAMILY

PNS ■ PHULBANI

Kandhamal MP Dr Achyuta Samanta has extended a helping hand to the family of the missing father-son duo in the recent flood in Kandhamal. Dinabandhu Majhi and his son Purendra were swept away while crossing a canal in Mundimaska village of Bilamal Panchayat in Tumudibandh block. Purendra was found dead and Dinabandhu is still missing.

Dr Samanta has given Rs 50,000 from his personal account to Dinabandhu's family and assured to enrol the two sons of Purendra in the KISS to pursue education free of cost.

Dr Samanta is on a three-day visit to Kandhamal from Friday. He went to various areas including Tumudibandh, Kotagad, Baliguda and K Naugao blocks and discussed with locals their various problems. He assured them to bring to the notice of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik their problems and take necessary steps for their resolution.

- Extended helping hand to the family of the missing Dinabandhu Majhi and his son Purendra during heavy floods in Kandhamal and admission to the children at KISS, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

- Reviewed and supervised the rescue and relief in Boudh district



Education:

Addressed the students of Subhas Chandra Bose school where 1500 students didn't have functioning toilets. Offered assistance to construct a toilet complex for students



Youth:

- Celebrated International Youth Day at Phulbani by addressing the youth and making them realize their potential in social service
- Announced arrangement of a Job Fair for the employment of the youth of Kandhamal
- Announced facilitation of Skill Development Programme for the Youth to increase the prospects of employment



Kandhamal MP Achyuta Samanta celebrates IYD with youth

PBD BUREAU

BHUBANESWAR, AUG 12

BRAVING heavy rain, thousands of young men and women assembled at the District Convention Center in Phulbani to celebrate International Youth Day with Dr. Achyuta Samanta, MP, Kandhamal on Monday.

Addressing the youth, Dr. Samanta said, "India has a huge opportunity by the virtue of being the youngest nation. The country can benefit from this demographic dividend only if the youth make it so. Otherwise, it will become a disaster."

He encouraged the youth to lead a life that first empowers them and then enables them to



help others.

Citing examples from his own life, he said that one can get success if one makes continuous effort towards one's duty.

He emphasized on the role of

parents and the duty of the children to look after the elders in the family. He talked about the huge potential of the youth in social service and encouraged them to spend a little time and energy to

make their own community better.

On the occasion, Dr. Samanta also announced several developmental plans for the youth of Kandhamal and launched 'AMA KANDHAMAL', a specific youth campaign to empower youth and overall development of Kandhamal.

He also announced that in September there would be a massive Job Fair to employ as many youths as possible.

He announced skill development programs on various soft and hard skills.

The assembled youth took a pledge to remain with him, take part in the developmental programmes and contribute to the overall development of Kandhamal.



The MDH Company, a well-known spice making firm, will set up a spices and food processing unit in Kandhamal district

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■ **Gubunesswar, Thursday 8 August 2019**

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■ ଅଞ୍ଚଳ ଦିନିକୀ ମା ୧୦, ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଗ୍ରାମ

■ ଶ୍ରାବଣ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ୧୫, ୧୯୪୩ ଶକାବ୍ଦ, ଶୁକ୍ଳାଷ୍ଟମୀ ତିଥି

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କନ୍ଧମାଳରେ ହେବ ମସଲା ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟାକରଣ ଯୁକ୍ତିଟ

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ୭ ।୮ (ନି.ପ୍ର): ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ମସଲା ଉତ୍ପାଦକ ଏମ୍‌ଡିଏଚ୍ କମ୍ପାନୀ କନ୍ଧମାଳରେ ଏକ ମସଲା ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟାକରଣ ୟୁନିଟ୍ ସ୍ଥାପନ

ହୋଇଥିଲେ । ବିଶେଷ କରି କିଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଜାଣିବା ପରେ ୯୭ ବର୍ଷ ବୟସ୍କ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୁରୁଟି ଆସନ୍ତା ମାସ କିଏ ଓ କିଏ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନରେ

କିରବକୁ ଯାଉଛି । କନ୍ଧମାଳ ଲୋକଙ୍କଦ୍ୱାରା ସମ୍ପାଦିତ ଅନୁକୂଳ ସାମଗ୍ରୀ ବୁଧବାର କମ୍ପାନୀର ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ପଦ୍ମକୃଷ୍ଣ ଧର୍ମପାଳ ଗୁମାସ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ ନୂଆଦିଲ୍ଲୀସ୍ଥିତ ତାଙ୍କ ବାସ ଘରରେ ଶେଢ଼ିନିମ୍ନବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୁମାସ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ କନ୍ଧମାଳରେ 'ସମ୍ପତି'ର ପକ୍ଷରୁ ଏକ ମସଲା ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତିକରଣ ଯୁକ୍ତିର ସ୍ଥାନ ପାଇଁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରିଥିଲେ । ଶ୍ରୀ ସାମଗ୍ରୀକ ଅନୁରୋଧକୁ ମେଳ କନ୍ଧମାଳରେ 'ସମ୍ପତି'ର ଯୁକ୍ତିର ସ୍ଥାନ ପାଇଁ । କେଉଁ ଗୁମାସ୍ତି ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠିତ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି । କନ୍ଧମାଳ ହଜବ୍ କିମ୍ବା କିମ୍ବା ଖୋଲ ହାସଲ କରି ଭାରତ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇଥିବା ବେଳେ ମସଲା ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତିକରଣ ଯୁକ୍ତିର ହେବାଦ୍ୱାରା । କନ୍ଧମାଳରେ ବାଣୀମାନେ ଉପକୃତ ହେବା ସହ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଅସିଦ୍ଧି ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ଉପରେ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୁମାସ୍ତିଙ୍କୁ ସମାଜିକ ସମାଧାନର ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୁମାସ୍ତି ବିବିଧ ଓ କିଛି ସମାଜ



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Bag of Happiness:

An Art of Giving Campaign celebrated all over Kandhamal, wherein people gifted stationery and education materials to the needy



BAG OF HAPPINESS

Kandhamal



Kanya Kiran:

In line with the PAREE Campaign, Kanya Kiran was organised in all the villages, Panchyats and blocks of Kandhamal Constituency for spreading the message of zero tolerance against gender based violence



Visits:

Kantamal, Boudh, Tumudibandha, Nayagarh, G. Udaygiri, Linepada, Kotagoda, , Tikabali, Nuagon, Khajuripada, Duteepada, Barikumpa



Meeting People:

Youth, Women, Gauda Samaj, Collector, PRI Officials, Party Karyakartas, Collectors, Sub Collectors, JE and so on



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Push for Kandhamal towards self-reliance

Achyuta Samanta talks to **TOI** about his plans to uplift this backward region, which is his constituency now, through better healthcare, education and skill development

Tucked right inside Odisha's belly, Kandhamal offers a picture of contrasts. Bountiful nature has gifted it with enchanting hills, meadows, waterfalls and streams, but hidden beneath the scenic beauty is one of mankind's toughest battles against hunger. For men, women and children alike, travelling to places hundreds of miles away, mostly for menial jobs, has been an age-old tradition. Those who cannot leave home make their ends meet mostly with the help of meagre government doles and whatever little they earn from farming, poultry and cattle rearing.

"Such abject poverty is one of the chief reasons for people's alienation from education, the ultimate barrier between poverty and modern society," remarks Achyuta Samanta, Kandhamal's new representative in the Lok Sabha. "Without education, we cannot enhance our purchasing capacity (ability to lead a decent life)," says the educationist-turned-politician, who runs two of India's biggest institutions of learn-

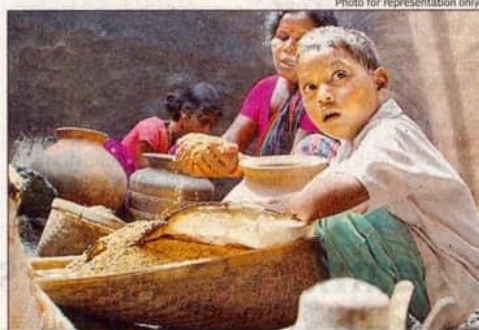


Photo for representation only

A BETTER LIFE AWAITS

ON THE CARDS

- ▶ Rail link for Kandhamal
- ▶ Development of tourism
- ▶ Opening of a medical college
- ▶ Nijukti Mela or job fair to absorb skilled manpower
- ▶ Ensuring all government welfare schemes reach the people
- ▶ MP offices in every block to address people's grievances

ning — KISS and KIIT.

The principal challenge for this backward region, which now features in Niti Aayog's list of aspirational districts, and the reason why development eludes it is perhaps lack of communication. There is no railway connectivity even today. "This is one of my dreams... to establish a rail link in my constituency.

Though how soon I can do it, I do not know. Clearing the land for railway tracks is a huge task," says Samanta.

Nearly 66% of the land area is under dense tropical vegetation. The tribals form nearly 75% of the population and live here in their natural heritage, depending largely on their land for survival.

"My constituency is the poorest in the country," says the MP. "But I want to bring about a sea-change in the district in the next five years," he promises.

A landscape that is riddled with Left wing insurgency — the dense forests and inaccessibility of the region have helped the rebels flourish — and ethnic clashes, though in the past, needs to address certain core issues to transform the region. "The last 30 years I spent on social work in the region has helped me understand where the fault li-

'I have found a bigger platform to serve people'

You were a Rajya Sabha member first and now a Lok Sabha member. How do you feel?

I am very happy because I have found a bigger and better platform to serve the people.

How do you plan to arrest migration?

I want to ensure one member of each family is able to earn Rs 10,000-Rs 15,000 and for this I have set up a skill development centre and also plan to set up small industrial units to help them find employment.

At one point, the region experienced violent ethnic clashes...

That is a thing of the past. They are all rehabilitated now.

How do you propose to keep the people away from the Maoists?

The best thing about the es," says Samanta.

Skill development is one of the first steps towards making the economically-vulnerable families self-reliant. A centre has been set up to train tribal men and women to make them job-ready. Small industrial units, including food processing, have been invited to absorb the trained workforce. "Giving the people sub-

Maoists is that they do not harm common people.

It appears the BJP and BJD are working in tandem. In the past 10 weeks or so, your party was there in the forefront supporting the NDA government.

Our CM has a very positive and constructive mind. He has extended support to the Centre wherever it was necessary for the good of the people, as in the passage of bills like Abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir and Triple Talaq.

Are you getting the same kind of help from the Centre? Your state also has so many demands...

Yes there are demands for special status, Polavaram, paddy MSP and other issues. All problems can be solved through mutual understanding and discussion in future. **TNN**



Want Kandhamal to be model dist: Samanta



PNS ■ PHULBANI

The District Press Club, Phulbani, welcomed Kandhamal MP Dr Achyuta Samanta and MLA Angad Kanhar at a function here on Monday.

Club president Sibaprasad Tripathy, secretary Ajit

Maharana and members were present. This was their first visit to the club after election by Samata. Speaking on the occasion, Samanta said that transparency should be maintained by media. Asserting that health and education are his top most priority, Samanta wanted that Kandhamal be a model district

in Odisha and Phulbani a model town.

He visited 20 blocks of his constituency for helping the flood affected people.

Kanhar said he wrote a letter to Union Tourism Minister for better communication to the tourist place of Kandhamal.

More on

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