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SCs,STs let down by ministers

VISAKHAPATNAM: In what can be termed as apparent lack of concern for the Dalits, the Union Minister of State for HRD, D Purandareswari, failed to turn up at a seminar on the rights of SC/ST employees here.

As per schedule, the Union Minister was supposed to attend the seminar on rights, privileges and responsibilities of the SC/ STs employees in the defence sector. The organisers had issued invitations to the press and other dignitaries only after confirming Purandeswari's participation.

But today, when the invitees came to the venue in time at 3 pm, the Union Minister was nowhere to be seen. After waiting for more than one hour, when the minister did not turn up nor was there any information, national secretary of SC and ST Employees Federation M Narasinga Rao called her at Hyderabad only to be told that she was too busy to come to the seminar.

As it turned out, some other high profile delegates, who had assured the organisers of coming to the seminar, also failed to come. Ironically, Minister for Tribal Rights Pasupuleti Balaraju was also one of them.

However, the seminar started with national general secretary of the federation, MK Ukey stating that the absence of the ministers amply demonstrated the indifference of the governments towards the issues of the SC/ ST's of late.

Accusing the Union Government of its negligence in filling up backlog posts in the defence and other sectors, he said the onus was on the Union Government to prove its credentials of being a government of the 'Aam Aadmi'.

Speaking on the occasion, Narsinga Rao said lack of reservations for SCs and STs in the private sectors meant that there were less opportunities for the unemployed youths of SC/ST.

He also alleged that the tribals in the country were at the receiving end of the unfavourable decisions of the Union government and added that the absence of Minister Balaraju showed the state government's lack of interest in looking after the welfare of the tribals.

MLAs Tynala Vijay Kumar, Siveri Soma and G Baburao and SC and ST employees in defence sector were present.

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