

[*Translation*]

Denudation of forests in north region

3125. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to State:

(a) Whether Rajasthan, Haryana and Union Territory of Delhi are witnessing large scale denudation:

(b) Whether the above regions are prone to onslaught of desert; and

(c) If so, the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) No large scale denudation has been reported from Rajasthan, Haryana and Union Territory of Delhi.

(b) Desertification is reported to be on the progress in Haryana and Rajasthan.

(c) Steps taken to check desertification include sand dune fixation, afforestation, pasture development, shelter-belts and water conservation works.

Recognition of degrees of Shastri and Acharya by public sector undertakings

2126. MAHANT ABEDYA NATH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'Shastri' and 'Acharya' degrees in Sanskrit recognised by Government as equivalent to graduation and post-graduation respectively are recognised by Government, where applicable to promotions and increments;

(b) if so, the names of public undertakings which are following this policy; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. M.G.K. MENON) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Government do not maintain a list of public undertakings which are following for the purpose of promotion and increments. The Government policy of recognition of Shastri and Acharya degrees in Sanskrit as equivalent to graduation and post-graduation. However, Government has issued a circular regarding equivalence of Sanskrit examinations. This has been sent inter alia, to public undertakings; and will be repeated to enable compliance.

[*English*]

Board of Administration in Kendriya Bhandar

3127. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Board of Administration of the Kendriya Bhandar has not been formed for the past over three years;

(b) whether irregularities in the purchase of items aggregating to lakhs of rupees have been brought to the notice of the authorities;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to investigate these irregularities;

(d) whether a number of appointments