

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA): (a) No, Sir. The schemes for grant of pre-matric scholarship to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Students are formulated and operated by State Governments and Union Territory Administrations and not by the Central Government. The Central Government, therefore, is not sharing any expenditure with the State Governments in paying the pre-matric stipend to SC and ST students of those States. The Central Government is, however, sharing 50% of the expenditure for awarding pre-matric scholarships to the children of only those who are engaged in unclean occupations, viz., scavenging of dry latrines, tanning, flaying, irrespective of their casts under a centrally sponsored scheme.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Orissa had requested the Central Government in May 1982 to share the burden of expenditure incurred in paying pre-matric stipend to SC/ST students with the State Government on 50 : 50 basis. But, the Central Government had expressed its inability to accede to the request of the State Government. The State Government has reportedly taken up the matter with the Planning Commission.

Cultural ties with U.S.A.

1254. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether efforts have been made by Government to establish cultural ties with U.S.A. ; and

(b) if so, the details of the ties proposed to be established to have better understanding with USA ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A festival of the American Performing Arts was organised in India in 1984 and a Festival of Indian Visual

& Performing Arts is being organised in the U.S.A. in 1985-86.

Preservation of Wildlife and Environment

1255. SHRIMATI MADHURI SINGH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a workshop to educate army personnel on the importance of wild life preservation in Rajasthan ;

(b) the measures taken to promote preservation of wild life and environment ;

(c) whether there is a proposal have such a workshop for other people working in different sectors to preserve wild life in their areas also ; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST (SHRI BIR SEN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is attached.

(c) and (d). Several steps are being taken for creating general awareness to enlist public support for wildlife conservation. The mass media, films, audio-visuals, publications and other publicity material are being used for this purpose. Special programmes are arranged on the All-India Radio and the Doordarshan. Visitor information and education centres are being established in selected wildlife reserves and zoos. Leading non-governmental organisations like the World Wildlife Fund—India and the Bombay Natural History Society have been organising nature camps and other educational programmes for children and the youth. During the Wildlife Week, held in October every year, special attention is focussed on these efforts all over the country.