

Assistance to Maharashtra for Forest Plantation

5013. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have given assistance to the State of Maharashtra for forest plantation in tribal areas;

(b) if so, the details of the areas covered; and

(c) the different kinds of plants planted in these areas under this centrally sponsored scheme during the last three years?

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) and (b). Central assistance has been provided to the Government of Maharashtra for planting in forest areas, which include tribal areas, under the scheme of Rural Fuelwood Plantations and the Drought Prone Areas Programme. The districts covered are Ahmednagar, Nasik, Jalgaon, Thane, Kolhapur, Sindhudurg, Parbhani, Pune, Sholapur, Sangli, Jalana, Dhule, Aurangabad, Satara, Beed and Osmanabad.

(c) Species being raised are mainly for fuelwood, fodder and forest produce.

Open Universities

5014. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) State-wise number of open universities set up in the country so far;

(b) whether one such open university has been set up at Kota in Rajasthan;

(c) if so, the Central assistance extended to that university in 1987-89 and 1989-90; and

(d) the policy of Government with regard to the expansion of such open universities in 8th Plan?

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) The State-wise number of open universities set up in the country so far is as follows:

Andhra Pradesh	—	1
Rajasthan	—	1
Bihar	—	1
Maharashtra	—	1

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No development assistance has been extended to the Kota Open University so far. However, University Grants Commission provided a sum of Rs. 5,000 to the University in 1988-89 under its Book Writing scheme and a sum of Rs. 60,000 in 1989-90 for organising an international seminar on Philosophy of Social Sciences.

(d) One of the objects of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is to encourage the Open University and distance education system in the educational pattern of the country and to coordinate and determine the standard in such system.

The expansion of the Open University system in the 8th Plan would, to a large extent, depend on the availability of funds for this purpose and the view taken in the matter by State Governments.