

(a) whether he has given approval for the constitution of a group of experts to deal with the boundary dispute between Meghalaya and Assam;

(b) whether the group has been constituted; and

(c) if so, the terms of reference for the group ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN) : (a) to (c). According to available information, the Governments of Assam and Meghalaya have mutually agreed to refer the question of interpretation of the inter-State Constitutional boundary to constitutional experts for advice. Further action in this regard is engaging the attention of the two State Governments. No reference seeking Central Government's approval in the matter has, however, been received from them.

Enriching of Uranium

4393. SHRI G.G. SWELL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether we are enriching uranium within the country for generation of nuclear power;

(b) if so, the technology that we employ; and

(c) whether there could be better and more economical technology ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Does not arise.

Port call by ship of U.S. Seventh Fleet

4394. SHRI DHARAMVIR SINGH TYAGI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a ship of the US Seventh Fleet made a port call at Cochin for a day early last year;

(b) if so, what measures were taken to ensure that the said ship was not nuclear propelled or a nuclear-weapon carrying one in conformity with the Government's declared stand of not allowing nuclear ships of any foreign navy inside an Indian port; and

(c) whether the second port call by another US Seventh Fleet ship scheduled for the current summer at the Marmagao port has materialised ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) A US Navy frigate USS Whipple called at Cochin from February 16 to 18, 1984.

(b) Government policy regarding port calls by foreign naval ships was laid down in a formal note from the Ministry of External Affairs to all the foreign Missions in New Delhi on 17th November, 1972 in the following terms : "The Ministry would like to draw particular attention of the Missions to the UN General Assembly Resolution No. 2822 (XXVI) of 16th December, 1971 regarding the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace which *inter alia*, calls upon the Great Powers to enter into immediate consultations with the littoral States of the Indian Ocean with a view to eliminating from the Indian Ocean the disposition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. The Government of India trust that requests for host facilities will not be sought for vessels which have nuclear weapons on board."

The Government of India expects all the foreign Governments to respect our stated policy in this regard.

(c) A US navy frigate USS Townes called at Goa February 28 to March 3, 1985.

Seizure of arms by Meghalaya Police from Assam Regimental Centre Quarter

4395. SHRI G.G. SWELL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a huge cache of arms and explosives were seized by the Meghalaya police in May from a house in the family quarters of the Assam Regimental Centre, Happy Valley, Shillong;

(b) whether among those arrested were a serving ARC Havildar and his wife, and the son of an ex-army Subedar; and

(c) whether interrogations revealed that these persons had links with insurgents in the North-east ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Preservation of art and culture of Himalayan Belt

4396. SHRI JITENDRA PRASADA : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to constitute an Authority or high powered body for preserving ancient art and culture of all the hilly areas located in the Himalayas and its valleys; and

(b) if not, the alternative steps proposed by Government to preserve the same ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING, ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

AND PENSION AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO) : (a) and (b). There is no such proposal at present. Government has, however, initiated special programmes for preservation of art and culture of the Himalayan region. These include :

- (i) documentation of various forms of performing arts of the region;
- (ii) organisation of training programmes for performing arts;
- (iii) preservation of folk musical instruments and other artefacts of this region in the museums;
- (iv) grant of financial assistance to various voluntary organisations engaged in the promotion of these activities;
- (v) preservation and conservation of monuments/paintings;
- (vi) collection of manuscripts ; and
- (vii) documentation of murals.

Thrust to new forest policy

4397. SHRI JITENDRA PRASADA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 383 on 10 April, 1985 regarding afforestation programmes for hill areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in new forest policy and state :

(a) whether the main thrust of new forest policy among others will be on complete ban on felling of trees for atleast 20 years and provide for incentives to the farmers similar to those admissible under family planning programmes, for planting more trees including fruit trees like apple trees with a view to checking soil erosion and denudation of hilly areas which constitute the catchment areas and sources of Ganga and Yamuna and their tributaries; and