

- (b) whether this is to be on reciprocal basis;  
 (c) if so, the details thereof; and  
 (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (d). In pursuance of our policy of encouraging people-to-people contact between India and Pakistan Government have decided, notwithstanding the constraints imposed by limitations of staff at our Mission in Islamabad, to substantially increase the number of visas issued to Pakistani nationals desiring to visit India.

Enhanced people-to-people contact would promote understanding between the two countries.

#### Report on World Population and Women in India

491. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has since been drawn to the recent UN report on the world population and UNICEF report on the women in India;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the steps taken to ameliorate the deplorable conditions of the Indian women?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) Government is aware of the Report on "The State of World Population", 1996 brought out by United Nations Population Fund.

(b) and (c). Government has taken note of the Report which gives a global overview of the rise in population particularly in urban areas, difficulties in providing adequate infrastructure, urban poverty, development of women, investment in health and education etc.

The Government is implementing a large number of women-specific programmes for their advancement which, inter-alia, focus on better opportunities for their education and health-care as well as on greater opportunities for economic empowerment through formation of self-help groups of women and through convergence of various state-sponsored schemes and programmes at the grass-root level.

#### Sainik Schools

492. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item published in the 'Pioneer'

dated June 29, 1996 under the caption "Sainik Schools hold no hope for soldiers"; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is enclosed.

#### STATEMENT

The caption "Sainik Schools hold no hope for soldiers" given to the news item published in "The Pioneer" dated June 29, 1996, is misleading. There is no proposal to abandon the Sainik Schools by the Government.

2. The scheme to establish Sainik Schools was introduced in 1961. The aim of the Sainik Schools is to prepare boys academically, physically and mentally for entry into the National Defence Academy. The other objectives include removal of regional and social imbalances in the officers cadre of Armed Forces and bringing Public School education within the reach of common man.

3. 4720 cadets from the 18 Sainik Schools established between 1961 to 1978 in 18 major States of the country have joined the National Defence Academy upto 1995. All students including those from Sainik Schools who have qualified 10+2 or equivalent examination are eligible for appearing for written examination for National Defence Academy conducted by UPSC. The average intake into NDA of Sainik Schools students out of a total of 660 admitted annually, for the last six years has been 63. The details of performance of Sainik Schools students in UPSC, NDA entrance examination, and at Services Selection Board vis-a-vis other eligible students is as under :-

	Sainik Schools	All other Schools
(a) Average pass percentage at UPSC, NDA Entrance Examination	36	09
(b) SSB Qualifiers at first attempt	08	02

These figures will show that Sainik Schools are providing their share of cadets to NDA

4. A proposal has been made for transfer of Sainik Schools to Ministry of Human Resource Development which in conformity with the recommendation of the Standing Committee of Parliament on Defence (1994-95), 10th Lok Sabha, that education is not an essential activity for the