

Idols stolen from Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar

3105. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SINHA: Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether five idols were stolen on 10th August, 1973 from the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar;

(b) whether the thieves have so far been apprehended and idols recovered; and

(c) if not, the efforts made or being made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (PROF' S. NURUL HASAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The State police is investigating the case.

Strengthening of Consumer Co-operatives

3106. SHRI R. V SWAMINATHAN: SHRI P. M. MEHTA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering the question of strengthening the consumer co-operatives in the country; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The need for strengthening and development of consumer cooperative has been recognised, so as to enable consumer cooperatives to play a dominant role in the public distribution system for essential commodities. Guide-lines and norms for sound de-

velopment of consumer cooperatives and their efficient working have been discussed at various forums and circulated to State Governments and consumer cooperatives for adoption and implementation. Besides, continuance of the Central Government guarantee scheme, the Government of India have introduced a Central Sector scheme for development of consumer cooperatives having growth and employment potential. Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided for the setting up of new department stores and other retail outlets, and expansion of existing stores, on the basis of carefully drawn up projects. Financial assistance is also being provided to State Consumer Cooperative Federations to enable them to undertake pooling and coordination of purchases for consumer cooperative stores on a larger scale. Detailed plans and programmes have also been drawn up for the Fifth Plan, which envisage the setting up of new department stores and large retail outlets on scientific lines, as also rehabilitation of weak stores, pooling and streamlining of purchases by strengthening the wholesale sector at the State and national levels, formation of managerial cadres and expansion of consultancy services, intensification of training programmes, and provision of adequate financial and administrative support by the States and the Centre

World Seed Bank for Food Crop

3107. SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether world seed bank for food crops is in the offing;

(b) if so, when it is likely to be built in India;

(c) whether at the Hyderabad Centre, germ plasm for the four crops has been assembled; and

(d) the main purpose of the proposed world seed bank in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANASAHEB P. SHINDE):
 (a) Establishment of a global network of seed or germ plasm bank is being contemplated by Food and Agricultural Organisation.

(b) It has not yet been decided how many such banks will be established or when and where. There is a good chance that one of the centres will be located in India.

(c) At Hyderabad germ plasm of four crops—Sorghum, Red gram (arhar or tur), Bengal gram and Groundnut—will be collected under the programme of research being developed by the International Crops Research Institute for semi-arid Tropics.

(d) The main purpose of the seed banks is to catalogue and preserve the existing varieties of crops, study their characteristics for possible use of particular varieties for crop improvement programmes by making their seed available to different research stations all over the world.

Agitation by the F.C.I. employees and its affect on distribution of wheat

2108. **SHRI BAKSI NAYAK:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether distribution of wheat throughout the Union Territory of Delhi was seriously affected during the middle of September due to the agitation launched by the F.C.I. employees; and

(b) the reaction of the Government of India thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):
 (a) and (b). To overcome difficulties created, due to the agitation of the

FCI employees, the Delhi Administration in consultation with the FCI management has made special alternative arrangements and the work of distribution of wheat was not allowed to be interrupted.

Students graduated from different universities

3109. **SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE:** Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of students who graduated and passed M.A., M.Sc., M.Com., M.T.; or any other equivalent examinations in different Universities of India in the year 1971 and 1972, year-wise and University-wise;

(b) the reasons for the decline of the number of successful students in higher and university examinations;

(c) whether the number of students for higher studies specially Medical, Engineering and Technical has consistently decreased and a serious apathy is growing among our youth for such education; and

(d) if so, what steps the Education Ministry is going to take with a view to create enthusiasm among the students and youths so that they can play an effective role in building the nation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE (SHRI D. P. YADAV): (a) The available information is given in Statements 1(a) and 1(b) laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-5883/73].

(b) On the whole the decline in the number of passes in the various Degree examinations is not discernible. However, some Universities have assigned some reasons for decline in few courses which are given in the enclosed Statement No. II.