

(a) the views given by the commission for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes to his Ministry for amending various Acts meant for welfare of these communities and enacting new laws for them during the last three years;

(b) the action taken by the Government on the views given by SC/ST Commission;

(c) whether the Government have taken any decision for making amendments to the existing Acts and Rules meant for SCs/STs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (d) The National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes presents its report, under Article 338 of the Constitution, to the President, annually and at such other times as it deems fit. Such reports contain the suggestions/recommendations of the Commission. The Commission has so far presented four reports and a special report. The first, the second and the special report of the Commission have already been laid on the Table of both Houses alongwith action taken report. The preparation of action taken reports on the third and the fourth report of the Commission is in process.

#### **Recitation of Saraswati Vandana**

3439. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to have recital of the 'Saraswati Vandana' at the Government functions after the protest of the Education Ministers of some States in the recent Conference of Education Ministers;

(b) whether there had been 'Saraswati Vandana' at the Government functions prior to the said conference; and

(c) if so, the names of such functions in which 'Saraswati Vandana' was done ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

#### **Seminar on Lower Judiciary**

3440. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a Seminar on lower judiciary was organised by the All-India Lawyers Forum for Civil Liberties in New Delhi on August 22, 1998; and

(b) if so, the points discussed in the Seminar and the outcome thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Consultants Appointed by Election Commission**

3441. SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Election Commission has appointed Consultants during the years 1997 and 1998;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and terms and reference of the contract;

(c) whether such a contract to appoint consultants is in violation of Government instructions; and

(d) if so, the details of other facilities being provided to such consultants in violation of the rules ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a), (b) and (d) According to information made available by the Election Commission of India, it has engaged a Consultant w.e.f. 1.1.98 to assist it in its functioning, particularly in the area of legal work. His consolidated fee has been fixed at Rs. 15,300.00 per month from 1.1.98 to 31.3.98 and Rs. 10,800.00 per month from 1.4.98 onwards. Facility of a telephone and of being picked up from his residence and being dropped back by official vehicle has also been provided to him.

(c) The terms and conditions of engagement of the consultant were the terms under which he, after negotiation with the Election Commission of India, agreed to serve it and were not strictly in accordance with the executive instructions, required to be followed by the Government Departments while engaging Consultants.

#### **Roads in Dadra and Nagar Haveli**

3442. DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is no proper road communication link in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and people find difficult to commute by road;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the action proposed to be taken in the matter;