

(d) whether the Government propose to ensure the availability of various scientific instruments in adequate numbers in higher secondary schools and colleges; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (e) Some Boards like Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) have made it a mandatory condition that for the affiliation/renewal of affiliation, the laboratories in the schools should be fully equipped as per the requirements of the syllabi, which continue to change from time to time. However, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, "Improvement of Science Education in Schools", States/Union Territories are inter-alia assisted for upgradation and strengthening of science laboratories in Secondary/Senior Secondary Schools. Colleges are established and managed by the State Governments/Private Managements. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the concerned State Governments/Private Managements to ensure that adequate number of scientific equipments are available in the colleges established by them.

[English]

AIR Station in Ernakulam, Kerala

1802. SHRI A.C. JOS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have any proposal to convert the present local radio station functioning in Ernakulam district Kerala to the status of a regional station with full-fledged news unit;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Two regional news units are already functioning at Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala, which cover all important news emanating from Kerala.

Pollution at Religious Places

1803. SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are working on some scheme to preserve the environment and check pollution at religious places of national importance;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress of the work undertaken to check pollution at such places in Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) There is no Centrally sponsored scheme specifically for preserving environment and checking pollution at religious places, but the Government have formulated a National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for restoration of river water quality as an extension of Ganga Action Plan (GAP). Under this scheme, major towns located on the banks of rivers have been taken up for control of pollution including some prominent religious places like Varanasi, Allahabad, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Ujjain, Nasik etc.

(c) No Centrally sponsored scheme for checking pollution at any religious place in Rajasthan has been taken up.

[Translation]

Grant for Educational Centres

1804. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government provide grant to the voluntary organisations running educational centres in tribal, forest and dalit areas;

(b) if so, the number of voluntary organisations which were provided grants and the amount allocated to them during the last three years; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) The Government provides grants to voluntary organisations for running education centres under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes in various States/Union Territories which includes running educational centres in tribal, forest and dalit areas. The details of grants of Rupees one lakh and above are generally contained in the Annual Report of Department of Education which are circulated to the Hon'ble Members of Parliament and also placed in Parliament Library.