

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The activities of the Indian Cultural Centres abroad are constantly examined and reviewed by Constituent Bodies of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, viz. Governing Body and General Assembly. On the basis of this process, the annual programme of the ICCR is drawn up.

(c) does not arise.

[Translation]

Use of Fertilizers

3162. SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the chemical fertilizers being used in agriculture on large scale are proving dangerous to human health;

(b) if so, whether any study has been conducted in this regard; and

(c) the effective steps being taken by the Government to prevent the excess use of fertilizers in agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) There are studies on the subject of chemical residues and their impact on human health. It cannot be concluded that the use of chemical fertilizers in agriculture is proving dangerous to human health.

(c) In general it cannot be said that the use of fertilizers in India is excessive. The average consumption of fertilizer nutrients in India is 86 Kilograms per hectare during 1997-98 against 345 Kilograms in Egypt, 135 Kilograms in Bangladesh, 375 Kilograms in Japan and 113 Kilograms per hectare in Pakistan, as per latest available data. Moreover, Government has promoted the concept of integrated nutrient management with appropriate use of organic manures and bio-fertilizers to reduce the reliance on chemical fertiliser.

[English]

Rice Research Station

3163. SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to set-up a Rice Research Station under the auspices of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in the

country, State-wise particularly Dhanbhandra in Barpeta district of Assam; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Transfer of Ghauri

3164. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan has procured Ghauri from North Korea in a secret deal;

(b) if so, whether Indian Government was aware of this secret deal;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Government have seen reports in the media that Pakistan's Ghauri missile is based on a design clandestinely obtained from North Korea.

(b) to (d) Government closely monitors all developments in Pakistan's missile programme and are aware that Pakistan has covertly obtained missile related technologies and materials from other countries.

Bangladesh P.M. Visit to India

3165. DR. SANJAY SINHA :
SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of Bangladesh has recently visited our country and held discussions with various leaders;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether she had offered to play mediatory role in the Indo-Pak negotiation during the course of her meeting; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) and (b) The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, paid a working visit to New Delhi on 16 June 1998 and held discussions with the Prime Minister. The talks covered bilateral relations, regional and international matters.

Both sides agreed on the need to intensify the excellent relations that exist between the two neighbouring countries, to increase exchanges at various levels including Parliamentary delegations, students and cultural groups and to step up commercial and economic interaction.

Border and security-related issues were reviewed. Both sides reiterated their commitment to SAARC in view of the important role it could play in promoting regional cooperation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Qualifying Marks in Tests For SCs/STs

3166. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the relaxation in qualifying marks in written test and viva-voce has been withdrawn with immediate effect vide O.M. No. 36012/23/96-Estt. (Res.) dated July 22, 1997;

(b) whether the posts reserved for SCs/STs in Group A, B, C, and D after July 22, 1997 have been filled up by the candidates of these communities;

(c) the number of posts of Group A, B, C, and D could not be filled up due to the fact that reserved category candidates of SCs/STs failed to achieve the prescribed qualifying marks; and

(d) the number of posts in Group A, B, C and D reserved for SCs/STs remaining unfilled have been permanently/temporarily deserted and filled up by the general category candidates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN: (a) In implementation of the Supreme Court Judgement in the S. Vinod Kumar's case, instructions were issued vide the said O.M. Withdrawing relaxation in qualifying marks and

standards of evaluation in favour of SCs and STs in matters of reservation in promotion.

(b) to (d) The information is not centrally maintained.

[Translation]

Sea Pollution

3167. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Arabian Sea near Mumbai has become polluted to a great extent; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The data collected under the programme, "Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Prediction System" of Department of Ocean Development have indicated that the creeks of Mumbai particularly Versova, Mahim and the Ulhas estuary are severely polluted; and Bassein, Dharamtar and Thane creeks are moderately polluted. However, it has been found that the levels of pollutants decrease towards offshore and the sea beyond 5 km is found to be clear.

(b) The Government of Maharashtra has taken the following steps for controlling pollution in the coastal waters of Mumbai:

(i) Implementation of a project by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay for sewage collection, treatment and disposal with World Bank assistance.

(ii) Implementation of restrictive industrial location policy in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region for the last two decades for controlling discharge of untreated industrial effluents into the Arabian sea near Mumbai. Accordingly the polluting industries are not allowed to be set up in the zone-1 of Mumbai Metropolitan Region and the existing industries are also not allowed to expand, if the pollution load is likely to increase.

(iii) Encouraging the setting up of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP) for small and medium scale industries.