

programmes for SC/ST population", under which projects are funded all over the country.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. A project entitled "Production of seeds and nursery, rearing of major carps and catfish (*Clarias batrachus*)" is being implemented by St. Anthony's College, Shillong since July, 98. The objectives of the project are to facilitate the production of fish seed of both the carps and the catfish, induced breeding and also the rearing of fry and fingerlings of these fishes along the modern scientific lines, training students of the college and also local farmers in the field through extension programme. This would not only help the students to start their own enterprise but also help to improve the financial status of fish farmers of this region.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Department of Biotechnology is interacting with the Govt. of Meghalaya for sponsoring research activities on medicinal and aromatic plants.

Bench of High Court at Trivandrum

1233. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Government of Kerala has sent a proposal for setting up of a bench of High Court at Trivandrum; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) No complete proposal has been received from the Government of Kerala, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, for establishing a bench of the High Court at Thiruvananthapuram. As such, it is not possible for the Central Government to take any action in the matter.

[Translation]

Linking of NH-34 Via Jamtada-Dumka-Pakudiar

1234. SHRI SOM MARANDI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the distance of North-East India would be shortened if G.T. Road and National Highway No. 34 are linked via-Jamtada-Dumka-Pakudiar;

(b) if so, whether any action plan is under consideration in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Mid-Day Meal Scheme

1235. SHRI TATHAGAT SATPATHY :

DR. RAVI MALLU :

SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY :

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MALLICK :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of States in which Mid-Day Meal Scheme has been introduced;

(b) whether the Government have reviewed its implementation;

(c) if so, the performance of different States in this regard;

(d) the allocation made to various States for the implementation of the scheme during the last three years, State-wise;

(e) the funds allocated for the scheme in 1998-99 State-wise;

(f) whether the Government have issued any fresh instructions to implement the scheme;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether irregularities have been committed in the running of this scheme;

(i) if so, the details thereof; and

(j) the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) The Mid-Day Meal Scheme has been introduced in all States and UTs.

(b) and (c) As the programme has been extended to all blocks and urban areas in the country only in the year 1997-98, it has not been possible to conduct any formal review or evaluation of the scheme so far. As such it is not possible to comment on the performance of different States in this regard.

(d) Statement of allocation of foodgrains during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 is enclosed.

(e) An amount of Rs. 1092.15 crores has been provided for the scheme in the budget of this Department in 1998-99. This is for payment of cost