

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA): (a) and (b). No, Sir. The Commission provides development assistance for strengthening institutional infrastructure such as buildings, books and journals, equipment and other facilities designed to promote the quality and level of teaching and research. The Commission also provides grants under various schemes of special assistance. The U.G.C. has not finalised the allocations to universities in the 8th Plan. However, the allocations are not likely to be less than in the 7th Plan.

[Translation]

Artificial Hockey Surfaces at Ranchi

1655. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the reply given on 30 April, 1990 to Unstarred Question No 6921 regarding Astro-Turfs in India and State:

(a) the reasons for the delay in laying artificial hockey surfaces at Ranchi, Bihar; and

(b) the kind of facilities proposed for the training of the players there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA): (a) Government of India sanctioned an amount of Rs. 40.00 lakhs to Bihar State Sports Authority in November 1988 for the laying of an artificial hockey surface at Ranchi. The installation of the surface is the responsibility of Bihar State Sports Authority, which appears to have taken time to execute the Agreement with the Supplier and also in taking other consequential action like installation of sub-base. This appears to be the cause of the delay.

(b) Bihar State Sports Authority is the owner of the surface. Therefore, primarily, it is their responsibility to develop the facilities for the training of the players.

Sport Authority of India has, however, decided to establish its Special Area Games (SAG) Hockey Centre at Ranchi. It has already taken up the construction of the Hostel for the SAG trainees who will also be utilising this Artificial Hockey Surface.

Poaching of Elephants in Karnataka

1656. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of elephants killed by ivory smugglers in Karnataka so far during the current year;

(b) the steps taken to protect the elephants; and

(c) the action taken against guilty persons?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NILAMANI ROUTARY): (a) It has been reported by the Karnataka Forest Department that during the current year five elephants have been killed by poachers.

(b) Steps taken by Government to protect elephants in Karnataka include:

(i) Coordination between the Chief Wildlife Wardens of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu by regular meeting and exchange of information of protection of elephants and illegal trade in ivory.

(ii) Police cell has been created under the Forest Department of Karnataka State for control of poaching.