

spersons for participation in international competitions and a system of monitoring the implementation of such a plan.

In the above context, Government has issued. An Excellence Development programme which will be effective from 1st March, 1988.

Grants to All India cultural Institutions

580. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any grants to All India Cultural Institutions and Indo-Foreign Cultural Societies have been sanctioned during the past three financial years including the current financial year;

(b) if so, the names of the Institutions and the Societies which have received the grants alongwith amount during this period separately for each year;

(c) whether the procedure for the sanction of the grants needs streamlining and whether the demand for grants is sufficiently met by Government; and

(d) the names of the institutions and the societies which applied for the grant during this period alongwith the reasons for not giving any grant to some of the Institutions or the Societies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L.P. SHAHI): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House as soon as possible.

Coordinating functioning of Heun Tsang Memorial with Nav Nalanda Mahavihara

581. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the decision to coordinate the functioning of the Heun Tsang Memorial and the Nav Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda in Bihar has since been implemented;

(b) if so, the broad outlines of the coordinated functioning and the date from which it has been done;

(c) if not, the reasons for delay and the date from which any coordination would be established; and

(d) the dates on which the construction work for the Heun Tsang Memorial was commenced and completed respectively as also the functions carried out at the Memorial since its completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L.P. SHAHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In March, 1985, the Bihar Govt. agreed in principle to the merger of Heun Tsang Memorial with Nava Nalanda Mahavihara and to establish an autonomous organisation. Subsequently, in a communication dated 4.3.86, the Bihar Govt. indicated that a thinking had developed for establishment of an Open University at Nalanda incorporating the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara into it. On 12.11.86, the State Government formally requested the Central Government to set up an Open University at

the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara. As this did not touch upon the original proposal of the merger of Hieun Tsang Memorial with the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, the State Government was requested to reconsider the matter. The matter is still under consideration of the State Government.

(d) The construction commenced in 1961 and was completed in 1984. It has not yet started functioning.

Loss of Forest Cover

582. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to refer to the reply given to the Unstarred Question No. 2431 on 10 April, 1985 regarding "Depletion of Forest area" and state:

(a) whether the National Remote Sensing Agency estimates indicating a loss of 18.74 per cent of forest area in the whole country between 1972-75 and 1980-82 have since been analysed and refined to determine the degree of error in their estimates;

(b) if so, the results of the analysis and the exact loss in percentage of the forest area in period under reference;

(c) whether any estimate regarding the loss/gain in forest area during the succeeding 15 years i.e. upto 1987 has also been prepared; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor and whether an upto date estimate would be prepared in this regard and the steps taken to extend the green cover on an adequate scale in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) and (b). According to a joint exercise undertaken by

Forest Survey of India and National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) using satellite data, the forest cover for the period 1981-83 was 19.52% of the geographical area of the country as against 14.10% assessed by NRSA during 1980-82. A fresh survey has not been done to assess exact loss in the forest cover during the period 1972-75 and 1980-82.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Ground truth was not available for the period 1972-75 to authenticate the interpretation of satellite imagery for that period. The review of the National Remote Sensing Agency's estimates for that period was not, therefore, taken up.

The Forest Survey of India has initiated monitoring of forest cover of the country on a two year cycle.

The existing green cover is being protected. The National Wastelands Development Board has been set up with the object of bringing five million hectares of land every year under fuelwood and fodder plantations.

Loss of forest cover

583. SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether growing and processing of tobacco causes of deforestation and spread of desert in areas of tobacco cultivation;

(b) whether any study has been made in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures taken to save the forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE