

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such agitation/strike in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

Freedom Fighter Pension

1950. SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to link the Samman Pension with Price Index;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating additional cost to be borne by the Government thereon; and

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to advise the States in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) The Central Government has already linked the Samman Pension with the Price Index. The first instalment of Dearness Relief @ 7% of the pension to various categories of freedom fighters and their eligible dependents has been released with effect from 1.8.1998. The estimated additional expenditure to be borne by the Central Government in this regard during the financial year 1998-99 is about Rs. 10.00 crores.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration. The expenditure on the schemes being implemented by the State Governments is not met from the Central revenues.

Right and Free Education

1951. SHRI FRANCISCO SARDINHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Right and free

education in Constitution" soon, appearing in *Hindustan Times* dated February 15, 1999;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government propose to set up a task force for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) In pursuance of the recommendations made in the Education Ministers' Conference in October 1998, a National committee of State Education Ministers has been Constituted by the Department to consider measures to pursue the goal of UEE in a Mission Mode.

In the first meeting of the committee held on 11 February, 1999 issues relating to the Constitution (Eighty Third Amendment) Bill, the report of the Expert Group on financial requirements for UEE and the need for institutional mechanisms for monitoring flow of funds under different educational programmes were among those discussed.

Funds to Consumer Courts

1952. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state the funds released by the Union Government to Consumer Courts during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): The funds released by the Union Government under One-time-grant scheme to supplement the efforts of the State Govts. and U.T. Administrations to strengthen the infrastructure of the Consumer Courts in last three years, State-wise, is given in the enclosed *Statement*.