

(b) whether any scheme has been formulated to popularise the Indian sports and to make them competitive at international level; and

(c) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) and (b) government assistance is being provided for promotion of Sports of Indian origin such as Kho-Kho, Kabaddi and Ataya Patya, as also for coaching, supply of equipment, scientific support, holding National Tournaments and for participation in International Tournaments under the scheme "Assistance to the National Sports Federations". The assistance is extended through the National Sports Federations concerned, which have been recognised for each discipline.

(c) The Kabaddi team secured the first place and received the Gold Medal in the last Asian Games held at Bangkok in December, 1998.

#### **Condition of Ashoka Pillar in Allahabad Fort**

993. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ashoka Pillar in the Allahabad Fort is in a State of Neglect;

(b) whether its antique value, being the only Ashoka Pillar so far known, bearing inscriptions over period of three millennia, has been brought to the notice of Government; and

(c) if so, what measures Government propose to take to save it from further ruin and to conserve it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) No Sir.

(b) Yes Sir, it is on account of its great antiquity that this pillar has been declared a monument of national importance under the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites & Remains Act of 1958.

(c) The Ashoka Pillar in Allahabad Fort is in a good state of preservation and necessary conservation measures are taken up periodically as per the requirement.