

Artists Sponsored under Cultural Exchange Programmes

2100. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many delegations or individual artists have been sponsored to other countries during the year 1997 under the programme of cultural exchange with other countries and people;

(b) how many delegations or individual artists have been received in India under the programme during the year 1997;

(c) names of delegations or individual artists from Andhra Pradesh covered under the programme during the year 1997; and

(d) whether there are any unique art forms with classical base included in the delegations and if so, the details of such forms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) During the year 1997, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) sponsored 103 cultural delegations/artists for performances abroad. Of these 61 cultural delegations/artists were sent to countries with which India has cultural exchange programmes.

(b) During the year 1997, 34 foreign cultural delegations/artists were received in India by the ICCR for performances in various cities. Of these, 11 were from countries with which India has cultural exchange programmes.

(c) The cultural delegations/artists from Andhra Pradesh covered under the programme during 1997 were:

1. Smt. Ananda Shankar Jayanth & group (Kuchipudi/Bharatanatyam/Contemporary dance)

2. Guru Jayarama Rao & Smt. Vanashree Rao (Kuchipudi)

3. Shri Shubender Rao (Sitar)

(d) Indian art forms with classical base presented in performances abroad by cultural delegations/artists sponsored by the ICCR in 1997 included:

Instrumental Music: Flute, Sarod, Sitar, Violin, Tabla, Mridangam, Gottuvadyam and other percussion, Rudra Veena, Shehnai, Sarangi, Santoor.

Vocal Music: Hindustani, Carantic, Light Classical.

Dance: Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kathakali, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Manipuri, Mohiniyattam.

Meeting between BSF and Bangladeshi Authorities

2101. SHRI RAGHAVJI:
PROF. VIJAY KUMAR
MALHOTRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting was held recently between the BSF authorities of India and their counterparts of Bangladesh;

(b) if so, what are the areas of discussions; and

(c) what has been the outcome of such discussions?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. Director General-level talks were held between the Border Security Force and the Bangladesh Rifles from 25 to 28 October, 1998 in Dhaka.

(b) and (c) The subjects discussed covered issues related to border management including smuggling, security cooperation, cross border movement, illegal trafficking in women and children etc. The meeting met its intended purpose of discussing ground level issues regarding border management and steps for cooperation.

Grant for food processing institutes

2102. SHRI M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the grant given by Government to the food processing institutes and agencies with State-wise particulars;

(b) the steps taken by Government; and

(c) the mechanism to institute such food processing centres in various regions of the country to preserve the food in the period of abundance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries under its plan Schemes provides financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid and soft loan to Non-Governmental Organisations, Cooperatives, Public Sector Undertakings and Private Industries etc. for the development of food processing industries. These Schemes are project oriented and not State specific. During the year 1997-98 an amount of Rs. 22.87 crores has been utilised under the Plan Schemes of the Ministry.

The Ministry does not set up any food processing unit directly in any State.

The thrust areas of the Plan assistance are;

1. Establishment of post harvest infrastructure particularly cold chain facilities.
2. Establishment of Food Processing Industrial Estates/Parks.
3. Setting up/expansion/modernisation of food processing industries.
4. Research & Development.
5. Human Resource Development.

Sickness of NERAMAC

2103. SHRI DRUPAD BORGHAIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken to remove the sickness of North Eastern Regional Agricultural marketing Corporation (NERAMAC);

(b) whether Government have any proposal to have more food processing industries under NERAMAC; and

(c) if so, where will these be located in North-Eastern States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) In December, 1996,

NERAMAC was referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) because of its sickness, BIFR appointed the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) as the Operating Agency (OA) for preparation of a rehabilitation package in respect of NERAMAC. The rehabilitation package prepared by IDBI was considered by BIFR in April, 1998. As directed by BIFR, action has been taken for obtaining Government's approval for the induction of fresh funds as also financial restructuring of NERAMAC.

(b) and (c) There is no proposal to have more food processing industries under NERAMAC. However, as a part of the rehabilitation package prepared by the OA, it is proposed to establish a post-harvest handling centre for ginger at Burnihat, Meghalaya.

Vacant posts of Directors of AIR Stations

2104. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that more than 75 stations of All India Radio are functioning without any Director; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to fill up all these posts which are vacant for the last two or three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, how much more time will be taken to fill up these vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Yes, Sir. The posts of Directors at 106 stations of All India Radio are presently vacant.

(b) to (d) The shortage in Station Directors' grade is on account of officers in the feeder grade not being eligible for promotion. All officers eligible for promotion upto 1.10.1997 have already been promoted. Action for considering promotion of officers who have become eligible as on 1.10.1998 has already been initiated.