

CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) and (b) As reported by the Department of Tourism the project for the mounting of Sound & Light show at Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta was sanctioned by that Department on 25-3-86 at a cost of Rs. 15.50 lakhs out of which first instalment of Rs. 3 lakhs was released on 25-3-86 and second instalment of Rs. 7 lakhs on 5-3-87.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Imprisonment of Indians in Singapore

77. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN

REDDY : SHRI V.

GOPALSAMY : SHRI

PASUMPON THA.

KIRUTTINAN : SHRI

ANAND SHARMA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to a recent news item that over 70 Indians have been charged and some of them have been sentenced to imprisonment and three strokes of cane for overstaying in Singapore under a new tough immigration law that came into force on April 30, this year; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government of India with the Government of Singapore to defuse the situation and to help the helpless Indians ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indian nationals charged under the Immigration (Amend-

ment) Act, 1989, enacted by the Government of Singapore, which came into force with effect from 31-3-1989, were given assistance in obtaining legal aid. 10 Indian nationals were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment. Each of the 10 Indians was also sentenced to 3 strokes of the cane. The Government took up the matter with the concerned authorities of Government of Singapore with a view to persuading them to grant the clemency petition filed by 9 of the Indians. The President of Singapore granted clemency in respect of the sentence of caning on 3rd July, 1989. The prison sentences have however, not yet been reduced. In respect of the 10th Indian national, his appeal to the High Court of Singapore is pending.

On 17th July, 1989, the Singapore Government announced a second and final amnesty to enable all immigration offenders including those who have been arrested but are awaiting trial or repatriation, to be repatriated, without punishment from 18th July, until 8th August, 1989.

A team of senior officers of Ministry of External Affairs also visited Singapore recently and had detailed discussions with the concerned authorities with a view to prevent recurrence of the cases of illegal entry/stay of Indians in Singapore.

78. *[Transferred to the 27 July, 1989]*

Conversion of Purulia Kotshika Line into Broad Gauge

79. SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering to include the Purulia Kotshila narrow gauge into broad gauge in the conversion programme in the Eighth Five Year Plan ; and