

Statue vandalized in London

2456. DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether statue of Thiruvalluvar, the Tamil Saint, philosopher and poet installed at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London, has been vandalized; and

(b) if so, the steps that have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No. But the statue shows signs of wear and tear from exposure for over 10 years. Two scratches and small hole have also been observed.

Indo-Nepal treaty to curb crime

2457. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Nepal have signed an agreement to ensure that law-breakers in one country do not find easy refuge across the border;

(b) whether the two Governments have also agreed to update the vintage 1953 extradition treaty to enable extradition of third-country citizens,

(c) whether under this agreement legal assistance would be provided to facilitate cooperation in investigation and prosecution of crimes; and

(d) if so, by what time final decision of implementation of the agreement is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) According to the 1953 Extradition Treaty between India and Nepal, there is an agreement on the basis of reciprocity between the two Governments to deliver to each other those persons being accused or convicted of a crime committed in the territory of the other Government under specific circumstances and conditions enumerated in the Treaty. Subsequently, the two Governments initialled a new Extradition Treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaty (MLAT) during the Home Secretary level talks held in India in January 2005.

(c) The MLAT provides for cooperation between the two Governments in providing mutual legal assistance in criminal matters including investigations, enquiries, trials or other proceedings relating to an offence created by the Legislature of the Contracting State.

(d) The new Extradition Treaty and the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaty will come into effect after their signature by the two Governments.

Inclusion of India in UNNCRE Programme

2458. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's name has not been included in the participating countries list for the United Nations National Competitive Recruitment Examination Programme;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government have taken/proposed to be taken to enable Indian Qualified Youth to attend the United Nations National Competitive Recruitment Examination?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) National Competitive Recruitment Examination (NCRE) are organized by the United Nations (UN) to recruit junior professionals as a matter of priority from countries that are unrepresented and under-represented among the staff of the UN Secretariat. In addition, the exam is also conducted for nationals of those countries that are in danger of becoming under-represented or unrepresented. India is amongst the 21 Member States of the UN that are over-represented in the UN Secretariat and therefore the NCRE is not conducted for India..

Pows in jails of Pakistan and Bangladesh

2459. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of prisoners languishing in jails of Pakistan, Bangladesh and China;