

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI A. A. RAHIM): (a) and (b) The Government's attention has been drawn to a Convention held on 29th July, 1984, in New York by some Khalistani protagonists. No US Senator or Congressman participated in the Convention. An ex-Congressman, James Corman, participated in the Convention. A letter, which is in the nature of greetings, addressed by Mario M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, was read out at the Convention by his Assistant for Ethnic Affairs;

(c) The matter has been taken up with the Governor of New York by our Consul General in New York and our Ambassador in Washington has also taken up the matter with the US State Department.

#### **Joint Celebration of various Festivals of Different Communities**

2754. SHRI HUSEN DALWAI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to initiate any action for joint celebration of various festivals of different communities to inculcate the spirit of national integration in the people; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. VENKATASUBBIAH):

(a) and (b) In its meeting held in 1983 the National Integration Council had endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on Communal Aspects, that Citizens Committees may be constituted at the State, District and Thana level to promote inter-alia joint participation by all communities in the festivals. This recommendation was brought to the notice of State Governments and other authorities.

#### **Visit by a Minister of Cabinet rank of West Bengal Government to the USSR**

2755. SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Minister of Cabinet rank in the West Bengal Government recently visited the Soviet Union;

(b) if so, what was the purpose of the visit, the amount of foreign exchange incurred on the visit and the manner in which it was met;

(c) the names and status of the Soviet dignitaries with whom the visiting Minister had discussions and what were the subjects discussed; and

(d) whether necessary permission was obtained from the Government of India for the said purpose, if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI A. A. RAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir. Professor Sambhu Ghose, the West Bengal Minister for Higher Education, visited the Soviet Union from the 14th July to the 11th August, 1984.

(b) The purpose of the visit was to have medical consultations in respect of an ailment from which Prof. Ghose was suffering. The Government of West Bengal had given an official sanction to cover the visit to the Soviet Union. The Embassy of India, Moscow, incurred an expenditure of Rs 68,956.61 in foreign exchange on behalf of the West Bengal Government in this regard. This excludes expenditure of Rs. 40,132/- towards the air passages incurred by the State following Soviet dignitaries; Government.

(c) During his stay in Moscow Prof. Ghose had discussions with the Mr. N. S. Egorov, Deputy Minister of Higher Education; Prof. V. I. Tropin, Vice-Rector, Moscow State