

(b) No Sir. However, nominations for the awards are open to all. Besides inviting nominations from institutional sources like State/UT governments, Central Ministries/ Departments, Institutes of Excellence and Bharat Ratna and Padma Vibhushan awardees, a large number of recommendations are also received from various other sources like Governors, Chief Ministers, Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, private institutions/bodies and individuals etc. All nominations/recommendations received in the Ministry are placed before the Padma Awards Committee for its consideration. The Awards Committee scrutinizes all nominations/recommendations placed before it and makes its recommendations to the competent authority for approval.

(c) In terms of the rules/regulations governing Padma awards, 'Padma Shri' is awarded for distinguished service in any field of activity.

Invitation to freedom fighters

†1433. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all freedom fighters were invited on 150th anniversary of first war of independence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the State-wise details of number of freedom fighters presently getting pension?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has informed that to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of First War of India's independence, an inaugural function was organized on 11th May, 2007 at Red Fort, large number of youth participated in a march from Meerut to Delhi to commemorate the march of 1857, which ended at Red Fort. A large number of freedom fighters also attended.

(d) Since the inception of the Freedom Fighters Pension Scheme in 1972 till 31.1.2010, Samman pension has been sanctioned by the Government to 1,70,693 freedom fighters and their eligible dependents. State-wise break-up of freedom fighters/dependents who have been sanctioned pension is given in Statement refer to the Statement appended to answer to SQ. No. 184 part(a). Since pension is disbursed through Treasuries and Public Sector banks spread all over the country, and the power to release dependent family pension to eligible dependents of deceased freedom fighters has been delegated to the pension disbursing authorities, the total number of Freedom Fighters who are receiving pension is not maintained/available in this Ministry.

Impact of IVFRT on foreign tourists

1434. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.