

Union Territory of Himachal Pradesh with a view to raise its status to a Statehood; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to grant Statehood to that territory and the time by when it is likely to be granted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has decided to grant Statehood to Himachal Pradesh. A Bill to give effect to that decision will be introduced in Parliament as early as possible.

CRITICISMS AGAINST THE PERSONNEL OF I.A.S.

1010. SHRI HALYAN ROY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to recent serious criticisms against the personnel of the Indian Administrative Service by the Confederation of Central Government Officers' Association; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction to the criticisms and suggestions made by the said officers' Association?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM NAWAS MIRDHA) : (a) Yes, Sir; Government's attention has been drawn to some of the criticism against the personnel of the Indian Administrative Service by the Confederation of Central Government Officers' Association.

(b) Government have issued a contradiction to the factual inaccuracies in some of this criticism. The positive suggestions of the Confederation have been noted by the Government.

PILOT PROJECT FOR UNIVERSAL FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION

1011. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES be pleased to refer

to the reply to Starred Question No. 355 given in the Rajya Sabha on 11th March, 1970 and state :

(a) whether the pilot project for having a universal free and compulsory education, which was to be started in selected areas of the country, has since been started;

(b) if so, the areas which have been selected for the purpose; and

(c) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, the time by when the said project is likely to be started?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES (SHRI A. K. KISKU) : (a) to (c) The Study Group on Pilot Projects which was set up by the Ministry of Education and Youth Services has since finalised its report. The Study Group, among other things, has suggested definite Pilot Projects to be taken up in the field of elementary education. The report has recently been considered by the Conferences of Education Secretaries and Directors of Education/Public Instruction.

The State Governments will be requested to initiate the Projects after the proposals have been cleared with the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission.

MALPRACTICES IN EXAMINATIONS

1012. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any schemes or proposals under their consideration for counteracting malpractices in examinations and providing adequate protection to the invigilators; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES (PROF. V. K. R. V. RAO) : (a) and (b) The matter is primarily the responsibility of State Governments and University