

**ST status to Pahari and Argon of Jammu and Kashmir**

3180. SHRI G. N. RATANPURI: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has received recommendations from Jammu and Kashmir Government to declare Pahari and Argon population of Jammu and Kashmir as Scheduled Tribes;

(b) if so, the status of these recommendations; and

(c) whether Government of India will include these two tribes in the Scheduled Tribes of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of India on 15-6-1999 (further amended on 25-6-2002), has laid down the modalities for determining the claims for inclusion in, exclusion from and other modifications in the Orders specifying lists for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. According to these modalities, only those proposals which have been recommended and justified by the concerned State Government/Union Territory Administration and concurred with by the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) are to be considered for amendment of legislation.

The proposal for inclusion of "Pahari" speaking people in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Jammu and Kashmir State has been processed as per above modalities.

The proposal for inclusion of "Argon" community in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Jammu and Kashmir was processed as per extent modalities and was not supported by RGI.

**Protection of Toto Tribal families**

3181. SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any special programme for protection of rarest tribes of India on the verge of extinction, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) if so, what special assistance is being extended to existing only 25 rarest Toto Tribal families at Toto Para in Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal for protection of their language, culture and human existence, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA): (a) Among scheduled tribes, there are certain tribal communities who have declining or stagnant population, low level of literacy, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically backward. 75 such groups in