

(b) if so, the details of such cases reported during each of the last three years and the current year; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA) : (a) and (b) The available data is not indicative of any regular smuggling of priceless antiques and sculptures out of the country. However, Central Bureau of Investigation, New Delhi; has informed that two cases were registered in EOU-V IEO.II Branch during the year 2011 and 2012.

(c) The Archaeological Survey of India is committed towards the protection and safety of antiquities at the Centrally protected monuments, sites and museums as well. For the purpose, watch and ward staff have been deployed and their strength have been augmented by deploying private security guards, State Police armed guards and the Central Industrial Security Force. Constant interaction takes place between Archaeological Survey of India, Central Bureau of Investigation and Customs authorities to share information on the smuggling or art objects. India is also a signatory to the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Trafficking in cultural Property.

#### **Declaration of World Heritage Cities in Tamil Nadu**

628. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has selected some of the cities, including some from Tamil Nadu, to be declared as World Heritage Cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to get World Heritage City status to some of the cities of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Archaeological Survey of India has submitted the proposal of “The Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai” and ‘Delhi - Imperial Capital Cities’ in 2014 to the World Heritage Centre for the purpose of its inscription. As of now no city has been selected from Tamil Nadu to be declared as World Heritage City.

(c) The property of 'Delhi - Imperial Capital Cities' has been evaluated by the ICOMOS in October 2014. The additional information as asked by ICOMOS has been provided to ICOMOS.

**Low wage workers under EPF and new pension scheme**

629. SHRI S. THANGAVELU : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to let low wage earners choose between provident fund and the New Pension Scheme;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a bulk of the employees would be out of the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) net if Government goes ahead with the above proposal;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the low paid worker suffers deductions greater than the better paid workers in percentage terms; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) A proposal to provide option to employees between Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) and National Pension System (NPS) has been included in the proposed comprehensive amendment to the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.

(b) The impact of the proposed amendment cannot be assessed at this moment. It will depend on the options exercised by the members after amendment.

(c) and (d) The rate of Provident Fund contribution under the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 is similar both for low paid and better paid workers. It is quite natural that the quantum of contribution will differ between low paid workers and better paid workers. The deduction will definitely impact much to low paid workers than better paid workers.

**Revision of family pension of freedom fighters**

630. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR :

SHRI ARVIND KUMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that some of the State Governments including