

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) the total number of mosques identified for the purpose, mosque-wise; and
- (e) the steps taken so far, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (KUMARI SELJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Questions do not arise.

Special scheme for care of artists

3743. SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that Kuchipudi Exponent Guru Nataraja Ramakrishna, winner of several awards including Padmabhushan, passed away recently and had a pathetic end due to lack of financial support;

(b) whether Government will agree that while promotion and preservation of our art and culture is important, taking care of our legends and icons of culture in their old age, who are not second to any of our national monuments, is much more important especially when their financial position is bad; and

(c) whether Government would like to carve out a special scheme to tackle this issue and safeguard the self respect of our veterans?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (KUMARI SELJA): (a) A Padmashree and a Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellow, Guru Nataraja Ramakrishna expired on 07.06.2011 at the age of 87. However, it would not be correct to say that he had a pathetic end due to lack of financial support.

Before his death, Guru Nataraja Ramakrishna was looked after well by his disciples and received hospital care, with assistance from the State Government, for over 10 days in Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India is already administering a scheme of financial assistance to persons distinguished in letters, arts and such other walks of life, who may be in indigent circumstances and their dependents. Under this scheme, a financial assistance of Rs. 4000/- p.m. is paid to the artistes who have made significant contribution to arts, letters, etc.; are not less than 58 years of age; and whose income (including income of the spouse) does not exceed Rs. 4000/- p.m.

Conservation of heritage monuments in Assam

3744. SHRIMATI NAZMIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of heritage monuments in Assam which are getting damaged;