

Vol. 242

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Friday

3 February, 2017

14 Magha, 1938 (Saka)

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
RAJYA SABHA
OFFICIAL REPORT

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[P.T.O.]

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RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 3rd February, 2017/14th Magha, 1938 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*:

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Report and Accounts (2015-16) of Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi and related papers

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): Sir, I lay on the Table, under Section 23 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

(a) Annual Report and Accounts of the Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.

(b) Review by Government on the working of the above Bureau.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6331/16/17]

MoU (2016-17) between Government of India and HHEC Ltd.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): Sir I lay on the Table, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India (Ministry of Textiles) and the Handicrafts and Handlooms Exports Corporation of India Limited (HHEC), for the year 2016-17.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6421/16/17]

Report and Accounts (2015-16) of IICT, Bhadohi, U.P. and CEPC, New Delhi and related papers

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

(i) (a) Annual Report and Accounts of the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), Bhadohi, Uttar Pradesh, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.

(b) Review by Government on the working of the above Institute.

(c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (i) (a) above.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6480/16/17]

- (ii) (a) Annual Report and Accounts of the Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC), New Delhi, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.
- (b) Review by Government on the working of the above Council.
- (c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (ii) (a) above. [Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6481/16/17]

Notification of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS, THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): Sir, lay on the Table, under sub-section (6) of Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (Department of Pharmaceuticals) Notification No. S.O. 4100 (E), dated the 21st December, 2016, publishing the Drugs (Prices Control) Third Amendment Order, 2016.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6386/16/17]

I. Report and Accounts (2015-16) of a Society, Institute and Centre and related papers

II. Report of Law Commission of India on the Protection of Children Bill, 2016

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

- (i) (a) Annual Report and Accounts of the Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research (SAMEER), Mumbai, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.
- (b) Review by Government on the working of the above Organisation.
- (c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (i) (a) above. [Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6412/16/17]
- (ii) (a) Twenty-first Annual Report and Accounts of the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT), New Delhi, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.
- (b) Review by Government on the working of the above Institute.
- (c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (ii) (a) above. [Placed in Library. *See* No. L.T. 6413/16/17]

- (iii) (a) Annual Report and Accounts of the Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), Pune, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.
- (b) Review by Government on the working of the above Centre.
- (c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (iii) (a) above. [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 6411/16/17]
- (iv) (a) Annual Report and Accounts of the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Mumbai, for the year 2015-16, together with the Auditor's Report on the Accounts.
- (b) Review by Government on the working of the above Centre.
- (c) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (iv) (a) above. [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 6410/16/17]
- II. Two Hundred and Sixty-third Report of the Law Commission of India on The Protection of Children (Inter-Country Removal and Retention) Bill, 2016. [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 6409/16/17]

Report of Comptroller and Auditor General of India

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): Sir, on behalf of my colleague, Shri Piyush Goyal, I lay on the Table, under clause (1) of article 151 of the Constitution, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on Fuel Management of Coal Based Power Stations of NTPC Limited - Union Government (Commercial), Ministry of Power, Report No. 35 of 2016 (Performance Audit). [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 6247/16/17]

REPORTS OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON OFFICES OF PROFIT

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY (West Bengal): Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Reports of the Joint Committee on Offices of Profit.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I have to inform that a letter has been received from Shri Kunal Kumar Ghosh stating that due to the restriction of

not leaving the jurisdiction of Narkeldanga Police Station imposed by the High Court of Calcutta in the interim bail granted to him, he is unable to attend the sittings of the current (242nd) Session. He has, therefore, requested for grant of Leave of Absence for the 242nd Session.

Does he have the permission of the House for remaining absent from 31st January to 12th April, 2017 during the current (242nd) Session of Rajya Sabha?

(No hon. Member dissented)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Permission to remain absent is granted.

STATEMENT REGARDING GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

अल्पसंख्यक कार्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नकवी): महोदय, मैं आपकी अनुमति से यह सूचित करता हूँ कि सोमवार, 06 फरवरी, 2017 से प्रारम्भ होने वाले सप्ताह के दौरान निम्नलिखित सरकारी कार्य लिए जाएंगे:—

1. आज की कार्यसूची में शामिल निम्नलिखित में से बकाया सरकारी कार्य की किसी मद पर विचार:—

राष्ट्रपति जी के अभिभाषण पर धन्यवाद प्रस्ताव पर चर्चा।

2. वर्ष 2017-18 के लिए केंद्रीय बजट पर सामान्य चर्चा।
3. लोक सभा द्वारा पारित तथा राज्य सभा की प्रवर समिति द्वारा प्रतिवेदित रूप में शत्रु सम्पत्ति (संशोधन और विधिमाम्यकरण) विधेयक, 2016 पर विचार और पारित करना;
4. लोक सभा द्वारा पारित किए जाने के पश्चात् निम्नलिखित विधेयकों पर विचार और पारित करना:—
 - (i) मज़दूरी संदाय (संशोधन) विधेयक, 2017
 - (ii) विनिर्दिष्ट बैंक नोट (उत्तरदायित्व का समाप्त होना) विधेयक, 2017

RE. ISSUE OF A POINT OF ORDER

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, to protest against the illegal arrest of the leader of the Lok Sabha... *...(Interruptions)...*

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): Sir, I have a point to make. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Point of order! *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Sir, let me finish. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, my colleague, Shri Derek O' Brien, who stood right now to attract the attention, ...(Interruptions)... Sir, please allow me to make a point of order. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me first listen to the point of order. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, I have stood up. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will call you. ...(Interruptions)... I will call you.

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: The Minister is having a point of order! ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Point of order has a preference. ...(Interruptions)... Point of order has precedence. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I am also a ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Point of order has precedence. ...(Interruptions)... Point of order has precedence. ...(Interruptions)... देरेक जी, बैठिए ...(व्यवधान)... देरेक जी, बैठिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: I am also a Member of this House, Sir. ...(Interruptions)... And, I hope, no Member in this House will disallow me in using the privilege that you all enjoy. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now, point of order. This has precedence. ...(Interruptions)... Let me listen to the point of order. ...(Interruptions)... I will allow you, Mr. Derek. ...(Interruptions)... Yes, hon. Minister, what do you wish to say?

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY (West Bengal): On the Zero Hour mention, you have a point of order! ...(Interruptions)... No point of order in Zero Hour.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will allow you, Mr. Derek. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): Sir, on this 'point of order', I have a point of order. Can a Cabinet Minister raise a point of order? ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will give the ruling. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I think, one needs to understand ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister is also a Member; no problem. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I am sure Mr. Anand Sharma ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: No point of order in Zero Hour, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me listen. ...*(Interruptions)*... Even otherwise, I am listening to the Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I am sure, Mr. Sharma will yield here... ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: No point of order in Zero Hour, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your problem? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: A colleague in the Rajya Sabha ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: No point of order, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. You have to call the rule and tell me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the Rule under which you are raising this?

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Rule 258. My colleague, Shri Derek O' Brien, yesterday on a point that he wanted to articulate, and very rightfully so, did the same. However, he quoted an individual citizen who is not here ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, she is referring to yesterday ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, I am referring to yesterday because the House was misled. ...*(Interruptions)*... Allow me to finish. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, he named an individual ...*(Interruptions)*... He is a common citizen who is not covered by privilege ...*(Interruptions)*... not available in the House to defend himself.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, this is no point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me listen to it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: This is not a *neta* or a celebrity ...*(Interruptions)*... This is a common citizen. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sukhenduji, let me listen to it. *...(Interruptions)...*
How can I say something unless I understand it? *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: To attack or defame an individual
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sukhenduji, because you are shouting, I can't hear that. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Expunge the name of the individual as per the convention of the House. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sukhenduji, neither I understand what you are saying nor what she is saying. *...(Interruptions)...* I will decide it. *...(Interruptions)...*
Sukhenduji, I accept that you are the Vice-Chairman but you are authorised to give a ruling when you sit here, not when you are there. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, I have a right to speak. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. *...(Interruptions)...* Because the hon. Minister said that she wanted to raise a point of order. *...(Interruptions)...* The Minister is also a Member, as far as I am concerned. So, I can allow her. Let me first understand what she is saying. Only then can I give a ruling. *...(Interruptions)...* Listen to me. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, she is referring to yesterday
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is correct. Let me understand that. *...(Interruptions)...* Why do you give a ruling without understanding and without hearing this? *...(Interruptions)...* This is my point. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, my humble submission is *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would listen to you also. *...(Interruptions)...*
In any case, the Minister has a right to be heard. *...(Interruptions)...* Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...*
The Minister has a right to be heard. *...(Interruptions)...* Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...*
No, no. *...(Interruptions)...* Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* The Minister has a right to be heard. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Sir, under Rule 258, the individual, who was named yesterday by my colleague, Shri Derek O' BRIEN, is not a *neta*, not a celebrity. He is a common citizen who has a right to free speech but does not enjoy the privilege of this House. Sir, as per the convention of the House, I am beseeching you that kindly expunge the name of an individual as you have done so on many occasions.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would look into the record.

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: The individual who cannot defend himself ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will go through the record and do the needful. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: He is saying that a wrong done yesterday cannot be corrected today. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It can be corrected. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: It is a big fallacy. ...*(Interruptions)*... Thank you, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If a wrong thing was done yesterday, it can be corrected. ...*(Interruptions)*... I would go through the record. ...*(Interruptions)*... If there is anything like that, I will do the needful. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, Shri Derek O' BRIEN. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री शरद यादव (बिहार): उपसभापति जी, हमें भी बोलना है। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your problem? ...*(Interruptions)*... I will call you also. ...*(Interruptions)*... Shri Derek O' Brien. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, there are two points. I don't want to disrupt the House by going into the Well. But we need to make these two points.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Have you given any notice?

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Yes, Sir. There are two notices. One is on the hundred deaths.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is about Zero Hour. I will call you ...*(Interruptions)*..

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, let me finish this. ...*(Interruptions)*.. Give me thirty seconds. ...*(Interruptions)*.. Sir, you asked me to stand up. I sat when you asked Smritiji to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me understand one point.

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, please let me make this point.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am allowing you, but let me understand this. Are you raising it under Rule 267?

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Or is it a Zero Hour matter? Have you given any notice?

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, please let me make this point. You asked the hon. Minister to speak and it has nothing to do with what she has said. Sir, my limited point in thirty seconds is this. Illegal arrest of our Lok Sabha Leader of Trinamool Congress and an MP ...(Interruptions)...

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): Who says this?

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: I did not interrupt. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him have his say. ...(Interruptions).. Let him have his say. ...(Interruptions)..

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, when the Minister was speaking, I did not interrupt. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is only saying it is illegal. That is his view. Don't worry. That is his view only. ...(Interruptions).. No, no. ...(Interruptions)..

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): Sir, there is no notice ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sit down. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: This is not ...(Interruptions)... The Chair has allowed me.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Naqviji, I have allowed him. ...(Interruptions)... I have allowed you. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs wants to do your job. ...(Interruptions)... So, you ask him to come and sit in your Chair. ...(Interruptions)... What is this? ...(Interruptions)... He asked me to speak. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He already has a job.

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: आप दूसरे सदस्यों का समय खराब कर रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री डेरेक ओब्राइन: नहीं, नहीं। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: हम यह कह रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)... आप दूसरे सदस्यों का समय खराब कर रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति: आप बोलिए। आप बोलिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*... Mr. Derek, you speak.

श्री दरेक ओब्राइन: आप समय की बात मत कीजिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप समय की बात मत कीजिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Derek, you address the Chair. ...*(Interruptions)*... You say what you want to say. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नकवी: आप दूसरे मेम्बर्स का टाइम खराब कर रहे हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

RE. ILLEGAL ARREST OF LOK SABHA LEADER OF TMC

श्री दरेक ओब्राइन (पश्चिमी बंगाल): आप समय की बात मत कीजिए। सर, लाखों-लाखों लोग demonetization के कारण घंटों-घंटों लाइन में खड़े थे। So, don't talk to me about समय। Sir, I have two limited points. One, illegal arrest of our Lok Sabha leader and our Member; and two, if not today, I will try again. ...*(Interruptions)*... One second, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*... We will try again on Monday morning. We want this House to maintain one-minute silence for the 120 deaths which have taken place. ...*(Interruptions)*... If it does not happen, on this illegal arrest, we are walking out. ...*(Interruptions)*... Trinamool Congress is walking out. ...*(Interruptions)*...

(At this stage, some hon. Members left the Chamber.)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, Shri Sharad Yadav. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. V. MAITREYAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I have a point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No. Sharad Yadavji. ...*(Interruptions)*.. I have called Sharad Yadavji. ...*(Interruptions)*... Okay, under what rule? ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Sir, it is very simple. Can anybody raise an issue about a Member of the other House? ...*(Interruptions)*... Do you permit that? ...*(Interruptions)*... How do you raise a matter relating to a Member of the other House? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. V. MAITREYAN: He said that it is an illegal arrest. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Illegal or legal is not my concern. ...*(Interruptions)*... Listen to me. ...*(Interruptions)*... Why is Dr. Maitreyan getting so charged up about that? Please listen to me. A Member can raise here the matter of arrest of any citizen of this country. You please understand that. So, I allowed him to raise it. That's all. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Sir, please refer to it again. ...(Interruptions)... You are probably away from truth. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): That is unfair. ...(Interruptions)... It should be expunged. ...(Interruptions)... He has cast an aspersion on the Chair. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, you have not understood the rule. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: But, he is casting aspersion on your judgement. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, you should also read. ...(Interruptions)... You are a well-educated person. It is only when you criticise a Member of the other House or the speech of a Member of the other House that I invoke the rule. When you speak about any other Member, of their plight or their difficulties or arrest, I will not interfere. Furthermore, it is only his version that it is illegal. Only he said that. It is only his view. Why do you worry? The Government has a view. Government will say if it is otherwise. So, you do not worry about that. ...(Interruptions)... Now, Sharad Yadavji.

RE. DISCUSSION ON COMMON CIVIL CODE

श्री शरद यादव (बिहार): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं आपकी अनुमति से एक गंभीर सवाल यहां उठाना चाहता हूं। महोदय, कॉमन सिविल कोड में हिन्दुस्तान में लोगों को अपने-अपने धर्म का पालन करने के पूरे-पूरे हक संविधान के तहत प्राप्त हैं। संविधान के आर्टिकल 44 में साफ लिखा है कि साउथ में, नॉर्थ में, ईस्ट और वेस्ट में, हिन्दुओं के, ईसाइयों के, पारसियों के, आदिवासियों के अलग-अलग किस्म के लॉज हैं, लेकिन कॉमन सिविल कोड पर एक सवाल लगातार बहस का जरिया बना हुआ है। संविधान की मंशा यह है कि सब को pursue कर के, सब को समझाकर, सब लोगों की राय व मशवरे से इस पर विचार किया जाए, लेकिन लॉ कमीशन ने हमारी पार्टी, हमारी सरकार और नीतीश कुमार जी को इस बारे में लिखा है। महोदय, चाहे क्रिश्चियंस हैं, पारसी हैं, सिख हैं या जैन हैं, सब को अपने-अपने धर्म का पालन करने के लिए हमारे संविधान के तहत अधिकार मिले हैं। महोदय, हमारे यहां अलग-अलग traditions हैं, लेकिन संविधान के आर्टिकल 44 में साफ कहा है कि समझदारी से, प्रेम से, pursuation से सब को तैयार कर के आप कॉमन सिविल कोड ला सकते हैं, लेकिन लॉ कमीशन अभी से सब को पूछ रहा है और इस तरह का काम कर रहा है जोकि ठीक नहीं है। महोदय, हमारा देश कई तरह की विविधताओं से भरा हुआ है। यह देश कई तरह की विविधताओं से इसलिए भरा हुआ है कि हमको देश में हर तरह से जो शांति है ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir,...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No discussion on this.

श्री शरद यादव: इस देश में जो पूरी तरह से ...(व्यवधान)... संविधान में मौलिक अधिकारों में यह नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing this. ...(*Interruptions*)... No discussion. ...(*Interruptions*)... No discussion. I am only listening to him, to decide ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री शरद यादव: सबको यह हक मिला हुआ है और अपने-अपने धर्म के अनुसार चलने का सब तरह से इंतजाम है, लेकिन लॉ कमिशन सबकी सहमति लिए बगैर, सबसे बात किए बगैर ...(व्यवधान)... सबसे चर्चा कीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सीताराम येचुरी: मेंडेट से बाहर जा रहा है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री शरद यादव: मेंडेट से बाहर जा रहा है। ...(व्यवधान)... यह ठीक नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)... मेरा इतना ही निवेदन है कि यह ठीक नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay; I heard you. I got your point. ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री शरद यादव: पहले सबसे सहमति लीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will tell you, Yechuryji. ...(*Interruptions*)... No, no. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, I associate. ...(*Interruptions*)... I associate because I think that it is a serious matter.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yechuryji, listen to me. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: It is a serious matter ...(*Interruptions*)... No authority ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, it is serious and, that is why, ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री अली अनवर अंसारी (बिहार): एक राज्य का मुख्य मंत्री ...(व्यवधान)... भेजते हैं। ...(व्यवधान)...इस तरह से ...(व्यवधान)... Yes or no! ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. ...(*Interruptions*)... Please listen. ...(*Interruptions*)... Listen, please. This subject... ...(*Interruptions*)... Now, please understand. Ansariji, please sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Sir, I request you that we are in the midst of the elections ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is what I am saying. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: And some people would definitely like to make it an agenda. My request is, since a Member of Parliament has raised it...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am coming to that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Neither the Government should come into the picture nor any other person because then everybody would start. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is what I am saying. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Once the Government takes some stand, then we shall also have to take a decision.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay; let me say.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: I think you should finish it here.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me make a point.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: This was raised by a particular Member and finish it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay; that is what I am saying. Yes. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: The Government should also not say anything.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you for helping me, hon. LoP. That is my point because since Shri Sharad Yadav, a senior Member, had given notice for suspension under Rule 267, I only allowed him to raise it to decide as to whether the motion should be allowed or not. So I am not allowing the motion. I only heard him. That was the decision. ...*(Interruptions)*...

अल्पसंख्यक कार्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी): सर, पहली बात तो यह है कि जो शरद यादव जी ने कहा है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Don't complicate. ...*(Interruptions)*... Don't complicate. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: कॉमन सिविल कोड कोई स्काई लैब नहीं है। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, once the Government says something ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: अगर राजकुमारी ...*(व्यवधान)*... कर रहा है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Don't complicate. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: तो वह ...(व्यवधान)... में कर रहा है ...(व्यवधान)... संविधान के तहत है। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: I am sorry to say that...(Interruptions)... Then, we will have to... ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. ...(Interruptions)... Let us not have a discussion on this. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Let us not have any discussion. ...(Interruptions)...

श्री उपसभापति: नक़वी जी। ...(व्यवधान)... Naqviji, let us not have a discussion on this. Please forget it. ...(Interruptions)...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: इसमें कंप्यूजन की बात नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)... कोई भी कंप्यूजन नहीं होना चाहिए। ...(व्यवधान)... ऐसा कोई भी कदम न उठाएं, जो राजकुमारी के बिना हो। ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have not allowed that. ...(Interruptions)... Naqviji, I have not allowed that. No discussion. ...(Interruptions)... Listen Naqviji. Yechuryji, please sit down. I only allowed Sharadji to raise it. I have not allowed the motion. So, that is closed. No discussion on that because it is a sensitive issue. Let us not take it. ...(Interruptions)... Okay; now we go to the Zero Hour. Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION

Declaring Andaman Cellular Jail as a National Monument

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I want to raise one important issue regarding the Andaman Cellular Jail in our country. The Andaman Cellular Jail which is one of the tallest monuments concerning the freedom struggle is unfortunately not under the Archaeological Survey of India. I will urge upon the Government to bring the Andaman Cellular Jail under the Archaeological Survey of India. The revolutionaries had gone into this Andaman Jail in two phases. In the first phase, before the First World War and in the second phase, after the Second World War. In the Andaman Cellular Jail, the properly registered history is up to the first phase. But the second phase is not properly registered and they are selectively displayed in the museum. This is a very unfortunate thing because if we go to the top of the Cellular Jail, at the Watch Tower, there are marbles where the names of the revolutionaries are depicted. As I come from Bengal, incidentally, majority of the names craved in the marble are from Bengal. I just want to take this opportunity to

mention here one incident regarding the Chittagong youth rebellion. The Chittagong youth rebellion was one of the most important incidents that took place at the time in undivided India in Chittagong, now in Bangladesh. A young school master headed 60 young school boys. They raided the armoury. They cut off the telegram and telephone posts, and Calcutta was severed from Chittagong. For two years, Chittagong declared independence. Incidentally, among all these people who were given death sentences, majority of them were under 18 years and their death sentences were converted into life imprisonment. They had gone to the Andaman Cellular Jail. The youngest one was a 13 year old boy. Incidentally, unfortunately, the names of these people are missing from the Andaman Cellular Jail. The display does not have these names. The Names of these people must be included. Incidentally, Master Sujoy Sen and other inmates, and the revolutionary Ganesh Ghosh happened to be an elected Member of the other House of the Parliament representing the Communist Party of India (Marxist). These people who were involved in Chittagong, they did not give in writing to the British Government that they would be approvers of the British Government. Unfortunately, the jail has the names of approvers in a most coveted fashion, but these names are missing. I urge upon the Government to look into this history and these names must be incorporated; proper history must be incorporated, and the Archaeological Survey of India must take over the Andman Cellular Jail so that proper history is incorporated. What is happening there? History is scuttled. These people must be given due importance and due respect. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI LA. GANESAN (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA (Nominated): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

SHRI MAJEED MEMON (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Vivek Gupta, not present. Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu.

**Need to the equip Central teams visiting the sites of natural calamities
with modern technical facilities**

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I seek the attention of the Union Government towards the obsolete, delayed method of sending Central teams to the calamity prone areas and localities, and the necessity to improve the method of assessing the damages and the rehabilitation requirements during the calamities, such as, floods and drought, with the help of advanced modern technological geo special tools. In our country, we are regularly facing several types of calamities. Now, several parts of the country are reported to have very severe drought, and from several locations, floods are also reported. If the Union Government is to send a Central team even on a war footing, it will take minimum three months, and in the normal course, it is taking six to nine months to send a Central team and have the assessment, and to take note of the damages that have occurred, whereas, there is every necessity to have the Disaster Management Mode, with the help of the satellite image and satellite mapping facilities, and with the support of the Meteorologic centres which we are having throughout the country. In each and every district, they can have the ready information about the calamities that are occurring, and the damages that are expected, and in close coordination with the State Government's Rehabilitation Departments and the Revenue Departments, they can also have the exact assessment even before sending any Central team to the location to have the assessment. But, as the delayed visit of the Central teams is creating a laughing situation, and we could not have the exact assessment about the real calamity that had occurred earlier, way back three months to nine months, I urge upon the Union Government to utilize the geo special satellite and modern advanced tools of the weather and the calamity assessment in the National Disaster Management Mode, and to send the Central teams when and where it is highly required, with adequate promptness, within 15 days of the message from the State Government, to have the exact assessment. Otherwise, this will become more obsolete, and this will not yield proper support to the relief-expecting population of such aggrieved localities and areas of the country. Thank you very much.

SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR (Himachal Pradesh): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu.

SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu.

**Problems being faced by the students due to restriction on
number of attempts for AIPMT**

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन (बिहार) : उपसभापति महोदय, मैं उन अभिभावकों और स्टूडेंट्स की भावनाओं को सदन में रखना चाहती हूँ, जो इस वक्त बहुत ही चिन्तित और परेशान हैं। माननीय सुप्रीम कोर्ट के आदेश के बाद गत वर्ष से देश में मेडिकल कॉलेज में प्रवेश की प्रक्रिया में एक बड़ा बदलाव किया गया है। NEET को लागू कर दिया गया है और देश भर में मेडिकल कॉलेज में प्रवेश NEET के अंकों के आधार पर होने वाली counseling के जरिए दिए जा रहा हैं। NEET 2017 का notification और bulletin 31 जनवरी को CBSE द्वारा जारी कर दिया गया है। इस बार NEET के आयोजन में कई बदलाव किए गए हैं। परीक्षा के अधिकतम अवसरों की सीमा तीन निर्धारित कर दी गई है, वहीं अधिकतम आयु भी 25 वर्ष कर दी गई है। साथ ही साथ एक बात का उल्लेख किया गया है, जिसे स्पष्ट किया गया है कि यदि कोई छात्र गत वर्षों में तीन बार AIPMT या NEET की परीक्षा दे चुका है, तो उसे NEET 2017 की परीक्षा देने का मौका नहीं दिया जाएगा। महोदय, 7 मई को परीक्षा होनी है, तिथि तय है। तीन महीने पहले ही आई इस सूचना से हजारों छात्र परेशान हैं। ये वे छात्र हैं, जो 7 महीने से NEET की तैयारी कर रहे हैं। साल भर से तैयारी और उसके बाद परीक्षा में शामिल नहीं होना, इससे छात्र और उनके अभिभावक बड़ी दुखद स्थिति में हैं। इससे अभिभावकों के अरमानों के पर उड़ान भरने से पहले ही कट गए हैं।

माननीय महोदय, मेरा अनुरोध है कि इस तरह का कोई भी नियम अगले सत्र से होने वाली परीक्षा के लिए लागू किया जाए, क्योंकि अगर यह इस वर्ष से लागू किया गया, तो एक साल से तैयारी कर रहे उन छात्रों का क्या होगा। इससे उनके सपने चूर हो जाएँगे, उनकी साल भर की तैयारी बेकार हो जाएगी और खास कर उन बच्चों और अभिभावकों के लिए बहुत ही मुश्किल होगी, जिन्होंने कर्ज लेकर गांवों से शहर में अपने बच्चों को पढ़ने के लिए भेजा है या फिर इसके लिए अपनी जमीन बेच दी है। इन सब बातों का ध्यान रखते हुए इस पर ध्यान दिया जाए कि जो notification हुआ है, वह इस वर्ष से नहीं, बल्कि 2018 से ही लागू किया जाए, जिससे उन बच्चों को इम्तिहान देने का मौका मिले।

श्री राम नाथ ठाकुर (बिहार): महोदय, मैं स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री राम चन्द प्रसाद सिंह (बिहार): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री हरिवंश (बिहार): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री राम कुमार कश्यप (हरियाणा): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री महेंद्र सिंह माहरा (उत्तराखंड): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

डा. अनिल कुमार साहनी (बिहार): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री विशम्भर प्रसाद निषाद (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्रीमती रजनी पाटिल (महाराष्ट्र) : महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA (Tripura): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the submission made by the hon. Member.

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI MAJEED MEMON (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

Concern over delay in updating National Register of Citizens in Assam

SHRI RIPUN BORA (Assam): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government of India to the inordinate delay in updating of National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam. The entire country is aware that Assam was burning for years together due to the illegal migrants and foreign national issue. Ultimately, under the leadership of the then Prime Minister, late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the historic Assam Accord was signed in the year 1985. At that time, the consensus for the cut-off year was that deletion, deportation and detection of foreigners in Assam was 24th March, 1971, the day of Indira-Mujib pact. After that what has happened was peace prevailed; and in the year 2004, under the leadership of the

then Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, a tripartite talk was held between the then Chief Minister of Assam and the delegation of the AASU. In that meeting a decision was taken for updating of the National Register of Citizens. The National Register of Citizens is nowhere in the country except in Assam. It was started in Assam in the year 1951. This decision was taken to solve the foreigners issue in Assam once for all. After a series of meetings, the Government of India had decided to fund the entire works for this purpose. Accordingly, in all development blocks, Gram Panchayats, NRC Seva Kendras were opened. Thousands of young boys and girls were appointed on a contractual basis to carry on the computer work and other office works. Forms were filled by the citizens. Scrutiny was also done. Then, spot verification was also done. Legacy data was also verified. Now, the draft publication has to be made. The Government has fixed the target to publish draft list by March, 2016. In 2014 General Elections and Assembly Elections, the BJP had made it a major election issue. They have promised to update NRC in time; and they would give Assam a correct voter list without the names of foreigners. But, unfortunately, after the BJP Government came to power in Assam and at the Centre, the work on this is being delayed. Now, there is an apprehension among the people that the Government has not given them forms.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The time is over.

SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA (Madhya Pradesh): Sir, I associate myself with matter raised by the hon. Member.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Your time is over. Please sit down.

SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM (Meghalaya): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

Plight of Print Media Industry

श्री हरिवंश (बिहार): उपसभापति जी, धन्यवाद। इस मुल्क ने जब आज़ादी की अंगड़ाई ली, तो देश ने यह आवाज़ सुनी कि जब तोप मुकाबिल हो, तो अखबार निकालो। वह अखबार उद्योग, प्रिन्ट मीडिया इंडस्ट्री आज खतरे में है। दुनिया में और अपने मुल्क में अखबारों ने पुनर्जागरण, सामाजिक बदलाव, आर्थिक और राजनीतिक चेतना फैलाने का जो काम किया, वह बताने की जरूरत नहीं है। वह प्रिन्ट मीडिया आज दो वजहों से मुसीबत में है। पहली वजह-समय का प्रवाह, यानी टेक्नोलॉजिकल चेंज, सोशल मीडिया, टीवी, इंटरनेट, फेसबुक और एफएम वगैरह,

[श्री हरिवंश]

ये मीडिया के ही नए-नए रूप हैं। यह ह्यूमन सिविलाइजेशन की प्रगति का हिस्सा है, इसमें बहुत कुछ नहीं हो सकता। दूसरी वजह—व्यवस्थागत है, जिसे हमारी सरकार और व्यवस्था ठीक करने में पहल कर सकती है।

महोदय, प्रिन्ट मीडिया, मुख्यतः पांच वजहों से खतरे में है। पहला— वेज बोर्ड का उस पर भारी असर आया है। दूसरा— जीएसटी में जो टैक्स प्रस्तावित है, जो बढ़ने वाला है, उससे प्रिन्ट मीडिया के ऊपर और आर्थिक भार पड़ने वाला है। तीसरा— न्यूजप्रिन्ट की कॉस्ट में लगातार बढ़ोतरी, चौथा— other inputs की कॉस्ट बढ़ना और पांचवां— अखबार उद्योग का कहना है कि डिमानेटाइजेशन से उनके विज्ञापन पर काफी गहरा असर पड़ा है, लेकिन देश का ध्यान इस संकटग्रस्त उद्योग की ओर तब गया, जब केंद्र सरकार के सूचना मंत्रालय ने टाइम्स ऑफ इंडिया में छपी एक खबर के बाद यह कहा कि वह इसे एगजामिन करा रहा है। मेरा सरकार से आग्रह है कि वह इस पर तत्काल पहल करे, क्योंकि जब हालात काबू से बाहर हो जाएंगे, तब पहल करने से बात नहीं बनेगी।

महोदय, यह सरकार 10 करोड़ रोजगार सृजित करने, यानी हर वर्ष दो करोड़ रोजगार क्रिएट किए जाने के आश्वासन के साथ सत्ता में आई थी। इसलिए अखबार उद्योग यानी प्रिन्ट मीडिया को बचाना जरूरी है। नए रोजगार तो सृजित नहीं हो रहे हैं, बल्कि प्रिन्ट उद्योग में छंटनी का दौर चल रहा है, जिसके कारण अखबारों के संस्करण बन्द हो रहे हैं। खासतौर से छोटे और मध्यम अखबार अपने अस्तित्व से जूझ रहे हैं। इसलिए इस उद्योग के लाखों पत्रकारों और गैर-पत्रकारों की नौकरी और उद्योग को बचाने में पहल कर के सरकार मदद कर सकती है।

महोदय, अखबार अपनी आय के लिए 70-80 प्रतिशत विज्ञापन पर निर्भर हैं, जिसमें ग्रोथ रेट पिछले कई वर्षों से 4 से 6 फीसदी के बीच है। वेज बोर्ड आने के बाद 'हिन्दू' का प्री-टैक्स लॉस में देख रहा था, तो मुझे मालूम हुआ कि वर्ष 2013-14 और 2014-15 के बीच यह काफी बढ़ा। फिर प्रेस ट्रस्ट ऑफ इंडिया का स्टाफ कॉस्ट वर्ष 2013-14 में पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले 174 परसेंट बढ़ा। यही हालत अन्य अखबारों और खासतौर से छोटे और मंझोले अखबारों की है।

महोदय, अखबार उद्योग को पेड न्यूज के दौर से बचाना है, उसकी साख और विश्वसनीयता की रक्षा करनी है, तो उसका अर्थतंत्र मजबूत करना होगा। सरकार यह पहल करे कि अक्टूबर, 2010 के बाद उसने डीएवीपी के विज्ञापन रेट में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं किया, इसलिए वह तत्काल परिवर्तन करे और प्रिन्ट मीडिया को इस हालत से निकालने के लिए और जो उपाय हो सकते हैं, उन्हें करे, धन्यवाद।

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI MAJEED MEMON (Maharashtra): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य द्वारा सदन में उठाए गए विषय से मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्री राम नाथ ठाकुर (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य द्वारा सदन में उठाए गए विषय से मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री राम चन्द प्रसाद सिंह (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य द्वारा सदन में उठाए गए विषय से मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री अली अनवर अंसारी (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य द्वारा सदन में उठाए गए विषय से मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

डा. अनिल कुमार साहनी (बिहार): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य द्वारा सदन में उठाए गए विषय से मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री नीरज शेखर (उत्तर प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य द्वारा सदन में उठाए गए विषय से मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

SHRI RIPUN BORA (Assam): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

Plight of powerloom industry in the country

SHRI MAJEED MEMON (Maharashtra): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for the opportunity given. It is with deep sense of regret that I seek attention of the Government of India, particularly the hon. Finance Minister and the Textile Minister, through this august House, to the fact that the Budget 2017-18, claiming to be pro-poor, does not even have a mention of the sinking powerloom industry in the country. There are various hubs throughout the country; more particularly, Malegaon, Bhiwandi, Ichalkaranji, Solapur in Maharashtra, Surat in Gujarat, Varanasi and Erode are the hubs of powerloom industry and these are literally on the brink of total sickness and closure. The issue was raised by us way back in July, 2016 through a Zero Hour Mention upon which the Textile Minister did convene a couple of meetings with the powerloom workers from various parts. Thereafter, we have also seen the Commerce Minister; a delegation was brought from various quarters of the country. The matter was heard but, unfortunately, in the Budget, we find that there is not even a whisper or a slightest relief that has been given to them. I have a humble request to the Government. Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to convey to the hon. Prime Minister that this particular industry, which is literally dying, needs to be supported. Or else, thousands and thousands of people are being disemployed. They are losing their jobs. They are starving. Some of them are on the verge of committing suicide. Now, in such a background, I only wanted to convey that we should not forget that a majority of those who are concerned

[Shri Majeed Memon]

with powerlooms belong to minority, and particularly the Muslim minority which has been certified to be backward in the sense of their economic condition as well as their education. Now, unless you give a helping hand to these people to come back into the mainstream, your slogan of 'सबका साथ, सबका विकास' becomes a mere paper tiger. I would draw the attention of those in authority that they should immediately consider and protect these people; their suicides may be outnumbering the suicides of even the farmers. In such a situation, I am sorry that the Budget does not provide any relief to these people. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned.

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I too associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned.

SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN (Kerala): Sir, I too associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned.

श्री अली अनवर अंसारी (बिहार): सर, मैं माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन (बिहार): सर, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्री राम नाथ ठाकुर (बिहार): सर, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री राम चन्द प्रसाद सिंह (बिहार) : सर, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री हरिवंश (बिहार) : सर, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य के उल्लेख का समर्थन करता हूँ।

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned.

SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would you like to react? ...*(Interruptions)*... Listen to the Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir, we also associate ourselves with what the hon. Member has mentioned. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, all of you are associating. Your names will be added. Now, allow the Minister. ...(Interruptions)... All those who support it, their names will be added. ...(Interruptions)... All the names will be added. Now, Madam Minister, would you like to say something? ...(Interruptions)... Listen to the Minister.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): Sir, I am grateful that the hon. Member... ...(Interruptions)...

श्री उपसभापति: आप सुनिए ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, the Minister has started.

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: I am grateful to the hon. Member that while presenting his angst on the issue, he has also highlighted ...(Interruptions)... Sir, I am not yielding.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: She has already started.

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: I hope my esteemed colleague would allow me to finish.

Sir, I am grateful that the hon. Member in his expression of angst has highlighted that post his submission to the august House regarding the concerns of the powerloom industry, my Ministry had convened various meetings with the powerloom industry and all stakeholders including inviting hon. MPs to be a party to those conversations so that we can find a holistic solution. Also, subsequent to those stakeholders' meetings, meetings were conducted under the aegis of the Ministry of Textiles with the Ministry of Power so that the challenges with regard to the rates of power, as has been articulated by the hon. Member in his communication to my Department, were also explored. But I am currently challenged that I cannot make declarations because of the Code of Conduct specifically which has been announced across the country, specific to the five State elections. I can only say this, Sir, that the outcome of the stakeholders' meetings will be positive. I am dutybound not to explain it in detail because, as my colleague has highlighted, it does affect a huge population in the segment of the minority community. Let him be assured that under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, currently, reduced cost of capital is available and all these issues are being pursued. But I can only make a declaration of the benefits to the industry after the Code of Conduct is lifted.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now, Shri Md. Nadimul Haque, absent. ...(Interruptions).. Sit down. ...(Interruptions)... The Minister has already replied. Sit down. Shri Swapan Dasgupta.

Reported attack on religious freedom in West Bengal

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA (Nominated): Sir, it is with a sense of deep dismay that I want to raise an issue of great importance which affects the State of West Bengal. Sir, as we all know, Saraswati Pooja is one of the most...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE (West Bengal): Sir, it is a State Subject. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. It is permitted. Sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let him speak.

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I have not even begun. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: It is the State law, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I have not even begun.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your problem with Saraswati Pooja? ...*(Interruptions)*... What is your problem with Saraswati Pooja? Sit down.

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I have not even begun.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Unnecessarily you are creating problems. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I have not even begun, Mr. O' BRIEN. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Sir, we have no problem. But the problem is that the * has started creating problems... ...*(Interruptions)*...

अल्पसंख्यक कार्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री; तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नकवी): ये repeatedly एक ऐसे संगठन का नाम लेते हैं, जो यहां पर नहीं है। ...*(व्यवधान)*... इन्होंने जो कहा, उसको एक्सपंज किया जाए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me listen. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I raised this issue with a sense of deep dismay... ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why did you unnecessarily mention * ? I am expunging *. Why do you bring in * now? Sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: This is the manner in which... ...*(Interruptions)*... I seek your protection. ...*(Interruptions)*...

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I did it. Sit down. ...(Interruptions)... एक्सपेंज करवा दिया है, आप बैठिए। ...(व्यवधान)... सुनिए ...(व्यवधान)... सुनिए ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, it is a cultural festival. ...(Interruptions)... If I am talking about a cultural festival ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Don't be impatient. ...(Interruptions)... This is also intolerance. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, this is the manner in which ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You first listen to it. ...(Interruptions)... You cannot listen to that, it is also intolerance. ...(Interruptions)... You should know that. ...(Interruptions)... You should hear the other view also. ...(Interruptions)... Even then you are not ready. ...(Interruptions)... First you listen to that. ...(Interruptions)... You listen to that. ...(Interruptions)... Please sit down. ...(Interruptions)... Shri Swapan Dasgupta is permitted. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: It is a matter of public importance. ...(Interruptions)... It is a matter which affects the cultural identity of a State. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Swapan Dasgupta was permitted by the hon. Chairman to speak here. He has a right. Let us listen to him and if you disagree, if you have anything else to say, that is a different matter. ...(Interruptions)... I can think of allowing you. But don't prevent him and let him say what he wants to say. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Thank you very much, Sir. ...(Interruptions)... I want to raise an issue which concerns the cultural identity...(Interruptions)...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Sir, it is a State Subject. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is this? ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: It is a matter concerning ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your problem? ...(Interruptions)... Mr. Nadimul Haque, sit down. ...(Interruptions)... Sit down. ...(Interruptions)... I am not allowing you. ...(Interruptions)... Only what Mr. Dasgupta says will go on record. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, it concerns the cultural identity of a State. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has been permitted by the hon. Chairman. What are you doing?

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I want to say that if there is ...*(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is permitted by the hon. Chairman. ...*(Interruptions)*... You sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: We have a bizarre situation. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN (West Bengal): *

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, we have a bizarre situation, so I can raise this matter of public importance which concerns the cultural identity of a State. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Md. Nadimul Haque, I will have to name you. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will have to name you. Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will be forced to name you. Sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... Why do you prevent another Member from raising his issue which is dear to him? If it is not dear to you, it is a different matter. ...*(Interruptions)*... This way we cannot function. If you think that the other person should say what you like, how can the Parliament function then? You may not like it. That does not mean that he cannot say it. No, I don't agree with that this way. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, he should be allowed. ...*(Interruptions)*... He should be allowed. ...*(Interruptions)*.. You please keep quiet. ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. Swapan Dasgupta. ...*(Interruptions)*... I want to know what he wants to say. ...*(Interruptions)*... That is my problem. ...*(Interruptions)*... I want to know what you want to say. You please say. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, I want to raise the matter of cultural identity of a State. ...*(Interruptions)*... We are facing a situation where people are being terrorized. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will have to take action against you.
...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: *

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: I have not even begun my submission.
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Nadimul Haque, I will have to name you.
...(Interruptions)... I will have to name you, I am telling you. ...(Interruptions)... You sit down. ...(Interruptions)... I cannot allow this. Why are you creating this problem during Zero Hour?

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, it is a matter concerning the cultural identity of a State. Therefore, I would like to ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: सर, जब सरस्वती पूजा के मुद्दे पर यहां पर इनका यह हाल है, तो पश्चिमी बंगाल में क्या करते होंगे? ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: *

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Everything in this country happens in one State or the other. You cannot come forward with this argument. ...(Interruptions)... I don't know what he has to say. ...(Interruptions)... Let me listen to that. Who are you to decide it before listening to that? ...(Interruptions)... I will have to name you. Sit down. ...(Interruptions)... Don't do anything. ...(Interruptions)... I will have to name you. ...(Interruptions)... I will have to name you. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Basant Panchami or Saraswati Puja is one of the most important cultural festivals which we all know that. ...(Interruptions)... If you know that, I think you would also realize that it is very important to know that people are allowed to observe it. ...(Interruptions)... After 65 years of continuous observance, now not observing this Saraswati Puja, I think it is a matter of shame. ...(Interruptions)... I can think it is not really a question ...(Interruptions)... Whatever the issue is, ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him speak. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: *

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Why are people feeling guilty? ...*(Interruptions)*... Why are certain people feeling guilty about it? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your point? ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. Swapan, you can raise your issue. ...*(Interruptions)*... Otherwise, your time will be over. ...*(Interruptions)*... You raise your issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: Sir, we want religious freedom for all communities in the State and just because ...*(Interruptions)*... That does not exclude any community especially those who observe Saraswati Puja. Restrictions have been placed on media for trying to cover it. People have been trying to place restrictions on immersion of Durga. So, the selective and vindictive attitude should be stopped. ...*(Interruptions)*... Religious freedom must exist for everybody. ...*(Interruptions)*... I think, it must exist for everybody ...*(Interruptions)*... No community can be excluded from it. ...*(Interruptions)*... And, I think, in West Bengal, today, we seek that. ...*(Interruptions)*... I want to raise that point. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, freedom of religion must exist for every community. That is the point. Thank you.

SHRI RAM NARAIN DUDI (Rajasthan): Sir, I associate myself with the Zero Hour submission of Shri Swapan Dasgupta.

SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA (Rajasthan): Sir, I also associate myself with the Zero Hour submission of Shri Swapan Dasgupta.

MAHANT SHAMBHUPRASADJI TUNDIYA (Gujarat): Sir, I also associate myself with the Zero Hour submission of Shri Swapan Dasgupta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir, we all associate ourselves with the submission made by the hon. Member.

Need to declare rehabilitation package for Gulf returnees

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Thank you, Sir. I appeal, through you, Sir, the Central Government for announcing a special package to rehabilitate the Gulf returnees who have lost their jobs due to the present oil crisis and also due to Nitaqat Law. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, Saudi Arabia started implementing Nitaqat Law in 2011 and this law ensures jobs for Saudi nationals, especially in private sector. Saudi Arabia private sector is mainly depending upon foreign workers, especially in retail and service sectors, and the foreign workers are mainly from India and Indian workers are mainly from Kerala.

After implementation of Nitaqat Law, till 2013, 1.41 lakh Indian workers have lost their jobs and had to return India from the Gulf countries. Majority of those

workers who have lost their jobs are from Kerala. I know that the hon. Deputy Chairman is also well aware of the situation.

The present oil crisis has aggravated the situation. We have witnessed a number of lay-offs, non-payment of wages to workers and forcing workers to stay in labour camps even without food. Of course, the Ministry of External Affairs has provided some food to those workers who compelled to stay back in labour camps. But, this is not going to serve the purpose.

Recently, Saudi Arabia has again declared another set of Nitaqat Laws which further aggravated the problems. Out of total households in Kerala, 25 per cent are dependent upon Gulf remittances for their livelihood. So, the problem of Gulf returnees is going to affect the State of Kerala in a very big way. It raised a serious concern as far as the economy of Kerala is concerned. It hit the State in a very big way.

So, I request the Central Government, through you, to announce rehabilitation package for Gulf returnees. Thank you.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Sir, I associate myself with the Zero Hour submission of Shri Ragesh ji.

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA (Nominated): Sir, I also associate myself with the Zero Hour submission of Shri Ragesh.

SHRI RANVIJAY SINGH JUDEV (Chhattisgarh): Sir, I also associate myself with the Zero Hour submission of Shri Ragesh.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir, I have to say something.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no. After Chhaya Verma, please. There is one more Zero Hour notice. Let me finish it first.

Deletion of the name of former Prime Minister

Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi from *Sadbhavana Divas*

श्रीमती छाया वर्मा (छत्तीसगढ़): माननीय महोदय, 20 अगस्त को भारत के पूर्व प्रधान मंत्री राजीव गांधी जी के नाम पर 'सद्भावना दिवस' के रूप में पूरे भारत देश में कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया जाता है। सभी बैनर्स, पोस्टर, पैम्फलेट्स, फ्लेक्स बोर्ड्स आदि में "राजीव जी के जन्म दिवस पर सद्भावना दिवस" ऐसा लिखा जाता है। लेकिन माननीय महोदय, मैं बताना चाहूँगी कि 2014 से पूर्व प्रधान मंत्री राजीव गांधी जी का नाम विलोपित करके 20 अगस्त को केवल 'सद्भावना दिवस' के रूप में ही मनाया जा रहा है। राजीव जी का नाम उसमें विलोपित कर दिया गया है। लगता है कि इनकी सद्भावना खत्म हो गई है।

माननीय महोदय, भारत के पूर्व प्रधान मंत्री, हमारे राजीव जी, पूर्व प्रधान मंत्री ही रहेंगे। अगर इनका यही रवैया रहा, तो वर्तमान को भूतपूर्व बनते देर नहीं लगेगी। जिसने भी यह हिमाकत

[श्रीमती छाया वर्मा]

की है, नाम बदलने की, या तो यह भूलवश हुआ हो, तो सुधार लें और जान-बूझ कर यह किया हो, तो यह एक बहुत बड़ा * है। माननीय महोदय, ऐसा नहीं होना चाहिए। नाम को विलोपित न किया जाए। राज्य शासन और केंद्र शासन भी उनका अनुपालन कर रही है। इस मंच के माध्यम से मैं कहना चाहूँगी कि नाम को यथावत् रखा जाए, धन्यवाद।

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL (Maharashtra): Sir, I associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD (Karnataka): Sir, also I associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

SHRI BISWAJIT DAIMARY (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

श्री आनंद भास्कर रापोलू (तेलंगाना): महोदय, मैं भी इस विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

MS. DOLA SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

श्री महेन्द्र सिंह माहरा (उत्तराखंड): महोदय, मैं भी इस विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री विवेक के. तन्खा (मध्य प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी इस विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री सन्तियुस कुजूर (असम): महोदय, मैं भी इस विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): Sir, Rajiv Gandhiji was a martyred Prime Minister of India. The country owes a debt of gratitude to its martyrs. ...*(Interruptions)*.... Shri Rajiv Gandhi is a martyr of this country. He was the Prime Minister of India. And, this country had declared his birth anniversary as *Sadbhavana Divas*. Since 20th August, 2015, in all the Government advertisements, in all circulars, in all notifications, Shri Rajiv Gandhi's name and his photographs have been removed. It is an insult to the memory of a great Prime Minister. This Government owes an explanation. It is functioning in an arbitrary and authoritarian manner. They are putting in names of people in various schemes, involving thousands of crores of rupees. They had done nothing for this country. Nothing means, they never occupied any office. Schemes have been named after the names of people who have never been in Government, who have never been in Parliament, let alone being Prime Minister. And, the names of the former Prime Ministers have been obliterated.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

It is a great insult. We condemn it. And, this Government owes an explanation, and they should rather apologize. ...(Interruptions)...

अल्पसंख्यक कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी): सर, पहली बात तो यह है कि आनन्द शर्मा जी जो कह रहे हैं, मैं उससे बिल्कुल इतिफाक नहीं रखता। उन्हें यह लगता है कि पूरे देश के सारे के सारे संसाधनों पर, सारी की सारी स्कीम्स पर, सारे के सारे कार्यक्रमों पर एक ही पार्टी का और एक ही परिवार का अधिकार है, तो वह सम्भव नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री आनन्द शर्मा: वे इस देश के प्रधान मंत्री थे। ...(व्यवधान)... वे इस देश के प्रधान मंत्री थे। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी: इस देश में हजारों-हजार राष्ट्रभक्त हैं, हजारों-हजार ऐसे लोग हैं, जिन्होंने देश के लिए कुरबानी दी है। ...(व्यवधान)... देश के सम्मान, देश के स्वाभिमान के लिए उन्होंने अपना योगदान दिया है, उनको भूल जाएँ और अगर इनकी इच्छा यह है कि केवल एक परिवार और एक पार्टी के नाम पर सारी सरकारी योजनाएँ चलें, तो वह अब मोदी जी के समय में सम्भव नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री आनन्द शर्मा: * ...(व्यवधान)... यह काम करते हो? ...(व्यवधान)... नेहरू का नाम खत्म कर दो। ...(व्यवधान)... इंदिरा गांधी की शताब्दी हो, खत्म कर दो। ...(व्यवधान)... यह इतिहास है। इतिहास को नहीं बदल सकते। ...(व्यवधान)... आप चुन कर आए हो, बाहर भी निकाल दिए जाओगे। ...(व्यवधान)... आप इतिहास नहीं बदल सकते। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Shri Azad, do you want to speak on this issue? I am on a different issue.

विपक्ष के नेता (श्री गुलाम नबी आज़ाद): सर, मैं इस मुद्दे पर अपने साथियों के साथ खड़ा होना चाहता हूँ कि जिन लोगों ने भारत को स्वतंत्र कराया, भारत को आज़ादी दिलाई, उनके नाम पर जो स्कीमें हैं, उनके नाम को ढाई साल से निरंतर बदला गया है। जैसा कि मेरे कलीग, आनन्द शर्मा जी ने बताया कि उनका कोई रोल नहीं था, लेकिन चूंकि एक रूलिंग पार्टी के साथ उनकी इनडायरेक्ट-डायरेक्ट एसोसिएशन थी, उसकी वजह से उन स्कीमों के नाम नेहरू, इंदिरा गांधी या राजीव गांधी के नाम से हटाकर उनके नाम पर रखे गए। लेकिन, "सद्भावना दिवस" विशेष रूप से राजीव गांधी के नाम पर था। राजीव गांधी क्या कोई साधारण प्राइम मिनिस्टर थे? यहां बहुत सारे लोग, जो पदों की वजह से सिक्योरिटीज़ लेकर बैठे हैं, उनकी सिक्योरिटी इसलिए रखी गई थी, क्योंकि जो देशद्रोही थे, वे उनको मारना चाहते थे। जब हमारे देश से दक्षिण को अलग करने का खतरा पैदा हो गया था, तब उन्होंने उन तत्वों को दूर रखने के लिए श्रीलंका में peace keeping force भेजने में रोल अदा किया। उसके बाद भी जब तक उन तत्वों ने उनकी जान नहीं ले ली, तब तक वे पीछे नहीं हटे। इस प्रकार, देश की एकता और देश की अखंडता के लिए उनकी जान चली गई। इस तरह, कांग्रेस के लीडर्स, चाहे वे महात्मा गांधी हों, इंदिरा गांधी हों या राजीव गांधी हों, उन्होंने देश की एकता और अखंडता के लिए अपने जीवन का बलिदान दिया है। उनके नाम की जगह पर उन स्कीमों के नाम किसी एक साधारण

[श्री गुलाम नबी आज़ाद]

नेता के नाम पर रखा गया है, जिसका कोई रोल न तो भारत की आज़ादी के लिए रहा है और न ही देश की एकता और अखंडता के लिए रहा है। अगर किसी का कोई रोल रहा है तो वह इस रूलिंग पार्टी के समर्थन के लिए रहा है। उनको एक ही पैरामीटर पर ट्रीट नहीं किया जा सकता। इसलिए जिन-जिन नेताओं के नाम पर वे स्कीमें थीं, उन्हें सरकार को चेंज नहीं करना चाहिए। जो "सद्भावना दिवस" है, इसके लिए तो कांग्रेस पार्टी किसी भी सूरत में यह बरदाश्त नहीं करेगी कि उसमें से उनका नाम बिल्कुल हटा दिया जाए।

† قائد حزب اختلاف (جناب غلام نبی آزاد): سر، میں اس مدّے پر اپنے ساتھیوں کے ساتھ کھڑا ہونا چاہتا ہوں کہ جن لوگوں نے بھارت کو سوتتر کرایا، بھارت کو آزادی دلائی، ان کے نام پر جو اسکیمیں ہیں، ان کے نام کو ڈھائی سال سے لگاتار بدلا گیا ہے۔ جیسا کہ میرے ساتھی، آنند شرما جی نے بتایا کہ ان کا کوئی رول نہیں تھا، لیکن چونکہ ایک رولنگ پارٹی کے ساتھ ان کی ان - ڈائریکٹ، ڈائریکٹ ایسوسی ایشن تھی، اس کی وجہ سے ان اسکیموں کے نام نہرو، اندرا گاندھی یا 'راجیو گاندھی کے نام سے ہٹا کر ان کے نام پر رکھے گئے۔ لیکن 'سبھاونا دوس خاص طور سے راجیو گاندھی کے نام پر تھا۔ راجیو گاندھی کوئی سادھارن پرائم منسٹر تھے؟ یہاں بہت سارے لوگ، جو پدوں کی وجہ سے سیکورٹیز لے کر بیٹھے ہیں، ان کی سیکورٹی اس لئے رکھی گئی تھی، کیوں کہ جو دیش دروبی تھے، وہ ان کو مارنا چاہتے تھے۔ جب ہمارے دیش سے دکشن کو الگ کرنے کا خطرہ پیدا ہو گیا تھا، تب انہوں نے ان ت ووں کو دور رکھنے کے لئے سری لنکا میں peace keeping force بھیجنے میں رول ادا کیا۔ اس کے بعد بھی جب تک ان ت ووں نے ان کی جان نہیں لے لی، تب تک وہ پیچھے نہیں ہٹے۔ اس طرح، دیش کی ایکتا اور دیش کی اکھنڈتا کے لئے ان کی جان چلی گئی۔ اس طرح، کانگریس کے لیڈرس چاہے وہ مہاتما گاندھی ہوں، اندرا گاندھی ہوں یا راجیو گاندھی ہوں، انہوں نے دیش کی ایکتا اور اکھنڈتا کے لئے اپنے جیون کا بلیدان دیا ہے۔ ان کے نام کی جگہ پر ان اسکیموں کے نام پر کسی ایک سادھارن نیتا کے نام پر رکھا گیا ہے، جس کا کوئی رول نہ تو بھارت کی آزادی کے لئے رہا ہے اور نہ ہی دیش کی ایکتا اور اکھنڈتا کے لئے رہا ہے۔ اگر کسی کا کوئی رول رہا ہے تو وہ اس رولنگ پارٹی کے سمرتن کے لئے رہا ہے۔ ان کے ایک ہی پیرامیٹر پر ٹریٹ نہیں کیا جاسکتا۔ اس لئے جن جن نیتاؤں کے نام پر وہ اسکیمیں تھیں، انہیں سرکار کو چینج نہیں کرنا چاہئے۔ جو سبھاونا دوس ہے، اس کے لئے تو کانگریس پارٹی کسی بھی صورت میں یہ برداشت نہیں کرے گی کہ اس میں سے ان کا نام بالکل ہٹا دیا جائے۔

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I have to say something.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, you allowed me. May I now raise it?
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have allowed Yechuryji.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, we totally agree with what the LoP said about the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. But I think, he mentioned about South ceding, and for that he sent IPKF, and all that which is unwarranted. ...(Interruptions)...

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): I have mentioned the names of the killers. I have mentioned the names of those who killed him. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, I want to raise an important issue and with anger and anguish I am raising this issue. I want a proper and thorough investigation in the manner in which the death of one of our very senior colleagues in the Parliament, a former Cabinet Minister, Shri E. Ahamed was handled, the way in which the news of his death was sought to be suppressed and there are various allegations. I have got various information. Some doctors say he was declared dead when he was taken to the hospital. Some say he died subsequently in the ICU. Then later he was shifted to the trauma centre saying that there are better facilities. And there has been interference; that is what I hear from the highest authorities in the country, from the PMO, and this is something that cannot be accepted. This is * for the Indian Parliament to accept this. I want this issue to be thoroughly investigated. I wish my information, what I heard of, is not correct, but if it is correct, then they must be made accountable and action must be taken against those who had behaved in this manner. The senior most leaders of our politics today were not allowed to see him in the hospital. His own children were not allowed to see him. Sir, tell me, any life support system can be put on anybody only with the permission of the nearest relative. Without that, how was that put and how was the announcement of the death delayed? If this can happen to somebody who spent half a century in our country's democratic process in the Parliament and Assemblies, then, you can imagine what will be the plight of the people! And this sort of a maneuvering is something that is completely unacceptable.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister would like to say something on that.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: No, no; Sir, I am asking you. I am asking you that an investigation must be ordered.(Interruptions)... I am asking you that an investigation must be ordered. People should be made accountable.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Since it is 12 o'clock, we would like to discuss this issue tomorrow. I and many of my colleagues were there upto 1 o'clock in the morning.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, it is time for the Question Hour.
...(Interruptions)...

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: So, they will say what they have to.
...(Interruptions)... We were witness to that. ...(Interruptions)... We will discuss it tomorrow. ...(Interruptions)... It is all fabricated. ...(Interruptions)...

12.00 Noon

(MR. CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*.)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*16. [*The Questioner was absent*]

Online ticketing facility for railway pass holders

*16. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that railway pass holders do not have the facility to book tickets online through any portal;

(b) the details of money spent by Government per ticket on booking at the counter and online respectively;

(c) whether Government is planning to link Aadhaar to avail railway passes henceforth, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of all sections of Government employees eligible for railway passes along with the number thereof in each case ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. At present, railway pass holders do not have the facility to book tickets online through any portal.

(b) With regard to ticket issued through computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters, the cost is incurred on various inputs such as premises, equipment, their maintenance, manpower cost and other costs such as electricity,

furniture, stationery, networking etc., which varies from location to location. As far as cost of issuing e-tickets is concerned, it is incurred on procurement and maintenance of hardware and software, cost of technical manpower, recurring expenditure like rent, electricity charges, internet bandwidth charges, administrative cost, etc. Recently, huge investment has been made on Next Generation e-Ticketing System (NGeT) and large scale augmentation of the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure for catering to increased number of booking demands. As such, it is not feasible to quantify the overall cost incurred on issuing of tickets through PRS counter and through online mode.

(c) At present there is no such proposal.

(d) Gazetted railway officers are given six (6) sets of privilege passes in a year and the non-gazetted railway employees are given one (01) set of privilege pass upto the end of 5th year of railway service and thereafter three (3) sets in a year. Employees of non-railway departments appointed on deputation to posts on Indian Railways and officers and staff of Railway Audit Department are also provided privilege passes at par with the railway employees of equal status.

The number of employees as on 01.04.2016 in Group 'A' and 'B' was 16360 (Provisional) and in Group 'C' and erstwhile Group 'D' was 1312449 (Provisional).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 16, hon. Member not present. Are there any supplementaries?

SHRI RIPUN BORA: Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister about the procedure of refunding of railway ticket. When I have a confirmed ticket and after that the train is suddenly cancelled, what is the procedure to get the refund of my ticket/fare?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, this question relates to online booking staff. So, I would request him that I can answer supplementaries related to this question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. ...(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI RIPUN BORA: No, no. ...(*Interruptions*).. This is related to this question. ..(*Interruptions*)..

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you have a supplementary on this question? ..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI RIPUN BORA: Yes, Sir. This is related to this only. This is about e-ticketing. This question is regarding online ticketing. It is the same. Yesterday they talked about so many reforms. But when I go for taking refund of my money, I have to run from pillar to post.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ask a question. That's all.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, I will read the question again if you permit me. It says, "(a) Whether it is a fact that railway pass holders do not have the facility to book tickets online...." This is something to do with them. Of course, I appreciate. There is a proper system for getting refund, which, if you want, I will send to you separately. I am not saying that this question is not relevant or....

SHRI RIPUN BORA: No, no. The money is not refunded instantly. ...*(Interruptions)*..

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRI RIPUN BORA: Money is not refunded instantly. ...*(Interruptions)*.. You have to fulfil a lot of formalities to get back your money.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: We will e-mail you the exact system. If you want, I will write a personal letter and send it to you. ...*(Interruptions)*..

श्री राम नाथ ठाकुर: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि रेलवे पासधारकों के पास किसी भी पोर्टल द्वारा ऑनलाइन टिकट बुक कराने की सुविधा नहीं है। मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह सुविधा कब से शुरू की जाएगी?

श्री सुरेश प्रभु: सर, यह सुविधा, रेलवे में काम करने वाले लोगों को और रेलवे से रिटायर होने के बाद ऐसे 13-14 लाख लोग हैं, जिन्हें मिलती है। ऐसे सभी लोगों की सुविधा के लिए काफी सालों से कुछ नियमावली बनायी गयी है। इसका एक बिन्दु यह भी है कि जो nearest route है, आपको उससे जाना होगा, ताकि कुछ लोग ऐसा न करें कि यहां से असम जाना है तो पहले तमिलनाडु जाएं, फिर और कहीं जाएं और उसके बाद असम पहुंचें। इस तरह से वे न कर पाएं, इसके लिए यह नियम बनाया गया है। यह बिल्कुल सही है कि आज के जमाने में इसे ऑनलाइन भी किया जा सकता है, लेकिन इसके लिए पूरा database है कि किसकी entitlement है। वह entitlement बेसिक पे के आधार पर होती है। जो ग्रुप "ए" और "बी" के ऑफिसर्स हैं, उनकी संख्या 16,360 है और ग्रुप "सी" और "डी" का जो स्टाफ है, उनकी संख्या 13,12,449 है। जो पास दिए जाते हैं, उनकी जो entitlement है, वह basic pay के आधार पर तय की जाती है और basic pay में बदलाव आ जाता है। इसलिए उसके लिए Human Resource Management (HRM) पर हम लोगों ने काम शुरू किया है। हम लोग यह भी काम कर रहे हैं कि Enterprise Resource Planning की सुविधा से सारा database पूरी तरह से उपलब्ध हो, क्योंकि उसके बाद जब ऑनलाइन बुकिंग करनी होगी तो उसका पासवर्ड भी बनाना पड़ेगा। इस सुविधा को देने के लिए जो backbone बनाने की जरूरत है, उस पर काम चल रहा है। यह काम पूरा होने के बाद हम ऑनलाइन बुकिंग की सुविधा दे पाएंगे।

श्री अजय संचेती: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि अभी जो उन्होंने जवाब दिया है, मेरा सवाल उसी तरीके का था। मेरा उनसे इतना ही कहना है कि यात्री कोई भी हो — चाहे पासधारक हो या पैसा देकर टिकट ले रहा हो, ऑनलाइन सुविधा दोनों को समान रूप से मिलनी चाहिए, उसके पे पैकेज से इसको लिंक करने का क्या

उपयोग है, यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आ रहा है। इसलिए बिना किसी issue के, be it HR issues or all that, it should be directly linked, irrespective of any delay in the matter. This is my question. Can it be possible or not? Thank you, Sir.

श्री सुरेश प्रभु: सर, सम्मानित सदस्य ने दो चीजों के बारे में बात कही है। जो मूल प्रश्न है, वह रेल में जो एम्प्लॉईज होते हैं, उनको जो पास मिलता है, उसके बारे में है। आप जो बात कह रहे हैं, वह बिल्कुल सही बात है। जो सीज़न टिकट होल्डर्स हैं, जो मुम्बई में, चेन्नई में, कोलकाता में या ऐसे जो मेट्रोपॉलिटन सिटीज में हैं, वहां पर suburban railway चलती है, तो वहां के जो लोग हैं, उनके लिए ज्यादा सुविधाएं कैसे दी जाएं।

सर, मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि जो मंथली सीज़न टिकट है और क्वार्टरली टिकट है, उसको लोग चार तरीके से कर सकते हैं, जैसा कि आपने कहा — across the counter कर सकते हैं, आईआरसीटीसी की वेबसाइट पर जाकर ऑनलाइन भी कर सकते हैं, ऑटोमैटिक टिकट वेंडिंग मशीन से भी कर सकते हैं। आजकल ये सुविधाएं हमने शुरू की हैं और मैंने इसका inauguration भी किया था। आप जो बात कह रहे थे, उसको माननीय सदस्य ने भी पूछा — एक क्वेश्चन है कि आज जो pass facilities हैं, जो present employees और retired employees को दी जाती है, उसके बारे में कह रहे थे कि HRM system लाने की जरूरत है। आज आम आदमी जाना चाह रहा है, उसको यदि सीज़न टिकट बुक करना है, तो उसके लिए चार सुविधाएं हैं। मोबाइल ऐप से भी टिकट लिया जा सकता है और उसके लिए मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि suburban railway में पैसेंजर्स ट्रेवलिंग में 2015-16 में 446 करोड़ से ज्यादा लोगों ने ट्रेवल किया है। उसमें से 50 करोड़ लोगों का रिजर्व टिकट है और आज 70 परसेंट ऑफ suburban railway...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister, please address the Chair. *..(Interruptions)...*
I would request both Members and Ministers to address the Chair rather than each other. Question No. 17.

Sale of Government stake in BCPL and HAL

*17. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to sell Government's majority stake in Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (BCPL) and Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd. (HAL), if so, the details thereof: and

(b) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government has decided to put Hindustan Antibiotics Limited (HAL) and Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited (BCPL) for

strategic sale. The Government has decided to sell that much of surplus land of HAL and BCPL to Government agencies as would be required to clear their outstanding liabilities, implement Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS)/Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) to pave way for their closure, manage the remaining land in accordance with guidelines of Department of Investment and Public Assets Management/Department of Public Enterprises and if need be, vest it in a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The Government has further decided that after liabilities have been met, balance sheet cleansed and VRS/VSS effected, HAL and BCPL be sold strategically.

The mode of sale, percentage of shares to be sold etc., shall be as per the advice of NITI Aayog and guidelines of the Department of Investment and Public Assets Management.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, the issue raised is a very serious one. But the answer which has been given is very casual. Sir, the Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited is a public sector drug company, HAL is a public sector drug company, IDPL is a public sector company. Why should these public sector drug companies be privatized? The answer says, it is done at the advice of NITI Aayog. Sir, NITI Aayog people say, it is "National Institute for Transforming India". Actually, it is acting as 'national institute for transferring public assets to private sector'. ...*(Interruptions)*...

Sir, public health must be the priority of the Government. Sir, you understand it. People do not have equitable access to healthcare. People are becoming poorer by spending more on healthcare and medical services. Instead of providing affordable drugs to people as the prices of medicines are going up, the public sector companies are being privatized.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI D. RAJA: My question is, why can't the Government think of modernizing these industries and increasing the production of drugs and providing it to the people at affordable price?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI D. RAJA: Why can't the Government think of modernizing the industries?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let your question be answered.

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, बीसीपीएल और एचएएल दो सार्वजनिक कम्पनियां हैं और ये फार्मास्यूटिकल कम्पनियां हैं। नीति आयोग ने सिफारिश की है और उसमें कुल मिलाकर 74 पीएसयूज हैं। जो 74 पीएसयूज सिक हुए हैं, सिक पीएसयूज का रिवाइवल करने के लिए भूतकाल में कोशिश की गई थी और वह कोशिश सफल नहीं रही। उसको बार-बार इंसेंटिव दिया गया था, लेकिन जब सफल नहीं रही, तब नीति आयोग ने निर्णय किया कि जो सिक कम्पनीज़ हैं, जैसे

कि 74 ऐसे पीएसयूज हैं, उनको बंद करें या स्ट्रेटिजिक सेल करें, उसके संदर्भ में बीसीपीएल और हिन्दुस्तान एंटीबायोटिक्स लिमिटेड इन दोनों कम्पनियों की स्ट्रेटिजिक सेल करने के लिए नीति आयोग ने जो सिफारिश की है और मंत्रिमंडल की एक कमेटी ने इस सिफारिश को स्वीकार करके केबिनेट ने निर्णय लिया है कि इन दोनों कम्पनियों का स्ट्रेटिजिक सेल किया जाए।

सर, यहां जो बात कही गई कि कम्पनी का एस्टेब्लिशमेंट इसलिए हुआ था, क्योंकि देश की आजादी के बाद फार्मास्यूटिकल्स इंडस्ट्रीज़ डेवलप नहीं हुई थी और जनता को essential medicines कम रेट पर मिलें, उसके लिए इसकी स्थापना हुई थी और बाद में समय बदलता रहा। और नम्बर ऑफ कम्पनीज़ मार्केट में हैं और समय-समय पर उसके कम्पीटीशन में हमारी गवर्नमेंट कम्पनी ठीक नहीं रही है, इसलिए वह घाटे में चली जा रही है। घाटे को फुलफिल करने के लिए सरकार ने दो बार, तीन बार कोशिश की, लेकिन सक्सेसफुल नहीं हुए। जनता को affordable medicines मिलें, उसके लिए हमारी सरकार का कमिटमेंट है और इसलिए एन.पी.पी.ए. के माध्यम से आज हमने 700 से अधिक medicines का सैलिंग प्राइस फिक्स कर दिया है और प्रधान मंत्री जन औषधि केंद्र के माध्यम से आज सारे देश में a number of medical stores ओपन करके, वहां 50 परसेंट से कम रेट में हम medicines उपलब्ध करा रहे हैं, इसलिए निर्णय किया गया।

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, I don't agree with this answer. In fact, the Government is deliberately making public sector units sick and putting them up on strategic sale. Having said this, I would like to put this question through you, Sir: In 2013, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce, headed by Shri Shanta Kumar, had recommended "...so as to make available an adequate supply of generic essential medicines for public health services". The logic given by the Committee was that "...this had become necessary as private companies were not the answer to the need for adequate supply of essential affordable generics." The Committee also said that the sick units must be revived. What efforts did the Government make? It is a Parliamentary Standing Committee's Report. Have you given any respect to the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee? Instead of reviving the sick public sector units, you make them further sick and try to sell them. What do you want to do in this country? The public sector is being broken and destroyed in this manner. It is the strength of our economy, the strength of our system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Let it be answered.

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, यह जो सार्वजनिक कम्पनी है, हमारे समय में सिक नहीं हुई है। जो एच.ए.एल. है, वह 1992 में सिक हुई, जो बी.सी.पी.एल. है, वह 1976 से सिक होती आई है और 1977 में इसको भारत सरकार को हैंडओवर किया गया था। सर, विषय यह है कि जो कम्पनी पुराने समय में सिक हुई है, पुराने समय में सिक होने के बाद जब उसकी liability बढ़ती रही, तो सरकार ने बार-बार कोशिश भी की। सर, सरकार ने दो बार 1992-1993 और 1997 में IDPL, HAL और BCPL को डॉयरेक्ट मदद भी की, लेकिन ये कम्पनीज़ सस्टेन नहीं हुई हैं, ये कम्पनीज़ प्रॉफिट में नहीं आईं और उनकी liability बढ़ती रही। वैसी स्थिति में सरकार ने कोई न कोई उपाय करना चाहिए था। बाद में नीति आयोग की एक समिति गठित हुई। नीति

आयोग ने सिफारिश की और उसके साथ-साथ जो फार्मा कम्पनी है, हमारा कमिटमेंट जनता को है कि एफॉर्डबल मेडिसिन्स मिलें, उसके लिए वह कायम रहा है और उसके लिए हमने अनेक उपाय किए। उसमें से ही प्रधान मंत्री जनऔषधि योजना के माध्यम से ऐसी medicines हैं, जो 700 से अधिक medicines हैं और 150 से अधिक मेडिकल डिवाइसेज हैं। ये medicines और मेडिकल डिवाइसेज 50 परसेंट से कम रेट पर हैं। डायबिटीज की medicine है, जिसकी एक स्ट्रिप का प्राइस 10 रुपए है। तो प्रधान मंत्री जनऔषधि केंद्र पर जाएंगे तो उसको मेक्सिमम 5 रुपए, तीन रुपए, दो रुपए में मिल सकती है। यह हमारे प्रधान मंत्री नरेंद्र भाई मोदी का जनता के प्रति कमिटमेंट है कि देश का कोई गरीब दवा के बिना नहीं मरना चाहिए। उस कमिटमेंट के साथ हम काम कर रहे हैं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Shri Anand Sharma.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, what kind of an answer is this? We are asking about public sector drug companies and he is talking about the Pradhan Mantri Yojana! I am asking about public sector drug companies. Why are you making them sick and then putting them up on sale? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sharma *saab*. ...*(Interruptions)*..

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, the Minister's answer is not satisfactory. Pharmaceutical is an important national subject, particularly the production of life-saving medicines and their availability. There have been concerns over the years that efforts were being made to acquire Indian pharmaceutical production capacities by entities, not in this country, but foreign entities. Therefore, a conscious view was taken by the earlier Government that when it comes to FDI and when it comes to acquisition of critical pharmaceuticals, like those for oncology, injections and vaccines, we will not allow more than 26 per cent FDI so as to protect national capabilities and assets. At the same time, FIPB will scrutinize any attempt where FDI or investment coming from foreign shores is more than the threshold which may threaten India's own production capacities. Now, Sir, two things have happened. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the question?

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, I am linking it to the question. Since we have done away with that scrutiny, since we have done away with the brown field acquisitions policy and now we have done away with the FIPB itself, what guarantee is there that our critical pharmaceutical units, particularly in the Public Sector Undertakings, in the name of strategic sales will not be sold over to foreign entities to create monopolies which will hurt India's own capacity for production of essential medicines?

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, पहली बात तो यह है कि किसी विदेशी कंपनी को भारतीय फार्मा कंपनी बेचने का आयोजन नहीं है। दूसरी महत्वपूर्ण बात यह है कि जब वर्ष 2005 में एक Rehabilitation plan बनाया गया, उस समय स्थिति यह हुई कि यह वर्ष 2005 में बना और 2007

में उसका implementation हुआ। उस बीच में liability बढ़ी और वैसे ही liability बढ़ती चली गयी। महोदय, जो माननीय सदस्य का प्रश्न है कि उसका effect देश में strategical pharma production पर होगा, यह इसलिए नहीं होगा क्योंकि as on today, situation is that कि देश में 1 लाख करोड़ का हमारा domestic market है और 1 लाख करोड़ का international market है। कुल मिलाकर फार्मा इंडस्ट्रीज का व्यापार 2 लाख करोड़ का है, जिन में से सिर्फ 65000 domestic companies का शेयर कम रह गया है, इसलिए गवर्नमेंट पीएसयूज के बंद होने से देश में आम जनता को essential medicines मिलने में कोई दिक्कत न हो, इसलिए यह निर्णय लिया गया है।

श्री नारायण लाल पंचारिया: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि आपके विभाग में कितनी ऐसी सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की कंपनियां हैं, जो घाटे में चल रही हैं और घाटे में चलने वाली उन कंपनियों में से कितनी कंपनियों को सरकार बंद करने जा रही है और कितनी कंपनियों को अप करने जा रही है?

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, मेरे विभाग में हिन्दुस्तान एंटी-बायोटिक्स लिमिटेड, आईडीपीएल, आरडीपीएल, बीसीपीएल और केएपीएल पांच सार्वजनिक कंपनियां हैं। उनमें से नीति आयोग की सिफारिश के अनुसार हम एचएएल और बीसीपीएल को बंद नहीं करना चाहते हैं। दो कंपनियों की हम strategic sale करेंगे और उनके साथ-साथ के.ए.पी.एल. जो हमारी profitable company है, उसकी strategic sale या बंद करने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। महोदय, आईडीपीएल और आरडीपीएल कंपनियों की liabilities भी बहुत बढ़ी हैं और उनका networth भी आज 7,147 और आरडीपीएल का (-) 24.65 है। महोदय, दोनों का माइनस networth होने से हमने ये दो कंपनियां क्लोज करने का निर्णय लिया है।

SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Sir, the hon. Minister has said that under the previous Government it was loss-making. Now what the Government is doing is that they collect medicines and sell it through *Pradhan Mantri Janaushadhi Pariyojana*. Is it 'Make in India'? It is wholesale agency. Is our present Government's policy to run a wholesale agency or 'Make in India' project which means producing? If the Government is producing, how many essential drugs are being produced by the Public Sector companies? Why are these two companies being sold? The Government, as far as I know, can design technology through various institutions for developing new methods of producing medicine. Why are we not making use of those things?

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, हम 'मेक इन इंडिया' के माध्यम से फॉर्मास्यूटिकल्स सेक्टर में आगे बढ़ रहे हैं। आज देश में फॉर्मास्यूटिकल्स इंडस्ट्रीज 10 per cent ग्रोथ से आगे बढ़ रही हैं। पूरे देश में GST बिल लागू होने से इंडस्ट्रीज को और बढ़ावा मिलेगा, क्योंकि देश में अभी ऐसी स्थिति थी कि सभी स्टेट्स में अपना-अपना टैक्स होता था और आज कोई स्टेट टैक्स होलिडे डिक्लेयर करती थी, तो उस स्टेट में फॉर्मास्यूटिकल कम्पनी उसका लाभ लेने के लिए चली जाती थी। GST लागू होने से एक समान कर develop होगा और फॉर्मास्यूटिकल्स इंडस्ट्रीज को और बल मिलेगा। इसके साथ-साथ जो भी संभव था और जो संभव है, हम उसको भी जारी रखना चाहते हैं। जो प्रॉफिटेबल कम्पनी KEPL है, वह कैसे आगे बढ़े? जिन कम्पनीज का नेटवर्क माइनस में ज्यादा चला गया है तथा उसके रिवाइवल की संभावना मुश्किल है, ऐसी स्थिति में ही हम

उनको क्लोज कर रहे हैं तथा IDPL व RDPL इन दो कम्पनीज़ को ही क्लोज कर रहे हैं तथा दूसरी कम्पनीज़ की स्ट्रेटेजिक सेल करेंगे और जो प्रॉफिटेबल कम्पनीज़ हैं, हम उनको चालू रखेंगे।

***18. [*The questioner was absent.*]**

Sale of land of ailing State-owned Pharma PSUs

***18. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY:** Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the surplus land of ailing State-owned pharmaceuticals companies like the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. and Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. has been cleared for sale to pay off their existing liabilities:

(b) whether these companies will be closed after their liabilities are settled from the sale of their surplus land:

(c) if so, how Government proposes to rehabilitate the workers of these companies: and

(d) whether Government proposes to provide VRS to the employees of these companies, if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) Yes Sir. The Government has decided to sell that much of surplus land of Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited (IDPL), Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited (RDPL) and Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited (BCPL) to Government agencies as would be required to clear their outstanding liabilities, implement Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS)/Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) to pave way for their closure, manage the remaining land in accordance with guidelines of Department of Investment and Public Assets Management/Department of Public Enterprises and if need be, vest it in a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The Government has decided that after liabilities have been met, balance sheet cleansed and VRS/VSS effected, IDPL and RDPL be closed and BCPL sold strategically.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 18. Questioner not present. Let the answer be given. Shri Tiruchi Siva.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, the Government has decided to sell the surplus land of IDPL, RDPL and BCPL. Sir, I think, NITI Aayog suggests nothing but the sale

of the lands of public sector undertakings. Sir, instead of reviving the sick units and studying the reasons as to why they have fallen sick, the Government is in a hasty move to close down all the public sector undertakings.

Sir, the public sector undertakings are the temples of economy of our country. When the whole world faced economic recession, India withstood the same only because of these PSUs. Sir, I was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry. The Committee's study revealed that the reasons of sickening of the PSUs are mainly mismanagement and non-upgradation of technology. So, instead of concentrating on that side, why is the Government in haste to shut down these PSUs? There should be a coordination between the DPE and the concerned Ministries, which should safeguard these PSUs as well as the employees. Non-revision of pay of employees also results in low morale.

So, I think, the Government has to concentrate more on revival and resilience of the public sector undertakings. It should then take all such steps which they have to take, instead of accepting all the suggestions given by the NITI Aayog.

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, जैसा कि मैंने पहले भी बताया है कि हमें किसी भी गवर्नमेंट PSUs के बेचने में कोई रुचि नहीं है, लेकिन कुछ ऐसे PSUs हैं, जिनका रिवाइवल करना मुश्किल है, जिनके रिवाइवल करने में दिक्कतें हैं, ऐसी PSUs के बारे में हमने कोई जल्दबाजी नहीं की है। उनके ऊपर विस्तार से विचार-विमर्श किया गया है। नीति आयोग ने जो सिफारिश की है, उस सिफारिश के ऊपर ग्रुप ऑफ मिनिस्टर्स ने विस्तार से डिस्कशन किया है। ग्रुप ऑफ मिनिस्टर्स ने डिस्कशन करने बाद ही केबिनेट को रिकमेंड किया है। ऐसी कम्पनीज़ के लिए ही रेकमेंडेशन किया गया है, जिनका सर्वाइवल करना मुश्किल है, हम ऐसी ही PSUs को क्लोज़ करेंगे। जिन PSUs में यदि थोड़ी भी संभावना है, तो हम ऐसी PSUs की स्ट्रेटेजिक सेल से भागीदारी बनाए रखने के बाद ही उसके साथ काम करेंगे। हमने वहां काम करने वाले कर्मचारियों तथा उनके हितों के बारे में भी विस्तार से विचार किया है। हमारे मंत्रालय ने भी यह विचार किया है कि जब उसकी स्ट्रेटेजिक सेल हो या वह क्लोज़ हो, तो उसके employees की जो liabilities हैं, उनका ध्यान रखा जाए। उनको नियमों के अनुसार VRS दिया जाए। जिसकी भी स्ट्रेटेजिक सेल होगी, ऐसी स्थिति में जो कर्मचारी VRS लेना चाहेगा, उसको VRS दिया जाएगा तथा कम्पनी की balance sheet को clear किया जाए। जो भी कर्मचारी जॉब करना चाहते हैं, तो नीति आयोग और प्राइवेट एन्टरप्राइजेज़ मिनिस्ट्री की जो कमेटी है, वह उनके बारे में विचार करेगी। जो भी वहीं पर जॉब करना चाहेंगे, तो उनको तीन साल तक के लिए प्रोटेक्शन दिया जाए और उसको सर्वाइव किया जाए, हम यह भी ध्यान रखेंगे।

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, what is the mandate of the NITI Aayog?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your question is finished. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, please allow him. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: One minute. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, what is the mandate of NITI Aayog? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, we seek your protection. The Minister's answer has raised a larger issue, which is about the strategic sale of PSUs and NITI Aayog's role.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a subject for separate discussion.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Give notice for a discussion on it.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, it raised an issue on the mandate of NITI Aayog. It is nebulous. Nobody knows about it. Is the NITI Aayog going to decide a grand clearance sale of Public Sector Undertakings?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a subject for separate discussion.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, it is the right of the House to know now ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. Give notice for a discussion.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, we seek your protection. Let the Prime Minister or the Finance Minister come and inform the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fair enough.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, you give a direction. ...*(Interruptions)*... Not today, but in this Session, let them come and make a statement. ...*(Interruptions)*..

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let this matter be discussed through appropriate procedure.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, we are only requesting...*(Interruptions)*... The Chair has the authority to direct the Government to make a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am suggesting a way out. Let this matter be a subject of a separate discussion.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, we will do that.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Respected Chairman, it is becoming very clear that the intent of the present Government is to locate the surplus land of the sick units and sell it as per their advantage. The duty of the IDPL, RDPL and BCPL is to just look for the surplus land. I would like to mention one important point here. The Ministry of Ayush is in search of Government land to start production units. I would like to know whether the Ministry would consider giving the surplus land to the Ministry of Ayush to expand its production.

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सभापति महोदय, हमारे जो सिक यूनिट्स हैं, उनकी लाइबिलिटीज़ पूरी करने के लिए यह लैंड की बिक्री की बात हुई है। इसमें जो उस यूनिट की बेलेन्स शीट है, उसको ठीक करने के लिए जितनी आवश्यकता होगी, उतनी ही लैंड हम सेल करेंगे और वह लैंड भी कंपीटीटिव बिडिंग से ...**(व्यवधान)**...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Let it be answered.

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, वह लैंड भी हम कंपीटीटिव बिडिंग से गवर्नमेंट एजेन्सीज़ को सेल करेंगे, किसी प्राइवेट व्यक्ति को हम देने वाले नहीं हैं। हम उसको पारदर्शिता से सेल करेंगे और उतनी ही लैंड को सेल करेंगे, जिससे हमारे इंफ्लॉईज़ और कंपनी की सारी लाइबिलिटीज़ खत्म हों। उतनी ही हम सेल करेंगे।

श्री लाल सिंह वडोदिया: माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार ने जब देश की प्रजा को सस्ते दामों पर दवाइयाँ उपलब्ध कराने का महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय लिया है, तो ऐसे समय में दवाइयाँ बनाने और उनकी प्रोग्रेस के लिए यह जमीन बेचने के बजाय भविष्य में इनके डवलपमेंट के लिए रिजर्व रखी जाए, क्या ऐसा कुछ सरकार कर सकती है?

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: माननीय सभापति जी, ज्यादा जमीन बेचने का हमने कोई विषय नहीं रखा है। हम उतनी ही लैंड को सेल कर रहे हैं, जिससे कि हमारे सिक यूनिट जो क्लोज हो रहे हैं और यह स्ट्रेटिजिक सेल करना है, जिससे यूनिट की सभी लाइबिलिटीज़ खत्म हों, पूर्ण हों। उतनी लैंड हम सेल करेंगे, बाकी की लैंड सरकार के पास ही रहेगी, कंपनी के पास ही रहेगी, ताकि आवश्यकता के अनुसार सरकार जो नीति बनाएगी, उसके अनुसार उसका उपयोग हो सकता है।

*19. [*The questioner was absent*].

Shortage of skilled manpower in IT sector

*19. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is considerable shortage of skilled manpower in the Information Technology (IT) sector;

(b) if so, the percentage thereof and the steps taken by Government to bridge the gap;

(c) whether Government has made any assessment and planning for immediate requirement of manpower in the IT sector due to Digital India Programme and online transactions and advent of more software related programmes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the skill development training proposed to be given to the educated youth in the country?

THE MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) According to National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), presently there is a workforce of 3.7 million in IT-ITeS sector. This is projected to grow to 4.3 million by 2019. The training requirements of this workforce will be met by educational and training institutions including the IIT's, IIIT's, NIIT's and Engineering colleges as well as National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT), NASSCOM Sector Skill Council, private entities and Industry. Further, the IT and ITeS industry is providing on-the-job training to bridge the skill gaps, if any, due to the changing technological landscape.

Details of initiatives taken by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for promotion of skilled manpower in the IT-ITeS sector are given in the Statement-I.

Statement-I

The Skill Development activities of the Ministry are primarily being taken up by its two autonomous societies *viz.* National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). In addition, various organizations/attached offices under the Ministry *viz.* ERNET India, Media Lab Asia, CSC E-Governance Services India Limited, STQC, NIC etc. are engaged in training of stakeholders.

National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT)

NIELIT is engaged both in Formal and Non-Formal education in the area of Information, Electronics and Communications Technology (IECT) besides development of industry oriented quality education and training programmes in the state-of-the-art areas. NIELIT has 35 offices and a network of about 800 institutes throughout the country. NIELIT offers courses in the IT-ITES domain ranging from 'O' Level (Foundation), 'A' Level (Advance Diploma), 'B' Level (MCA equivalent), 'C' Level (M-Tech level), IT literacy courses such as CCC (Course on Computer Concept), BCC (Basic Computer Course) and long-term and short-term courses in the non formal sector such as courses on Information Security, ITeS-BPO (Customer Care/Banking), Computer Hardware Maintenance (CHM-O/A level), Bio-Informatics(BI-O/A/B level). At present, NIELIT is training and certifying around 4 lakh persons per year.

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)

C-DAC undertakes R&D in IT, Electronics and associated areas. In addition,

C-DAC is engaged in IT education and training. Presently C-DAC is training about 5000 persons per year in the areas of High Performance, Grid and Cloud Computing (HGC), Multilingual Computing, Professional Electronics including Embedded and VLSI, Cyber Security, Software Technologies and Health Informatics.

Apart from the above, various other skill development activities taken up by MeitY are as under :

I. Post Graduate and Doctorate Level:

Visvesvaraya PhD Scheme: The objective of the scheme is to generate 1500 (500 full time and 1000 part time) PhDs for each of ESDM and IT/ITES sectors over a period of 5 years, in order to promote innovation and development of new products in IT/ITES and ESDM sectors. So far, a total of 1160 PhD (970 Full Time + 190 Part Time) candidates have been enrolled under this Scheme.

II. Graduate Level:

- (i) Scheme for setting up of Electronics and ICT Academies: Under the Scheme, 7 Electronics and ICT Academies have been set up at NIT Warangal, IIITD&M Jabalpur, IIT Guwahati, NIT Patna, IIT Kanpur, IIT Roorkee, MNIT Jaipur. These Academies undertake faculty/mentor development in collaboration of States/Union Territories. So far, Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) covering 4,310 participants have been conducted.
- (ii) Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) Phase-II: The project aims at capacity building in the area of Information Security, training of Government personnel and creation of mass awareness on Information Security. The project is being implemented by 52 institutions. So far, 13,868 candidates have been trained in various formal/non-formal programs; 2,730 Government officials have been trained and 406 awareness workshops have been conducted covering 46,466 participants.

III. Vocational, Skill Development Level:

- (i) Two Schemes for Skill Development in ESDM Sector are currently under implementation viz. (i) “*Scheme for Financial Assistance to select States for Skill Development in Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) sector*” being implemented by the respective State Implementing Agencies (SIAs) of 8 States with a total target to skill 90,000 candidates upto March 2019. (ii) “*Skill Development in ESDM for Digital India*” being implemented in remaining States/UTs with a target to skill 3,28,000

candidates upto March, 2019. So far, under both the Schemes, a total of 2,29,700 candidates have enrolled, out of which 1,81,316 have been trained.

- (ii) 'Skill Development in Electronics Hardware' being implemented by NCPUL/NIELIT Chandigarh: The project has been approved for a duration of 3 years for conducting One-year Diploma course jointly by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) and NIELIT, Chandigarh for training 10,000 candidates. The training is being conducted at 50 NCPUL centres and trained faculty is being provided by NIELIT. So far 8869 candidates have been enrolled/trained.

IV. Skill development facilities in deprived areas through strengthening of NIELIT:

- (i) Development of North-Eastern Region by enhancing the Training/Education capacity in the IECT area: The project objective includes upgradation of the six existing NIELIT centres; setting up ten new Extension centres and upgradation the two existing extension Centres to increase the training capacity from 3,080 per year to 14,400 per year from the 5th year. So far, 15 NIELIT Centres/extension Centres have been made operational under the project and 26,000 candidates trained in various Electronics and ICT courses. NIELIT is presently offering trainings courses from 17 locations in all the eight NE States covering two additional locations at Agartala and Kohima.
- (ii) Setting up/upgradation of NIELIT Centres at Srikakulam, Ladakh Region of Leh, Kolkata, Patna, Ranchi, and Ropar is underway

V. Digital Literacy Schemes:

Two Schemes namely National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM) and Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA) have been implemented. Under these schemes, a total of 82.74 lakh beneficiaries (1 per household) have been covered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 19. The questioner is not present. Let the answer be given.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Respected Chairman, the growing requirement of cashless transactions has thrown a challenge to have skilled repairers of ATMs. I would like to know from the Union Ministry whether it is going to give any credence to the industrial institutes where class eight or class ten passed students are getting trained to repair hardware and electronic equipment. With the involvement of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the ITIs can

attain the status of service providing and technology expanding institutions. Are you contemplating to give any extra focus to give support to the ITIs in the country?

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, I am happy to inform the hon. Member about this. His question is a very valid question. Indian IT Sector has done great service to the country. Indian IT industry today is present in 200 cities of 86 countries and, Sir, the revenue rollover in 2015-16, the House needs to know, has been ₹ 8,40,000 crore and the export has been at all-time high of ₹ 7,00,000 crore. Sir, they employ 37 lakh professionals directly and one crore indirectly. In the last two years, we have given jobs to two lakh people; out of which, more than one-third are women.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could you respond to his suggestion?

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Now, as far as the skilling part is concerned, apart from NIELIT and C-DAC, which are giving professional skilling courses, we are also taking up a big skilling course, including non-Government, Government, smaller bodies, which can be involved in skilling in IT products. One thing more I would like to inform the hon. Member that of late, electronic manufacturing is becoming a very big activity in India. We have received proposal of ₹ 1,26,000 crore and India is becoming a big hub of mobile manufacturing. Sir, I am very grateful to inform the House that in the last one-and-a-half years, 72 mobile manufacturing units have come in India – 42 mobile and 30 component manufacturing factories – in a very big way giving job to nearly two lakh people directly and indirectly. All this surely will lead to higher skill. Sir, we have a good number of IITs, NITs, IIITs and so many ITIs. All have to work together for the enhancement of the skilling potential of India and the Government of India is encouraging all this in a very, very purposive way.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: They are yet to be connected with the IITs, NITs and all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, your question is over. Now, Shrimati Kahkashan Perween.

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन: सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने जो जवाब दिया है, उसमें उन्होंने कहा है कि प्रति वर्ष 5 हजार व्यक्तियों को प्रशिक्षित किया जा रहा है। इसके अनुसार 2014-15, 2015-16 और 2016-17 के हिसाब से लगभग 15 हजार व्यक्तियों को प्रशिक्षित किया गया है। मैं यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि प्रशिक्षित व्यक्तियों को कहीं नौकरी मिली या नहीं, क्या इसका कोई डेटा इनके पास है? मैं यह भी जानना चाहती हूँ कि इन्होंने दो सालों में किस राज्य में कितने लोगों को इन कामों में प्रशिक्षित किया है?

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद: सर, मैं माननीय सदस्य महोदय को बहुत विनम्रता से बताना चाहूँगा कि अगर वे मेरे इस उत्तर के Statement-I को विस्तार से पढ़ेंगी, तो NIELIT ने 4 लाख लोगों को train किया है, C-DAC ने 5 हजार लोगों को train किया है और 1,500 को हम PhD दे रहे हैं। अगर आप इसके Statement-I के III को देखें, तो 2,29,700 candidates Skill Development में enrol हुए, जिनमें 1,81,316 train हो चुके हैं। अब यह प्रदेशवार कितना है, मैं आपको इसकी सूची भेज दूँगा। एक बात अवश्य है कि Digital India की व्यापकता में प्रदेश और केंद्र, दोनों को साथ-साथ मिल कर चलना है। इस दिशा में राज्यों को जो भी सहयोग चाहिए, वह हम अवश्य देंगे।

रेलवे स्टेशनों पर स्वचालित सीढ़ियां और लिफ्ट लगाया जाना

*20. **डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) उज्जैन, रतलाम, इन्दौर, भोपाल (मुख्य) इटारसी, नागपुर, जयपुर और कोटा सहित प्रमुख रेलवे स्टेशनों के प्लेटफार्मों पर सुगमतापूर्ण ढंग से पहुंचने के लिए स्वचालित सीढ़ियां और लिफ्ट लगाए जाने की क्या-क्या योजना एवं कार्य-योजना है; और

(ख) उक्त रेलवे स्टेशनों पर यात्रियों की निरंतर बढ़ती संख्या के दबाव को विकेंद्रित करने के लिए किए गए उपायों का ब्यौरा क्या है तथा उक्त स्टेशनों पर स्वच्छता और यात्री सुविधाओं को बढ़ाए जाने के लिए निरंतर किए जा रहे प्रयासों का ब्यौरा क्या है?

रेल मंत्री (श्री सुरेश प्रभु): (क) और (ख) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) भारतीय रेल की 770 एस्केलेटर और लगभग 620 लिफ्ट लगाने की योजना है जिसमें से अभी तक उज्जैन, रतलाम, इंदौर, भोपाल (मेन), इटारसी, नागपुर, जयपुर और कोटा सहित 167 स्टेशनों पर लगभग 370 एस्केलेटर और 98 स्टेशनों पर लगभग 183 लिफ्ट लगा दी गई हैं जिनका ब्यौरा नीचे दिया गया है:

क्र. सं.	रेलवे स्टेशन	पहले से ही संस्थापित		योजना/कार्य प्रगति पर	
		एस्केलेटर	लिफ्ट	एस्केलेटर	लिफ्ट
1.	उज्जैन	—	4	2	—
2.	रतलाम	2	—	—	2
3.	इंदौर	—	1	6	1
4.	भोपाल (मेन)	2	1	—	2
5.	इटारसी	—	2	2	—
6.	नागपुर	2	—	4	—
7.	जयपुर	4	1	2	3
8.	कोटा	2	2	—	—

(ख) रेलें उपरोक्त उल्लिखित स्टेशनों पर निरंतर रूप से बढ़ती यात्री संख्या के दबाव को संभालने के लिए स्टेशनों को अपनी विभिन्न स्टेशन विकास योजनाओं के अंतर्गत निरंतर रूप से उन्नत कर रही हैं। आदर्श स्टेशन योजना के अंतर्गत उज्जैन, रतलाम, इंदौर, इटारसी और जयपुर स्टेशनों की पहचान की गई है।

इन आदर्श स्टेशनों पर बढ़ते यात्री यातायात को संभालने के लिए निम्नलिखित सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराई गई हैं:

- परिचलन क्षेत्र में सुधार ताकि वाहनों आदि का उचित प्रवेश और निकास सुनिश्चित हो सके।
- बेहतर प्रकाश व्यवस्था के लिए लाइटिंग टॉवर।
- प्लेटफार्मों, कॉनकोर्स आदि पर बेहतर आधुनिक प्रकाश प्रबंध।
- साइनेज और कोच इंडिकेशन बोर्डों सहित यात्री मार्ग दर्शन अच्छी प्रणाली।
- बुकिंग और पूछताछ कार्यालयों में सुधार।
- बुकिंग कार्यालय, कतार लगाने के क्षेत्र आदि में रोशनी करना।
- यात्रियों के शीघ्र प्रवेश और निकास पर फोकस (बुकिंग कार्यालय सहित न्यूनतम दो प्रवेश और दो निकास स्थान)।
- स्टेशन परिसर में सुगम पहुंच।
- चौड़े पैदल पार पुलों का प्रावधान (एफओबी)।

निर्धारित मानकों के अनुसार उपरोक्त स्टेशनों पर सभी न्यूनतम आवश्यक सुख-सुविधाएं पहले ही उपलब्ध करा दी गई हैं। बहरहाल, यात्री सुख-सुविधाओं का उन्नयन एक सतत् प्रक्रिया है और कार्यों को आवश्यकता, यात्री यातायात के घनत्व आदि पर निर्भर करते हुए किया जाता है।

स्टेशनों पर स्वच्छता को बेहतर करने के लिए, 2 अक्टूबर, 2014 को स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के अंतर्गत विशेष स्वच्छता अभियान शुरू किया गया था। तबसे रेलवे स्टेशनों सहित गाड़ियों और रेल परिसरों में स्वच्छता मानकों में महत्वपूर्ण और स्थायी सुधार के एकमात्र उद्देश्य के साथ भारतीय रेलों पर नियमित गहन अभियान चलाए गए हैं। स्वच्छता/सफाई के प्रति भारतीय रेल द्वारा की गई महत्वपूर्ण पहलकार्यों में से कुछ निम्नानुसार हैं:

- (i) सवारी डिब्बों में बाँयो-टॉयलेट लगाने की गति बढ़ाई गई है। पिछले दो वर्षों में 25000 से अधिक बाँयो-टॉयलेट फिट किए गए और इस वर्ष के लिए लक्ष्य 30,000 का है। सवारी डिब्बों में बाँयो-टॉयलेट लगाना यात्रा के दौरान मानव अपशिष्ट को सीधे पटरियों पर आने से रोकेगा।
- (ii) ऑन-बोर्ड क्लीनिंग की सुविधा को 780 से अधिक गाड़ियों में उपलब्ध कराया गया है जिसकी यात्री फीडबैक प्रणाली आधारित क्लोज्ड लूप 'एप्प' द्वारा निगरानी रखी जा रही है।

- (iii) रेलवे एसएमएस आधारित, वेब आधारित और एप आधारित शिकायत निपटान प्रणाली का उपयोग कर रही हैं। रोजाना अनियमित रूप से चुने गए लगभग 1 लाख यात्रियों से आईवीआरएस आधारित पैसेंजर फीडबैक लिए जा रहे हैं।
- (iv) प्रमुख स्टेशनों पर स्वच्छता प्रयासों के प्रभावों का आकलन करने के लिए 407 स्टेशनों पर स्वच्छता संसूचकों पर थर्ड पार्टी सर्वेक्षण किया गया जिसमें इस वर्ष 1.3 लाख यात्रियों की प्रतिक्रियाएं प्राप्त हुईं।
- (v) यांत्रिक स्वच्छता उपकरण और गुणवत्ता वाली सामग्रियों के प्रयोग को बढ़ावा देने के लिए उत्तरोत्तर रूप से प्रमुख स्टेशनों पर इंटीग्रेटेड हाऊसकीपिंग कांट्रैक्ट दिए जा रहे हैं।
- (vi) भुगतान करो एवं उपयोग करो शौचालयों सहित रेलवे स्टेशनों पर अतिरिक्त शौचालय सुविधाएं।
- (vii) भारतीय रेल (रेल परिसरों पर स्वच्छता प्रभावित करने वाली गतिविधियों के लिए जुर्माने) नियम, 2012 को लागू करना तेज किया गया है।
- (viii) प्रमुख स्टेशनों पर स्वच्छता गतिविधियों की निगरानी के लिए सीसीटीवी का व्यापक प्रयोग।
- (ix) क्षेत्रीय रेलों द्वारा बारी-बारी से विभिन्न रेलवे स्टेशनों पर साप्ताहिक गहन स्वच्छता अभियान शुरू किए गए हैं।
- (x) रेलों के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में स्वच्छता पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने के लिए समय-समय पर विभिन्न थीम आधारित अभियान शुरू किए गए हैं।

Installation of escalators and lifts at railway stations

†*20. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the planning and action plan to install escalators and lifts for smooth access to platforms of major railway stations, including Ujjain, Ratlam, Indore, Bhopal (Main), Itarsi, Nagpur, Jaipur and Kota; and

(b) the details of measures taken towards relieving the pressure of constantly growing passenger volume at aforesaid railway stations and the details of efforts being continuously made to increase cleanliness and passenger facilities at the said stations?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

(a) Indian Railways plan to provide about 770 No. of escalators and about 620 No. of lifts out of which so far, about 370 No. of escalators at 167 stations and about 183 No. of lifts at 98 stations have been installed across Indian Railways at major railway stations including Ujjain, Ratlam, Indore, Bhopal (Main), Itarsi, Nagpur, Jaipur and Kota as per the details below:

Sl. No.	Railway Station	Already installed		Planned/work in progress	
		Escalators	Lifts	Escalators	Lifts
1.	Ujjain	—	4	2	—
2.	Ratlam	2	—	—	2
3.	Indore	—	1	6	1
4.	Bhopal (Main)	2	1	—	2
5.	Itarsi	—	2	2	—
6.	Nagpur	2	—	4	—
7.	Jaipur	4	1	2	3
8.	Kota	2	2	—	—

(b) To ease out the pressure of constantly growing passenger volume at aforesaid stations, Railways have been continuously upgrading stations under its various Station Development Schemes. Ujjain, Ratlam, Indore, Itarsi and Jaipur are identified under Adarsh Station Scheme.

At these Adarsh Stations, following facilities are provided to tackle the growing passenger traffic:

- Improvement in the circulating area so as to ensure proper entry and exit of vehicles etc.
- A lighting tower for improved illumination.
- Improved modern lighting arrangements at platforms, concourse etc.
- Good passenger guidance system including signages and coach indication boards.
- Improvement of booking and enquiry offices.
- Lighting of booking office, the queuing area etc.
- Focus on quick entry and exit for passengers (minimum two entry and two exit points with booking office).
- Smooth access to station premises.
- Provision of wide Foot Over Bridges (FOBs).

All Minimum Essential Amenities have already been provided at the above stations as per the laid down norms. However, upgradation of passenger amenities is a continuous process and works are undertaken depending upon need, volume of passenger traffic etc.

To improve cleanliness at the stations, Special Cleanliness Campaign under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched on Indian Railways on 2nd October, 2014. Regular intensive campaigns/drives have been organized since then over the Indian Railways with the sole objective towards significant and sustainable improvements in cleanliness standards of Trains and Railway premises, including Railway stations. Some of the major initiatives taken by Indian Railways towards sanitation/cleanliness are as follows:

- (i) Pace of fitment of bio-toilets in coaches has been increased. More than 25000 bio-toilets were fitted in the last two years and target for this year is 30,000. Fitment of Bio-toilets in coaches will prevent discharge of human waste during train journeys directly onto the track.
- (ii) The facility of On-Board Cleaning has been extended to more than 780 trains which is being monitored through a closed loop 'APP' based passenger feedback system.
- (iii) Railways is resorting to SMS-based, web-based and APP-based complaint redressal system. Daily IVRS-based passenger feedback is randomly being taken from about 1 lakh passengers.
- (iv) To assess the impact of cleanliness efforts at major stations, a third party survey on cleanliness indicators has been done at 407 stations this year generating 1.3 lakh passenger responses.
- (v) Integrated Housekeeping Contracts are being put in place at major stations progressively to promote use of Mechanised Cleaning equipment and Quality materials.
- (vi) Additional toilets at Railway Stations including Pay and Use toilets.
- (vii) Enforcement of Indian Railways (Penalties for activities affecting cleanliness at railway premises) Rules, 2012 has been intensified.
- (viii) Extending use of CCTVs for monitoring cleanliness activities at major stations.
- (ix) Weekly intensive cleanliness drives have been undertaken at various Railway stations in rotation by Zonal Railways.
- (x) Various theme-based drives have been undertaken from time to time with focus on cleanliness in different areas of Railways.

डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया: माननीय सभापति जी, माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में स्टेशनों पर जनता के आवागमन की सुविधाओं के बारे में विस्तार से क्या काम किया जा रहा है तथा उनमें उज्जैन, रतलाम, इन्दौर, भोपाल, इटारसी, नागपुर, जयपुर और कोटा के कुछ स्टेशंस का नाम देकर उनके बारे में कहा है। मुझे खुशी है कि माननीय रेल मंत्री जी ने अपने इस उत्तर में इसका हवाला दिया है कि वे कहां escalator स्थापित कर रहे हैं और कहां लिफ्ट लगा रहे हैं। वैसे भी मैं रेल मंत्री जी को नए बजट में जो प्रावधान किए गए हैं, उनके अन्तर्गत इन सारी योजनाओं को पूरा करने की संभावना को देखते हुए बधाई देता हूँ। मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि आदर्श स्टेशंस के अन्तर्गत जो स्टेशंस लिए गए हैं, वहां इस अवधारणा, इस concept को पूरा करने में कितना समय लगेगा और इसके लिए क्या-क्या उपाय किए जा रहे हैं?

श्री सुरेश प्रभु: सर, यह सही है कि हम लोगों ने बड़े पैमाने पर आम आदमी की सुविधाओं का ध्यान रखने की कोशिश की है, खास तौर पर बुजुर्गों और दिव्यांगों को जो दिक्कतें आती हैं, उनके लिए अतिरिक्त सुविधाएं देने का प्रबंध शुरू किया है। उनके लिए लिफ्ट और एस्केलेटर्स की सुविधा दी जाएगी, जो स्वाभाविक तौर पर बहुत बड़ा और अहम काम है। हम लोगों ने 770 एस्केलेटर्स लगाने की योजना बनाई है और जल्दी ही उनको लगाए जाने की शुरुआत की जाएगी।

जैसा माननीय सदस्य ने पूछा, यह बात बिल्कुल सही है कि सभी स्टेशनों में लिफ्ट और एस्केलेटर्स लगाया जाना बहुत जरूरी है, लेकिन शुरू में 'ए-वन' कैटेगरी, 'ए' कैटेगरी और 'सी' कैटेगरी के स्टेशंस के ऊपर ज्यादा जोर देकर हम लोगों ने काम की शुरुआत की है। शायद आपको मालूम होगा कि 75 स्टेशंस 'ए-वन' कैटेगरी में आते हैं, 302 स्टेशंस 'ए' कैटेगरी में आते हैं और 483 स्टेशंस 'सी' कैटेगरी में आते हैं। इसके साथ इनमें से कुछ स्टेशंस को आदर्श स्टेशंस की कैटेगरी में भी चुना गया है, आपने इसके संबंध में पूछा भी है। सभी आदर्श स्टेशंस पर अभी ये सुविधाएं देने में कुछ समय लगेगा, क्योंकि इसके लिए जो धन लगता है, वह passenger amenities के अंतर्गत आता है। पिछले कुछ समय से ही हमने passenger amenities को बढ़ाने की शुरुआत की है। इसके लिए पिछले तीन साल से करीब 3000 करोड़ रुपये से ज्यादा पैसा दिया जा चुका है। हमें यह भी पता है कि यह धन भी पर्याप्त नहीं है, क्योंकि लोगों की मांग ज्यादा है, इसलिए इसको देखते हुए हमने CSR के तहत भी कुछ कंपनियों से अपील की थी। मुझे यह बताते हुए खुशी है कि कुछ कंपनियों ने आगे आकर इस काम के लिए हमें बहुत बड़ी मदद भी की है, जैसे WCL ने हम लोगों को 30 करोड़ रुपये दिए हैं। इससे हम लोग कैटेगरी 'सी' के स्टेशंस में भी इस तरह की सुविधाएं प्रदान कर रहे हैं, लेकिन मैं आप सबसे एक यह अपील करूंगा, जैसे कि कुछ सांसदों ने ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just answer his question.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: His question was: How soon will I be able to fulfil it? I am saying, it depends upon the availability of resources. That is why passenger amenities have been stepped up. We are getting CSR funds. There are a lot of hon. Members who have given ₹ 5 crores each from their contribution. So, if you can also contribute, I will be very happy to do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now, second question.

डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया: माननीय सभापति जी, बात यह है कि जो मॉडल स्टेशंस बनाए जा रहे हैं, उन मॉडल स्टेशंस के काम को पूरा करने के लिए हमें कोई न कोई लक्ष्य तो रखना ही पड़ेगा। हम पुराने स्टेशंस में छोटे-बड़े बदलाव करके, वहां कुछ सुविधाएं उपलब्ध करवा दें, केवल इससे तो ये बातें पूरी नहीं होंगी। नए प्रकार से उसकी रचना करके इस काम को करना होगा।

महोदय, नागदा का जो स्टेशन है, वह बड़े औद्योगिक क्षेत्र में आता है। उसके दोनों छोरों पर, एक तरफ इंडस्ट्री है और दूसरी तरफ शहर बसा हुआ है, इसलिए उन दोनों छोरों पर सुविधाओं का विकास करने की आवश्यकता है। नागदा जंक्शन एक एक बड़ा स्टेशन है।

स्वच्छता अभियान के बारे में मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूं, जैसा माननीय मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि 2 अक्टूबर, 2014 को स्वच्छता अभियान की शुरुआत कर दी गई है। यह स्वच्छता अभियान हमारे लिए सभ्य समाज की ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please ask your question.

डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया: मेरा क्वेश्चन सीधा है कि स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के अंतर्गत स्टेशंस को साफ-सुथरा रखने एवं अधिक सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराने के लिए क्या आपने अभी तक कोई कार्यक्रम बनाया है? यदि बनाया है, तो आप उसकी कार्य योजना को कैसे पूरा करेंगे? आज भी स्टेशंस पर बहुत सारी असुविधाएं होती हैं, जिनको दूर किए जाने की जरूरत है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a specific question. It can be answered specifically.

श्री सुरेश प्रभु: सर, इन्होंने दो बिन्दुओं पर अपना प्रश्न पूछा है। एक तरह से इसमें हम लोग incremental हैं। जिन स्टेशंस पर कोई सुविधा नहीं थी, वहां सुविधाएं देने की शुरुआत की गई है, लेकिन साथ-साथ स्टेशन को पूरी मात्रा में redevelop करने का कार्यक्रम भी हमने शुरू किया है। कुछ स्टेशंस पर काम शुरू कर दिया गया है और बाकी के स्टेशंस में भी आने वाले कुछ दिनों में काम शुरू हो जाएगा। कई स्टेशंस के लिए on bidding इस काम को शुरू किया गया है, ये स्टेशंस airport से भी ज्यादा अच्छे होंगे। इस तरह हम लोगों ने bidding करवाने के काम की शुरुआत भी की है। मुझे विश्वास है कि जिन सुविधाओं की बात आप कह रहे हैं, all stations will be fitted with all modern amenities.

स्वच्छ रेलवे का जो अभियान है, उसके तहत बहुत सारे बिन्दु आते हैं। पिछले दो सालों में 25,000 बॉयो-टॉयलेट्स लगाए गए हैं और इस वर्ष के लिए हमारा टार्गेट 30,000 बॉयो-टॉयलेट्स बनाने का है। इसके साथ ही ऑन-बोर्ड क्लीनिंग की सुविधा की शुरुआत भी की गई है। 780 गाड़ियों में closed loop 'App' द्वारा इसकी निगरानी रखी जा रही है। हर रोज़ 1 लाख लोगों से online passenger feedback लिए जा रहे हैं, while they are still travelling. Third-party feedback भी लिए जा रहा है, अभी तक 1.3 लाख लोगों से ये लिए जा चुके हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त mechanised cleaning equipments लगाए जा रहे हैं, additional toilets लगाए जा रहे हैं, सीसीटीवी से cleaning monitor करने की शुरुआत भी हमने की है। इस तरह कुछ और भी बिन्दु हैं, जिनके ऊपर मैं मानता हूं कि अधिक से अधिक लोगों के सहयोग से हम और ज्यादा काम कर पाएंगे।

DR. NARENDRA JADHAV: The hon. Minister's response is very comprehensive and informative. It talks about improvement in railway stations, bridges, lifts, even CCTVs, and cleanliness etc. Regrettably, however, the response does not say anything about making the railway stations physically disabled-friendly, *divyang*-friendly. Mr. Chairman, Sir, Suburban Railway travel in cities like Mumbai, is generally a torture. Mr. Sachin Tendulkar, who is here, will bear me out but, for physically disabled, it is nothing but a nightmare. Sir, I would like to raise a supplementary question. What are the provisions which the Government is coming up with to make the railway stations disabled- friendly? Is there a target date by which the projects are going to be completed? Is there a time-bound programme? Sir, I will take only 30 seconds. This is a low-cost improvement which will go a long way in alleviating the extreme difficulties currently faced by the disabled, *divyangs*, as well as senior citizens.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, I fully share the compassion and the concern of the hon. Member. It is absolutely relevant to know that we are working on this very important issue. This is absolutely right that most of the stations, till recent past, were not disabled-friendly, inaccessible to many people and, therefore, to make all stations *divyang*-friendly is our objective, but it will begin in small steps. All new stations and all new coaches which are getting constructed will be *divyang*-friendly. We have already set the target. I will not be able to give the number just now because right now this is under trial. I will definitely share it with you. But the whole idea is, all the major stations, wherever there is a need for it, we are trying to make them *divyang*-friendly. All new stations are planned like that and all new coaches are already planned as *divyang*-friendly coaches. And, in fact, we have invited some experts in this field to understand as to how the design should be and, therefore, we are really working on it.

श्री माजीद मेमन: माननीय सभापति जी, माननीय रेल मंत्री जी से अभी हमारे एक मित्र ने मुम्बई के बारे में पूछा। बदकिस्मती से रेल का बजट अलग से नहीं रखा गया, नहीं तो विस्तार से हम कई सवाल उनसे पूछ सकते थे, लेकिन चूंकि अब मौका है, इसलिए मैं इस प्रश्न से जुड़े हुए विषय के बारे में माननीय रेल मंत्री जी के ध्यान में लाना चाहता हूं और वे इस बात से अच्छी तरह से परिचित हैं कि मुम्बई शहर की लोकल ट्रेनों की परिस्थिति, जिसके बारे में अभी हमारे मित्र श्री नरेंद्र जाधव जी ने कहा, वह ऐसी है कि अगर कोई लोकल ट्रेन 30 या 45 सेकंड भी लेट हो जाती है, तो पीक टाइम में ऐसी अवस्था होती है कि प्लेटफॉर्म पर पैसेंजर्स को खड़े होने की जगह भी नहीं मिलती है।

महोदय, जहां तक एस्केलेटर्स और लिफ्ट्स के प्रावधान की बात है, मुझे लगता है कि मुम्बई में ऐसी परिस्थिति हो चुकी है कि लगभग सभी रेलवे स्टेशनों पर या तो लिफ्ट या एस्केलेटर का प्रोविजन होना चाहिए। Disabled commuters, elderly commuters, women and sick commuters are finding it very difficult to climb from one platform to another when

the announcements are made that the train is coming say on platform No. 5 instead of platform No. 3. सर, यह बहुत आवश्यक है। मैं रेल मंत्री जी का आभार मानता हूँ कि उन्होंने पिछले वर्ष में जनरल मैनेजर्स सेंट्रल रेलवे और वेस्टर्न रेलवे की, खासदारां यानी सांसदों के साथ मीटिंग रखी थी। मगर उसके फलस्वरूप कुछ हो नहीं पाया। आपका अलग बजट नहीं आया। हमारी बड़ी आशाएं थीं कि आप मुम्बई के लिए बहुत कुछ देंगे, ताकि मुम्बई के कम्यूटर्स को सुविधाएं मिलें।

श्री सुरेश प्रभु: सर, हमारे सम्माननीय सदस्य बहुत जाने-माने एडवोकेट हैं। इसलिए उन्होंने बहुत अच्छी तरह से मुम्बई के लोगों की समस्या हमारे सामने रखी है और उन्हें जानकर खुशी होगी कि देश के इतिहास में शायद पहली बार एक शहर के लिए 55 हजार करोड़ रुपए की, अपग्रेडेशन ऑफ इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर की योजना हमारे सम्माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी की उपस्थिति में दिसम्बर, 2016 में यानी लगभग पांच हफ्ते पहले हम लोगों ने लॉच की थी। उसमें एलीवेटेड कॉरिडोर भी है। उसमें हमारा मुम्बई अर्बन ट्रांसपोर्ट प्रोजेक्ट-तीन भी है और उसमें 55 करोड़ की इन्वेस्टमेंट के बाद, मुझे विश्वास है कि लोगों की समस्या बहुत हद तक कम हो जाएगी। इस बारे में बजट में भी लिखा है। जब उन्हें बजट की पूरी जानकारी मिलेगी, तब वे इससे अवगत हो जाएंगे।

महोदय, मुम्बई में लिफ्ट्स लगाने के लिए, जैसा मैंने कहा, आपको सुनकर खुशी होगी कि हम लोगों ने 30 करोड़ रुपए सिर्फ सीएसआर के तहत डब्ल्यूसीएल से लिए हैं और उसमें 33 स्टेशन्स जिनमें अलग-अलग स्टेशन्स हैं, यानी सेंट्रल रेलवे के 19 स्टेशन्स हैं और वेस्टर्न रेलवे के 14 स्टेशन्स हैं, उनके ऊपर काम करने की शुरुआत हुई है। कुछ टेंडर्स भी इश्यू किए गए हैं। इसलिए मुझे पूरा विश्वास है कि इससे भी लोगों को राहत मिलेगी, लेकिन मैं पूरी तरह से आपसे सहमत हूँ कि मुम्बई में जिस तरह से ट्रैफिक का लोड बढ़ रहा है, वहां 75 लाख लोग रोज ट्रांसपोर्ट सबअर्बन सिस्टम का यूज करते हैं और उसमें पिछले 40-50 साल में परिवर्तन नहीं हुआ। इसके लिए एलिवेटेड कॉरिडोर और इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर का अपग्रेडेशन करने की जरूरत है। इसके लिए हम पूरी तरह से लगे हुए हैं। आपके सहयोग के लिए मैं बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद देता हूँ।

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर: माननीय सभापति जी, मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूँगी कि दिल्ली स्टेशन पर आपने एस्केलेटर लगाया हुआ है, जो फर्स्ट नम्बर प्लेटफॉर्म पर जाता है, लेकिन उसके बाद प्लेटफॉर्म-2, प्लेटफॉर्म-3, प्लेटफॉर्म-4 या प्लेटफॉर्म-5 पर लोगों को सीढ़ियां उतर कर जाना पड़ता है। जो ओल्ड हैं, सीनियर सिटिजंस हैं या जिस तरह से इन्होंने कहा हैंडिकैप्ड लोग हैं, उनको वहां जाने के लिए अपना सामान उठाकर उन सीढ़ियों से उतरना और चढ़ना बहुत मुश्किल हो जाता है। तो यह जो आपका प्रोग्राम है, इसे आप पहले दिल्ली में क्यों नहीं शुरू करते, जहां पर सारे भारत के, सारी दुनिया के लोग आते हैं और उन सीढ़ियों से उतरना और चढ़ना बहुत मुश्किल हो जाता है? तो मैं यही जानना चाहती हूँ कि उसके लिए ये क्या प्रावधान करने जा रहे हैं?

श्री सुरेश प्रभु: सर, जैसा मैंने कहा कि सब जगहों पर A, A Plus and C category में हम लोग एस्केलेटर्स लगाने जा रहे हैं। जैसे नयी दिल्ली स्टेशन लीजिए, यह बिल्कुल सही है कि उसमें बहुत सारे प्लेटफॉर्म्स हैं। यदि हम एक ही स्टेशन पर सभी प्लेटफॉर्म्स पर इसे लगाएँगे, तो हमारे पास जो मर्यादित मात्रा में धन उपलब्ध है, उससे शायद वह कुछ स्टेशन्स पर ही लगेगा।

हम यह कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि पूरी मात्रा में ज्यादा से ज्यादा स्टेशंस पर यह लगे। यदि हमें धन उपलब्ध होगा, ...(व्यवधान)... यह आप भी जानते हैं कि रेल की फाइनेंशियल पोजिशन क्या है, उसके बाद भी, जैसा मैंने आपको बताया कि कितनी बड़ी मात्रा में हम लोगों ने उसमें बढ़ोतरी भी लाई है। यह बिल्कुल सही है कि सभी प्लेटफॉर्म पर यह लगना चाहिए। मैं भी यह मानता हूँ, लेकिन मैं आपको जानकारी के लिए कहना चाहता हूँ कि पिछले ढाई सालों में जितने एस्केलेटर्स लगे हैं, उनकी मात्रा अगर आप देखें, तो ढाई साल पहले वे कितने थे और कितनी बड़ी मात्रा में लगे हैं। मैं बिल्कुल मानता हूँ कि उसमें बढ़ोतरी होनी चाहिए. ...(व्यवधान)...

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर: सर, ...(व्यवधान)...

Better internet service to the household consumers

*21. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the BSNL/MTNL broadband internet connection, availed by household consumers, works at a very slow speed and remains erratic with the result that people have no choice but to opt for private internet connection;

(b) the major reasons for this state of affairs when the country is so capable in satellite technology; and

(c) whether Government has any concrete plan to make BSNL/MTNL internet services efficient and faster?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE; AND THE MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) No Sir, the speed of Broadband connections is provided as per tariff plans opted by the household customers. After the expiry of the fair usage limits, as per tariff plan opted the speed falls back to the level as defined in the plan. After Fair Usage Policy (FUP) customer has an option to restore the pre-FUP speed by making additional payment. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has increased the FUP limit (speed) from 512 Kbps (Kilo-bytes per second) to 1 Mbps (Mega-bytes per second) from 01.08.2016 without any additional cost to customer to provide better speed experience to customer.

The speed mentioned in any tariff plan is the maximum speed that a customer can get. A customer may get lesser speed at some point of time depending upon following factors:

- (i) broadband speed at the customer end depends on number of factors like speed of individual website being accessed,
- (ii) processing speed of customer end device,
- (iii) features of the broadband tariff plan chosen by the customer and
- (iv) location of server across the globe hosting the respective web site being accessed by the customer.

Most of the Broadband connections provided by BSNL and MTNL to wireline and mobile customers are through terrestrial media. Similar is the position for other Telecom Service Providers (TSP) too. Satellite media is used largely for far flung remote areas only, where provision of terrestrial media is costlier as compared to satellite media.

(c) Following steps have been taken by BSNL and MTNL for improving and strengthening the wire line Broadband services in the country;

Steps taken by BSNL:

- (i) Augmentation of broadband speed up to 2 Mbps for all the customers.
- (ii) BSNL has increased the FUP limit (speed) from **512 Kbps to 1 Mbps** from 01.08.2016 without any additional cost to customer.
- (iii) Replacement of DNS (Domain Name System) server with high capacity and latest technology.
- (iv) Addition of one more Broadband POP (Point of Presence) at Chandigarh.
- (v) Deployment of Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) based Next Generation Packet Access Network (MNG-PAN) network in selected cities.
- (vi) Up-gradation of 1 G ring to 10 G rings (32 rings)
- (vii) Peering/Caching with content providers.

Steps taken by MTNL:

- (i) Augmentation of fibre network.
- (ii) Implementation of Very-high-bit-rate Digital Subscriber Line (VDSL) Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer (DSLAM).
- (iii) Bringing DSLAM near to subscriber location.
- (iv) High speed Wi-Fi network.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q.No. 21. The questioner is not present. Let the answer be given.

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much. Sir, BSNL broad band users face problems from the domain name server. The DNS is not that much active. It doesn't respond many times because the new default router when we get a new BSNL connection usually they don't give us the better performance quality products. So, because of this, we usually face problems. At times, Sir, we have to pay four times more than the private players, which give us better connectivity than BSNL. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the BSNL and MTNL internet service providers come up with the time and use the latest technology and upgrade their equipment so that the connectivity could be improved in the near future.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister, Shri Manoj Sinha is absent; and on his request you are kind enough to allow me to reply on his behalf.

Sir, I have taken note of the suggestion of the hon. Member. BSNL is improving a lot of its operational activities and requirements. There has been a legacy issue to which I had occasion to earlier share in the House. It had a profit of ₹ 10,000 crore in 2004. It came down to ₹ 8,000 crore loss in 2014. But today I am happy to announce in this House that their operating profit has gone up by ₹ 4,000 crore and the losses have come down to ₹ 3880 crore. Their revenue also has gone up. You are right; they are investing in new products. There is greater need for involvement. They are giving one Mega-byte free services for the whole broad band. Surely, we take note of your suggestions. If any specific complaint is there, our official would respond to it.

Sir, one thing this House needs to know. It is very important. My good friend, Mr. Raja was talking about PSUs. The human resource component of BSNL/MTNL is more than 50 per cent of their revenue expenditure.

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Establishment cost!

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, in the case of the private sector, establishment cost is only two to three per cent. In spite of this heavy load, for good measure, we need to support employment. If they are doing so well, coming into profit, making new investment and turning things around, I think this initiative needs to be appreciated. Secondly, this House also needs to remember that during natural calamities, it is only these public bodies which provide free services. We need to appreciate that. We know that very well in the case of Chennai. So, the good part also needs to be appreciated. If there is any specific issue, we would certainly look into that.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Hon. Chairman, Sir, we are now in the age of 'struck-up India', 'hanging India' and 'hacking India'. I am aware of the capability and the comprehension of the senior Minister. Even though the regular Minister is absent, I would like to know from him what the Government's take on broadband connectivity is. What is the scope and necessity of broadband connectivity at present, keeping in mind the growing demand of cashless digital transactions in the light of demonetization, so as to serve the PIOs and aid such cashless transactions, which are increasingly leading to hanging of websites and struck-up credit card transactions? Keep this in view while assessing broadband connectivity and its future requirements.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: It is the computers that are hanging, not human beings!

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: I was also taken aback! I am grateful. Sir, I appreciate the interest shown by the hon. Member in digital payments. Keep it up!

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Sir, I also take a lot of interest in cyber. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please; you have asked your question.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: We would all be benefited by your wisdom one day.

Sir, as far as Internet penetration is concerned, his point is fairly well taken. India today is home to about 50 crore Internet connections. We need to increase it. We are expanding connectivity of *Gram Panchayats* through the Optical Fibre Network. I want to gently remind this House that it was started by your Government, Mr. Anand Sharma. It was known as NOFN. Now, we have made it *Bharat Net*. It was started in 2011. Till 2014, in three years, the total length of optical fibre laid was 358 kilometres. We have laid down 1,92,000 kilometres in two-and-a-half years. That is how we are doing it. We need to take it further. Private players too are coming in. Wireless (WiFi) technology is coming up in a very big way. All these are designed to make it more and more pro-people.

Sir, I go to a lot of these Startup convocations. I see young people doing so well and coming up with new technology for broadband. We all need to work together. I do take your suggestion on board, but let me tell you, Indians first observe technology, then adopt it and, finally, they become empowered in the process. I see a lot of new technologies coming up in India to further expand Internet connectivity in the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. ...(Interruptions)... One minute. Your question is over. Shrimati Kahkashan Perween.

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन: माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि पिछले पांच सालों में गांवों में बीएसएनएल और एमटीएनएल के उपभोक्ताओं की संख्या बढ़ी है या घटी है? इसके साथ ही मैं यह भी जानना चाहती हूँ कि इन दो सालों में कितने गांवों में स्पीड हाई-फाई नेटवर्क लगाए गए हैं?

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद: सर, इस विभाग को अब मैं हैंडल नहीं कर रहा हूँ और यह प्रश्न इस प्रश्न से संबंधित नहीं है, लेकिन फिर भी अपने अनुभव के आधार पर मैं उनको बताना चाहूंगा कि आज कल बीएसएनएल 20 लाख कस्टमर्स प्रति महीने ऐड कर रहा है और वह इस क्षेत्र में देश में चौथे नंबर पर आ गया है, जब कि पहले इनकी संख्या 5 या 6 लाख में हुआ करती थी। इस विकास के लिए उनका सम्मान तो होना चाहिए और वह गांवों में भी बहुत काम कर रहा है। सभापति जी, चूंकि माननीय सदस्या ने स्पेसिफिक संख्या मांगी है, इसलिए मैं विभाग को कहूंगा और वहां से लेकर हम उनको प्रोवाइड करा देंगे।

एक बात हमें अवश्य कहनी चाहिए, वह यह है कि भारत में जो तकनीकी बदलाव हो रहा है, उसके मद्देनजर मैं देख रहा हूँ कि विस्तार से नई-नई सेवाएं शुरू होंगी और बीएसएनएल भी उनको काफी इंप्रूव करेगा, एमटीएनएल दिल्ली में लगभग हजार नए बीटीएस लगाने की योजना बना रहा है, मुम्बई में वह काफी काम कर रहा है। इस प्रकार से हम मिल कर काम करेंगे, निजी क्षेत्र भी काम करेंगे और पीएसयूज भी काम करेंगे। ऐसे मिल कर देश को सशक्त करेंगे।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Question No. 22.

Conversion of agricultural land for other purposes

*22. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the problems being faced due to the conversion and diversion of agricultural land towards non-agricultural uses, which has led to a shrinkage in the agricultural output;

(b) the details of agricultural land that has been converted for non-agricultural uses in the country in the last two years and the current year; and

(c) whether any policy/law has been implemented by Government to contain such conversion of agricultural land, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Government is aware of the problems of the conversion and diversion of agricultural land towards non-agricultural uses. While there is a shift

in agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes, non-agricultural land is also being brought under agricultural uses. In the present system of reporting of land utilization in the country, the details of agricultural land put to non-agricultural uses are not available separately. However, as per report of Land Use Statistics for 2013-14 (latest available), during the period of three years, there has been marginal decline in the agricultural land and similar increase in the area put to non-agricultural uses as per details given below:

(Million Hectares)

Year	Agricultural land	Area put to non-agricultural uses
2010-11	182.01	26.40
2013-14	181.85	26.91
Increase (+)/Decrease (-)	(-) 0.16	0.51

Despite marginal decline in the agricultural land various initiatives taken by the Government have led to increase in the agricultural production in the country except in the years of drought, flood, etc.

(c) As per Seventh Schedule of Constitution of India, land comes under the purview of State Government. Therefore, the State Governments are to take suitable steps as required to check diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. However, under the National Policy for Farmers-2007 (NPF-2007), State Governments have been advised to earmarked lands with low biological potential such as uncultivable land, land affected by salinity, acidity, etc., for non agricultural developmental activities, including industrial and construction activities. National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy – 2007 (NRRP-2007) has also recommended that as far as possible, projects may be set up on waste land, degraded land or un-irrigated land. Acquisition of irrigated, multi-cropped agricultural land for non-agricultural uses may be kept to the minimum and avoided, to the extent possible.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, this is a very important question that needs to be dealt with at length, but, this being the Question Hour, I would like to make it concise. I would request you to permit a separate discussion on this subject.

Sir, India is basically an agricultural country and our population is increasing enormously. And sooner or later, we are going to surpass even China in population, whereas, the area of India is only one-third of China. In this situation, when the requirement for food is increasing, the cultivable agricultural lands are being converted for non-agricultural purposes. Sir, the statistics show very clearly that in the year 2013-14, 26.91 million hectares of agricultural land have been converted for non-agricultural purposes, that is, 2 crore 70 lakh hectares of agricultural land.

When the population is increasing and when the food requirement is increasing, it is diminishing or decreasing to this very, very alarming situation, what are the steps the Government is keeping in mind? They may say that it is a State issue, but, when the Central Government can issue directions to the State Government how to acquire lands and all, there must be a stringent law that agricultural lands should not be converted for non-agricultural purposes. I would like to know whether the Ministry is having such an intention.

श्री परषोत्तम रूपाला: चेयरमैन सर, माननीय सांसद श्री तिरुची शिवा ने जो प्रश्न उठाया है कि एग्रीकल्चरल जमीन घट रही है और फूड सिक्योरिटी के बारे में चिंता जताई है, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय सदस्य और माननीय सदन के संज्ञान में लाना चाहता हूँ कि अगर आप तथ्यों पर गौर करें, 2010 से लेकर वर्तमान समय तक एग्रीकल्चर क्षेत्र में जो टोटल प्रोडक्शन की फिगर्स हैं, उनके अनुसार पहले 244 मिलियन टन से बढ़ कर, इस साल, अभी तक वर्ष 2015-16 की जो फिगर्स हैं और आने वाले वर्ष 2016-17 की फिगर्स हैं, हम 252 मिलियन टन तक पहुँचे हैं। इसी तरह अगर कन्टीन्यूटी में आप देखें, तो वर्ष 2013-14, वर्ष 2014-15 और वर्ष 2015-16 में, जब सूखे का समय था, उस समय भी देश में एग्रीकल्चर प्रोडक्शन कम नहीं हुआ है। इसका मतलब यह हुआ कि जमीन तो घट रही है, यह फैक्ट है, इसे नकारा नहीं जा सकता, लेकिन विकास के जितने काम हो रहे हैं, नई सड़कें बनेंगी, नई रेल लाइनें बनेंगी, नए रास्ते बनेंगे, नई आबादी के लिए घर बनेंगे, उसके लिए जमीन तो कटेगी, मगर इसके इलाज के लिए, खासकर माननीय सांसद ने जैसा अभी बताया कि हमारी आबादी बढ़ रही है और हम चीन से भी आगे निकल जाएंगे, उन्हें खाने की दिक्कत न हो, फूड सिक्योरिटी की दिक्कत न हो, इसके लिए भारत सरकार ने जो कदम उठाए हैं, उनके अंतर्गत इस साल में आज तक इतिहास का रिकॉर्ड उत्पादन इस देश का किसान करने जा रहा है, यह मैं आपके माध्यम से संसद के संज्ञान में लाना चाहता हूँ।

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, the Minister's reply is justifying that the conversion of cultivable agricultural lands to non agricultural lands will not affect the food production. Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister one thing. When he says that food production has increased comparatively what it was, and what it is now, and whether it would meet the demand and supply situation. Agricultural sector is the largest sector which provides more employment, and production which he says nowadays is by way of modern technology. Non-conventional methods do not suit our soil, and it has already displaced too many numbers of agricultural workers, and introduction of genetically modified seeds would also encourage the farmers that they would get more yield. But, in that case, we have to stretch our hands to foreign countries even for our seeds, and our conventional agriculture would be totally erased. So, in that situation, statistics showing that food production has increased by non-conventional methods, will not suit us. We have to stick on to conventional methods. What I would urge the Minister is that kindly see to that no more agricultural land is converted for non-agricultural purpose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

श्री परषोत्तम रूपाला: माननीय सभापति जी, मेरा कहना यह कतई नहीं था कि agricultural land का non-agricultural land में जो conversion हो रहा है, उससे हमें खुशी हो रही है या हम इसके पक्ष में हैं। ऐसी कोई बात नहीं है। भारत सरकार यह चाहती ही नहीं है कि agricultural land का non-agricultural land में conversion हो।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid, Question Hour is over. The House is adjourned till 2.30 p.m

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Productive and non-productive cows and bullocks in the country

*23. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that 99.19 per cent of cows and 99 per cent of bullocks in the country are productive;
- (b) if so, the average value of production from them and expenditure thereon;
- (c) the agency that collected this data and when was this done; and
- (d) the basis of categorisation of productive and non-productive cows and bullocks?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) No, Sir. As per the 19th Livestock Census-2012, out of total no. of 122.98 million cows, 43.95 million cows are in-milk production (35.74%) and 46.88 million male cattle (69.03%) out of total population of 67.92 million are used for breeding and draught purposes.

(b) The total milk production from Cow/Buffaloes etc. was 146.31 Million tonnes during the year 2014-15 and the average value of production was ₹ 33.65 per kg. The total expenditure on Dairy Development programmes by the Central Government during 2012-13 to 2015-16 was ₹ 1920.69 crores.

(c) The production estimate for milk is calculated annually based on the data collected under Integrated Sample Survey conducted by the State/UT Animal Husbandry Departments with the support of the Union Government and the value output of milk is calculated annually by Central Statistical Office.

(d) As per the definition adopted for 19th Livestock Census-2012, the animals in milk production are described as animals 'in-milk'. The categorisation of male cattle has been done on the basis of their use such as "for breeding", "for draught" and "for both draught and breeding".

Supply of Fertilizers to Chhattisgarh

†24*. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken by Government to meet the demand of fertilizers in naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has established any competent, responsible and accountable mechanism in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Following steps have been taken by Government to meet the demand of fertilizers in the country including naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh:—

- I. Before the commencement of each cropping season, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW), after consultation with all the State Governments, assesses the requirement of fertilizers. After assessment of requirement, DAC&FW projects month-wise requirement of fertilizers.
- II. On the basis of month-wise and State-wise projection given by DAC&FW, Department of Fertilizers allocates sufficient/adequate quantities of fertilizers to States by issuing monthly supply plan and distribution within the State is the responsibility of the concerned State Government. Further, the availability of fertilizers is continuously monitored through following system:—
 - (i) The movement of all major subsidized fertilizers is being monitored throughout the country by an on-line web based monitoring system called integrated Fertilizer Monitoring System (iFMS);
 - (ii) The State Governments are regularly advised to coordinate with manufacturers and importers of fertilizers for streamlining the supplies through timely placement of indents for railway rakes through their State institutional agencies like Markfed etc.
 - (iii) Regular Weekly Video Conference is conducted jointly by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW), Department of Fertilizers (DoF), and Ministry of Railways with State Agriculture Officials and corrective actions are taken to dispatch fertilizer as indicated by the State Governments.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (iv) The gap between demand (requirement) and production is met through imports. The import for the season is also finalized well in advance to ensure timely availability.

Due to the above efforts of Department of Fertilizers and State Governments, the availability of fertilizers is ensured in all States including Chhattisgarh.

Coach Mid life Rehabilitation workshop at Kurnool

*25. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have sanctioned Coach Mid Life Rehabilitation (CMLR) workshop at Kurnool under South Central Railway (SCR) in the year 2013-14;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the progress of the workshop as on date;

(c) whether any funds have been allocated to this workshop since its inception, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons for the inordinate delay in taking up the execution of the project?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work was sanctioned in the Railway Budget 2013-14 at a cost of ₹ 110 crores.

(i) Tender for Earth work, Boundary wall and road has been awarded and the work has started.

(ii) Open Tender for construction of the CMLR Workshop at Kurnool has been floated.

(c) Yes, Sir. The details are as given below:—

Year	Outlay
2013-14	₹ 5 lakhs
2014-15	₹ 50 lakhs
2015-16	₹ 1 crore
2016-17	₹ 14.62 crores

(d) The execution of the project was delayed as 119.88 acres of land out of approx 144 acres was handed over by the Government of Andhra Pradesh on 23.05.2015 and 4.11 acres was handed over on 09.03.2016 only. The balance land of approx. 20 acres is expected to be handed over by Government of Telangana to Railways shortly.

Rejuvenation of closed jute mills

*26. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of jute mills closed in the country during the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the action taken by Government for rejuvenation of the closed mills?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) State-wise details of both Private and Public Sector closed jute mills during the last three years are given below:—

Year	West Bengal	Odisha	Andhra Pradesh	Bihar	Uttar Pradesh	Chhattisgarh	Total (Cumulative)
2013-14	6	1	1	0	2	1	11
2014-15	10	1	3	1	2	1	18
2015-16	17	1	6	1	2	1	28

(b) Government has been implementing several Schemes and measures for supporting the Jute Manufacturing Units in particular and the Jute Sector in general. These include – the implementation of norms under Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987; Incentive Scheme for Acquisition of Plant and Machinery; Export Market Development Scheme; Promotion of Diversification; and Imposition of Anti-Dumping Duty on imported Jute Goods for protection of the Domestic Industry.

Second version of model APMC Act

*27. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to come out with second version of model Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Act, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the APMC Act is aiming to increase farmers' income by measures like taking contract farming out of the law, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) The Government constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare (DAC&FW) on 12.08.2016 to promote National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) through

agricultural marketing reforms. Subsequently, scope of the committee was expanded to include entire basket of reforms in Agri-marketing sector. The Committee was mandated *inter alia* to study the existing provisions in State APMC Acts/Rules and suggest amendments in existing model APMC Act, 2003. The Committee has formulated a draft Model APMC Act encompassing the progressive reforms. This has been circulated to the States/Unions Territories and concerned Central Government Ministries/Departments for soliciting their views/comments.

(b) Yes Sir, while drafting new model APMC Act, 2016, the provisions of contract farming have been taken out. However, Contract Farming would be useful to farmers by ensuring pre-agreed prices and overall risk mitigation and hence may be one of the measures to increase farmers' income. A Committee has been formed in Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare to draft a Model Contract Farming Act.

Reasons behind recent train accidents

†*28. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons behind continuous train accidents that occurred between Lucknow-Kanpur-New Delhi-Delhi; and

(b) whether any terrorist connection is also coming to light during investigations of the series of train accidents, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Since November, 2016 following three consequential train accidents occurred between Lucknow-Kanpur-New Delhi-Delhi:—

- (i) Derailment of Train No. 19321 Indore-Rajendra Nagar Terminal (Patna Express) on 20.11.2016 at 03:04 hours between Pokhrayan and Malasa stations on Jhansi-Kanpur section of North Central Railway. Statutory inquiry into the derailment of Train No. 19321 Indore-Rajendra Nagar Terminal (Patna Express) has been ordered to determine the reasons of the accident by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Eastern Circle, Kolkata under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- (ii) Derailment of Train No. 12987 Sealdah-Ajmer Express at Rura station on 28.12.2016 at 05:20 hours on Allahabad-Kanpur section of Allahabad Division of North Central Railway. Statutory inquiry into the derailment of Train No. 12987 Sealdah-Ajmer Express has been ordered to determine the reasons

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

of the accident by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Northern Circle, New Delhi under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

- (iii) Derailment of Goods Train No. DN NGC on 12.01.2017 at 17:44 hours on Lucknow-Kanpur Section of Lucknow Division of Northern Railway. Departmental inquiry has been ordered to determine the reasons of the accident.

(b) In the case of accident of Train No. 19321 Indore-Rajendra Nagar Terminal (Patna Express) on 20.11.2016 at 03:04 hours between Pokhrayan and Malasa stations on Jhansi-Kanpur section of North Central Railway, a case *vide* Cr. No. 55/16 u/s 337, 338, 304 (a), 427 IPC and 151, 154 Railways Act was registered by GRP/Bhimsen on 21.11.2016. Investigation of this case has been taken over by the National Investigation Agency. In the case of accident of Train No. 12987 Sealdah-Ajmer Express at Rura station on 28.12.2016 at 05:20 hours on Allahabad-Kanpur section of Allahabad Division of North Central Railway, a case *vide* Cr. No. 818/2016 u/s 337, 338, 497 IPC and 151, 154 Railways Act was registered by GRP/Kanpur Central on 28.12.2016. This case is under investigation by police.

Agrarian crisis in the country

*29. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any study on the regions facing agrarian crisis in the country;

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by Government to encourage the use of modern agricultural techniques to sustain growth of agriculture to solve the problem of agrarian crisis in the country?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Taking cognizance of the problem of Agrarian distress and consequent farmers suicide in country, Government has undertaken a study "Farmers Suicide in India: Causes and Policy Prescription" as an All India coordinated study in the work plan 2016-17 through the Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru. The study is being conducted in major suicide hit States of the country.

(c) Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

Under agriculture mechanization, there is a programme namely, Submission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM) is concerned, financial assistance as cost subsidy to the tune of 25-40% is being provided for the individual ownership of the farm machinery which is also applicable for farm machinery component under other schemes of the Department for different categories of Machinery and Equipment. The financial assistance @40% is provided for establishment of farm machinery banks to provide custom hiring services for the benefits of small and marginal farmers. For installing solar photovoltaic water pumping system, financial assistance of ₹ 43,200/ Horsepower to ₹ 63,360/ Horsepower is provided. To promote the mechanization in selected village with low level of farm mechanization, financial assistance @80% of the project cost for farm machinery banks is given to a group of minimum 8 farmers. Hiring assistance for various farm operations carried out through the farm machinery banks set up under financial assistance is also provided @50% of the cost of operation/ha limited to ₹ 2000 per ha. to farmers.

To support the agricultural Mechanization in North Eastern States where the Mechanization level is very low, the maximum permissible subsidy per machine per beneficiary is provided @50% limited to ₹ 1.25 lakh/beneficiary for procurement of various agricultural machinery and equipments for individual ownership, and 95% of the cost of the machinery/Implement up to ₹ 10 lakhs per farm Machinery bank for the establishment of Farm Machinery Banks with a minimum of 8-10 farmers respectively. During the year 2016-17, cost subsidy of ₹ 10.74 crore has already been released in the first installment to NE States under the different components of SMAM.

Under the component 1 of SMAM, Agricultural Mechanization through Training, Testing and Demonstration, a total of 2267 women were trained during the current Financial Year 2016-17, (till December, 2016). A list of about 30 identified gender-friendly tools and equipment developed by the Research and Development Organization for use in different farm operations has already been sent to all States and UTs for popularizing them. State Governments have been directed to earmark 30 per cent of total funds allocated under SMAM for women beneficiaries.

To promote the mechanization of small and marginal farm holdings and farm holding in difficult area with low level of mechanization, the efforts have been made to concentrate on establishment of farm Machinery Bank and Hi tech, high productive farm machinery hubs for custom hiring services. Under the components 4, 5 and 6 of the SMAM total ₹ 91.44 crore as cost subsidy, has already been released to States in the first installment to establish 1662 Farm Machinery Banks for providing the custom hiring services in the country till December, 2016.

In order to achieve fast pace in farm growth and increasing the agricultural production, Crop Science Division of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has prioritized research and development programmes in rice, wheat, maize, millets, fodder crops, oilseeds, pulses, sugarcane, cotton and other fiber crops. These research programmes are undertaken by 26 commodity theme based research institutes and 33 All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRPs) and All India Network Projects (AINPs), mostly situated in State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) to develop location specific crop varieties and matching technologies as per the agro-ecological needs.

The crop improvement programmes give emphasis on development of new crop varieties/hybrids with improved quality and tolerance/resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses and making crops able to withstand the weather extremities. As a result of these efforts, 308 high yielding varieties/hybrids of different crops including 155 of cereals, 50 of oilseeds, 44 of pulses, 33 of fibres, 17 of forages and 9 of sugarcane with fair degree of tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses have been released for cultivation by the farmers during the year 2016. The structured science and development programmes of ICAR has led to production of 12484 tonnes breeder seeds of different crops during 2015-16 that were supplied to different seed producing agencies so that quality seeds of improved varieties/hybrids could be made available to the farmers for cultivation and boost the productivity and production in major crops.

The institutes under the Crop Science Division of ICAR is regularly conducting nationwide Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs), on and off farm trainings, skill development programmes, improved technology demonstrations including varieties/hybrids in pursuit of technology transfer and to create awareness amongst the farmers for adopting improved scientific packages and practices to enhance the farm productivity and production.

Besides, they are regularly organizing *Kisan Melas*, Farmers' Field Days, *Kisan Gosthis*, scientists-farmers interfaces/meetings on different aspects of crop production and protection, packages and practices, website updating, sensitization through print and electronic media and empowering the farmers with knowledge. In addition, the improved varieties and production technologies were also demonstrated at the farmers' fields by the ICAR institutes, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) through Frontline Demonstrations (FLD) Programme to create awareness among the farmers about them. Besides, Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI) and National Food Security Mission Programmes are also being implemented wherein improved agricultural technologies/package of practices, improved varieties/hybrids are promoted. ICAR is providing technical backstopping in these programmes.

Derecognition of political parties

*30. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any measures are being taken to derecognise those political parties which are inactive and are suspected to be indulging in money laundering; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Election Commission has informed that the Commission had recently conducted verification to review the existence of the unrecognized political parties registered with the Commission that had not contested any Assembly or Parliamentary election or any bye election during the last ten years. On the basis of the reports of the Chief Electoral Officers of the State concerned, the Commission has delisted 255 political parties during the period from February to December, 2016. The Commission has also provided the list of such delisted political parties to the Central Board of Direct Taxes.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**Drought in Andhra Pradesh**

157. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a detailed report on the drought occurred in the State during Kharif season requesting to release suitable financial assistance to the State, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether any action has been taken on the request to release assistance to Andhra Pradesh, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has declared drought in parts of the State and submitted a Memorandum seeking assistance of ₹ 2281.79 crores from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF). An Inter-Ministerial Central Team has recently visited the affected areas in the State for assessment of the drought situation and requirement of financial assistance.

Further action will be taken in accordance with the established procedure.

Setting up of cold chain

†158. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a scheme for setting up a cold chain has been formulated by the Ministries of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Food Processing Industries;

(b) if so, whether Government is considering to take any steps in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The Government is implementing the following Schemes for setting up of cold chain and increasing storage capacity for perishables.

- (i) Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) of DAC&FW.
- (ii) Integrated Cold Chain Scheme of MOFPI.
- (iii) Scheme of Agricultural Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under Ministry of Commerce.
- (iv) Scheme of National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) under DAC&FW.
- (v) Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM).

(b) and (c) Under these schemes, financial assistance is provided to farmers/entrepreneurs for setting up cold storages/cold chain infrastructure:—

- (i) Under MIDH Scheme implemented by Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, subsuming the schemes of NHM, HMNEH, NHB, CDB, NBM, CIH, financial assistance is provided for taking up various activities related to development of horticulture including marketing infrastructure and post harvest management. For the development of post harvest management including establishment of cold storage infrastructure, subsidy @35% (for general areas) and 50% (for hilly and tribal areas) of capital cost of the project is available for both public and private sector enterprises. The subsidy for the private sector is credit linked and back-ended.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (ii) Ministry of Food Processing Industries is implementing a Central Sector Scheme of Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure since 2008-09 in the country. The financial assistance @35% to 50% of the total cost of plant and machinery and technical civil works in general areas and @50% to 75% for NE region and difficult areas (North Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand) subject to a maximum grant-in aid of ₹ 10 crore per project is provided for different components of PHM and cold chain infrastructure. Government has also approved taking up of 100 new integrated cold chain projects in the financial year 2016-17. Integrated Cold Chain and preservation of entrepreneurs, Cooperative Societies, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), NGOs, Central/State PSUs, etc.

Sale of vegetables by farmers below the production cost

159. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that farmers growing vegetables are compelled to sell their produce, particularly perishable articles like tomatoes at 50 paise per kg due to non availability of buyers after demonetization of currency notes, if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(b) whether Government would announce any special package for compensation to those farmers who have suffered severe losses due to selling of their vegetables at the price much below the cost of production; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) As per the data available with the Government of India, the price trends of potato and tomato during the year 2014, 2015 and 2016 always showed declining trend during the months of November and December. The modal prices of both potato and tomato have been reported by and large above their production costs during the demonetization period.

(b) and (c) No such proposal is under consideration. However, in order to protect the interest of farmers, the Government of India implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of horticultural and agricultural commodities which are perishable in nature and not covered under Price Support Scheme (PSS) scheme. The objective of the intervention is to protect the farmers from making distress sale

in the event of bumper crop during the peak arrival period when the prices tends to fall below economic levels and cost of production. The condition is that there should be either at least a 10% increase in production or a 10% decrease in the ruling market prices over the previous normal year. The scheme is implemented at the request of a State/UT Government which is ready to bear 50% of the loss (25% in case of North Eastern States), if any, incurred on its implementation.

Benefits for farmers under PMFBY

†160. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether wide changes have been made in old crop insurance scheme by reconciling the discrepancies under recently introduced new Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) to enable farmers to get maximum benefits, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the amount of premium paid by farmers under PMFBY has been substantially reduced and also the cap on payment on insurance has been withdrawn, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Government has recently reviewed the erstwhile Crop Insurance Schemes and introduced yield based Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and weather index based Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) from Kharif 2016 to provide financial support to farmers suffering crop loss/damage due to natural calamities/adverse weather conditions, to stabilize the income of farmers. Under PMFBY, comprehensive risk insurance is provided to cover yield losses due to non-preventable risks. Salient features of the scheme are given in the Statement (*See below*).

Under PMFBY and RWBCIS, the premium payable by farmers has been substantially reduced and simplified and there is one premium rate on pan-India basis for farmers which is upto maximum of 1.5%, 2% and 5% for all Rabi, Kharif and annual horticultural/commercial crops, respectively. Further, removal of the provision of capping on premium and consequent reduction of sum insured, a feature of erstwhile schemes has facilitated farmers to get claim against full sum insured without any reduction.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement***Salient Features of PMFBY***

- (i) Provide comprehensive insurance coverage against crop loss on account of non-preventable natural risks, thus helping in stabilising the income of the farmers and encourage them for adoption of innovative practices.
- (ii) Increase the risk coverage of Crop cycle – pre-sowing to post-harvest losses.
- (iii) Area approach for settlement of claims for widespread damage. Notified Insurance Unit has been reduced to Village/Village Panchayat for major crops.
- (iv) Uniform maximum premium of only 2%, 1.5% and 5% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif Crops, Rabi Crops and Commercial/horticultural Crops respectively.
- (v) The difference between premium and the rate of Insurance charges payable by farmers shall be provided as subsidy and shared equally by the Centre and State.
- (vi) Uniform seasonality discipline and Sum Insured for both loanee and non-loanee farmers.
- (vii) Removal of the provision of capping on premium and reduction of sum insured to facilitate farmers to get claim against full sum insured without any reduction.
- (viii) Inundation has been incorporated as a localized calamity in addition to hailstorm and landslide for individual farm level assessment.
- (ix) Provision of individual farm level assessment for Post harvest losses against the cyclonic and unseasonal rains for the crops kept in the field for drying upto a period of 14 days, throughout the country.
- (x) Provision of claims upto 25% of sum insured for prevented sowing.
- (xi) “On-Account payment” upto 25% of sum insured for mid season adversity, if the crop damage is reported more than 50% in the insurance unit. Remaining claims based on Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) data.
- (xii) For more effective implementation, a cluster approach will be adopted under which a group of districts with variable risk profile will be allotted to an insurance company through bidding for a longer duration upto 3 years.
- (xiii) Use of Remote Sensing Technology, Smartphones and Drones for quick estimation of crop losses to ensure early settlement of claims.

- (xiv) Crop Insurance Portal has been launched. The portal will be further developed for ensuring better administration, co-ordination, transparency, dissemination of information and delivery of services including crediting the claim amount electronically to the individual farmer's Bank Account.
- (xv) Focused attention on increasing awareness about the schemes among all stakeholders and appropriate provisioning of resources for the same.
- (xvi) Premium rates under Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) have also been reduced and brought at par with new scheme. Further, capping on Actuarial premium and reduction in sum insured has been removed in this scheme also.
- (xvii) In addition, a Unified Package Insurance Scheme (UPIS) has also been approved for implementation on pilot basis in 45 districts of the country from Kharif 2016 season to cover the other assets/activities like machinery, life, accident, house and student-safety for farmers alongwith their notified crops (under PMFBY/ Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme - WBCIS).

Production of Kharif and Rabi crops

161. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the production figures of foodgrains in Kharif and Rabi seasons during 2015-16;
- (b) whether floods/drought are expected to affect their production this year, if so, to what extent;
- (c) the Kharif crop production this year; and
- (d) the expected Rabi season production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) As per the fourth advance estimates, the production of foodgrains during Kharif and Rabi seasons of 2015-16 is as under:

(Million tonnes)	
Season	Foodgrain production
Kharif	124.01
Rabi	128.21

- (b) India Meteorological Department (IMD) informed that the 2017 winter

season (Jan to March) rainfall over North India is most likely to be normal. The Long Period Average (LPA) of the winter rainfall over North India for the period 1951-2000 was 183.1 mm. Hence, above normal seasonal rainfall leading to flooding during current Rabi season over the plains of North India is not expected.

(c) The production of major Kharif crops during 2016-17 (1st Advance Estimates) is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(d) First assessment of production of Rabi crops in an agriculture year is given in the second advance estimates of crop production. At this stage, it is too early to arrive at an assessment of Rabi season production for 2016-17.

Statement

First Advance Estimates of Kharif Crops Production for 2016-17

		(In million tonnes)
Sl. No.	Crops	Production
1.	Rice	93.88
2.	Pulses	8.70
3.	Coarse Cereals	32.45
	TOTAL Foodgrains	135.03
4.	Oilseeds	23.36
5.	Sugarcane	305.25
6.	Cotton*	32.12
7.	Jute and Mesta**	10.41

* Production in million bales of 170 kgs. each.

** Production in million bales of 180 kgs. each.

Impact of demonetization on farming sector

162. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to ensure minimum damage to small farmers due to demonetization;

(b) whether Government has conducted or planning to conduct any study to understand the nature of impact of demonetization on farming sector, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, by when Government is planning to conduct such a study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) The Government has taken several measures in respect of the demonetization. Such measures include:—

- (i) The Farmers were permitted to draw upto ₹ 25,000 per week in cash from their Know Your Customer (KYC) compliant accounts subject to the normal loan limits and conditions. This facility will also apply to the Kisan Credit Cards (KCC).
- (ii) The farmers who receive payments in their bank accounts through cheque/ RTGS for sale of their produce in the APMC markets/mandis will be permitted to draw upto ₹ 25,000 per week in cash.
- (iii) The Government has allowed farmers to use old ₹ 500 denomination notes for making payments towards purchase of seeds from the centres, units or outlets belonging to the Central or State Governments, Public Sector Undertakings, National or State Seeds Corporations, Central or State Agricultural Universities and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, on production of proof of identity.
- (iv) In the aftermath of demonetization, the Government decided that an additional grace period of 60 days for prompt repayment incentive @ 3% will be provided to such of the farmers whose crop loans dues fall due between 01.11.2016 to 31.12.2016 and if such farmers repay the same within 60 days from their due date in this period.
- (v) The Government has granted interest waiver for two months (November and December, 2016) for all short term crop loan availed from Cooperative Banks between 01.04.2016 to 30.09.2016 and upfront deposit of the same in the account of the concerned farmers. For this purpose, provision of additional resources of ₹ 660.50 crore in the current financial year (2016-17) has been kept.
- (vi) NABARD in 2016-17 shall undertake short term borrowing up to ₹ 20,000 crore at market rate for onward lending to Cooperative Banks at 4.5% p.a. provided Cooperative Banks made available short term crop loan up to ₹ 3.00 lakh to farmers at 7% p.a. Further, under the Interest Subvention Scheme, the interest subvention @ about 1.8% p.a. and 0.2% administrative cost of NABARD amounting to ₹ 400 crore for this purpose shall be released by the Government to NABARD in 2016-17.
- (vii) Post Demonetization, the Government through its many organizations viz. Cooperative Banks, including Urban Cooperative Banks and Multi-State

Cooperative Banks, RRBs, IFFCO, KRIBCO, NABARD, National Seed Corporation, Mother Dairy, NAFED, Krishi Mandies etc. organized training and awareness camps for farmers, dealers and retailers and disseminated information through posters and pamphlets in regional language for promotion of cashless transaction, opening of Mobile account, use of Rupay Card, Debit Card, use of PoS (Point of Sale Machine), promotion of digital payment between farmers etc.

- (viii) The Government has extended the cut-off date for submission of premium proposal for cash crops for certain States under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) on case to case basis during 2016-17. Further, for the States whose cut off dates were lying between 15.12.2016 to 31.12.2016 this cut-off date was extended upto 10.01.2017 under PMFBY for payment of premium by farmers.
- (ix) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Banks have been advised by Government of India (GOI) to make the required cash available to the District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs). This will ensure quick flow of credit and required cash to the farmers during the current Rabi seasons. RBI has advised all the eligible institutions that around ₹ 35,000 crore will be required by DCCBs for sanction and disbursement of crop loans to the farmers @ ₹ 10,000 crore per week. Government has advised RBI and Commercial Banks to prioritise availability of adequate legal currency to the DCCBs to meet their cash requirement.
- (x) The availability of certified/quality seeds for the current Rabi season is adequate in the country.
- (xi) For ensuring adequate availability of Urea, DAP, MOP, NPK and other fertilizers in every nook and corner of the country, close coordination was done with Companies, State Governments, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Shipping etc.
- (xii) To ensure that the sales of fertilizers is not hampered due to lack of cash in the system, Manufacturing Companies and Importers of various fertilizers were directed to provide fertilizers to dealers/wholesalers/retailers on credit and the credit limit was extended by additional 30 days by the Companies.
- (xiii) Companies were asked to instruct their dealers/wholesalers/retailers to use all modes of transaction including sales on credit, debit card, credit card, cheque etc. for sale of fertilizers to the farmers.

- (xiv) States were issued advisory that at their level they should ensure that the fertilizers are readily made available to the farmers as per their demand without fail and also necessary instructions to be issued from State Governments to cooperatives, private retailers/wholesalers to provide fertilizers on credit and accept all modes of payment viz. debit card, credit card, cheques etc.
- (xv) Petrol pumps were advised to accept old notes of ₹ 500 for purchase of diesel and petrol.

(b) and (c) To understand the impact of demonetization on farming sector, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-National Institute of Agricultural Economics and Policy Research (NIAP) conducted a short survey of farmers in few villages around Delhi under Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav (MGMG) initiative. Survey findings could not establish any significant adverse effect of demonetization on input availability, market arrivals of produce and area sown in Rabi season. As per preliminary reports received from the States, the total area sown under Rabi crops as on 27th January, 2017 stands at 637.34 lakh hectares as compared to 600.02 lakh hectares this time in 2016 indicating no significant impact of demonetization on Rabi sowing.

Introduction of new Agriculture Policy

163. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is introducing a new Agriculture Policy for providing more incentives to farmers to increase agricultural production; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) There is no proposal of introducing new Agricultural Policy under consideration at present.

Promoting fisheries sector

164. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that fisheries is not considered as a main agricultural activity by Government;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the rate of interest for agricultural loans is less than that for fisheries; and
- (c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to promote fisheries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Fisheries is one of the important allied activity of agriculture and during 2014-15 it contributed about 0.9% to the National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and about 5.17% to the agricultural GDP.

(b) The interest rates on loans have been deregulated by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and it is now based on the Base Rate fixed by the banks. However, with a view to ensuring availability of credit at a reasonable cost, the Government prioritizes the activities for credit flow.

(c) Foreseeing high potential in fisheries sector, Government has called for Blue Revolution in the fisheries sector. The Blue Revolution with its multi-dimensional activities, focuses mainly on increasing fisheries production and productivity from aquaculture and fisheries resources, both inland and marine. Accordingly, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has restructured the Central Plan Schemes by merging all fisheries Schemes under an umbrella of Blue Revolution. The restructured Scheme on Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries approved in December, 2015 by the Government at a total Central outlay of ₹ 3000 crore for implementation in all States and UTs for a period of five years. The Blue Revolution Scheme is being implemented from 2016-17 and the guidelines of the Scheme with increased unit costs have been issued on 30.06.2016. The scheme provides for a focused development and management of the fisheries sector to increase both fish production and fish productivity from aquaculture and fisheries resources.

Mechanism to provide remunerative price to farmers

†165. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the farmers were not getting even production cost for their produce like potato and tomato due to demonetization and incidents like leaving their agricultural produce in the farms and dumping on the road has come to light; and

(b) if so, whether Government would announce minimum support price or develop any mechanism for procuring potato from farmers in potato producing season in line with crops like paddy, sugarcane, wheat and other so that farmers get reasonable price for their produce, the details thereof?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) As per the data available with the Government of India, the price trends of potato and tomato during the year 2014, 2015 and 2016 always showed declining trend during the months of November and December. The modal prices of both potato and tomato have been reported by the large above their production costs during the demonetization period.

(b) In order to protect the interest of farmers, the Government announces Minimum Support Price (MSP) for agricultural crops, however, potato crop do not meet the criteria for inclusion under MSP. Therefore, Government of India implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of horticultural and agricultural commodities, which are perishable in nature and not covered under Price Support Scheme (PSS) Scheme. The objective of the intervention is to protect the farmers from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop during the peak arrival period when the prices tend to fall below economic levels and cost of production. The condition is that there would be either at least a 10% increase in production or a 10% decrease in the ruling market prices over the previous normal year. The Scheme is implemented at the request of a State/UT Government which is ready to bear 50% of the loss (25% in case of North Eastern States), if any, incurred on its implementation.

Organic farming under PKVY

166. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government was able to mobilize 50 acres of land with fifty or more farmers to take up organic farming under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) across the country, including in the State of Tamil Nadu; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) Scheme, assistance is provided to the farmers through respective State Agriculture Department for cluster formation. It includes different components such as:

- (i) Mobilization of farmers: training of farmers and exposure visit by farmers.
- (ii) Quality control: soil sample analysis, process documentation, inspection of fields of cluster members, residue analysis, certification charges and administrative expenses for certification.

- (iii) Conversion practices: transition from current practices to organic farming, which includes procurement of organic inputs, organic seeds and traditional organic input production units and biological nitrogen harvest planting etc.
- (iv) Integrated manure management: procurement of Liquid Bio fertilizer consortia/ Bio pesticides, Neem cake, Phosphate Rich Organic Manure and Vermi compost.
- (v) Custom hiring centre charges: to hire agricultural implements.
- (vi) Labelling and Packaging assistance and Transport assistance.
- (vii) Marketing through organic fairs.

Under PKVY Scheme, assistance is provided ₹ 50,000 per hectare per farmer in cluster during the 3 years to develop 10,000 organic clusters of 50 acre (20 hectare) land so as to cover certified organic area by 2 lakh hectare during the 3 years period. Government has approved Annual Action Plan of 29 States and 1 Union Territory. 7186 clusters have been formed during 2015-16, out of which Tamil Nadu has developed 112 clusters.

MSP for foodgrains

167. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission on Farmers headed by Dr. M. S. Swaminathan had recommended for fixing of Minimum Support Price of foodgrains at least 50 per cent more than the weighted average cost of productions, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the MSP for foodgrains announced by Government for 2016-17 met this recommendation, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) National Commission on Farmers (NCF) headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan had recommended that the Minimum Support Price (MSP) should be at least 50% more than the weighted average cost of production.

Government has fixed MSP for 2016-17 based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the views of concerned State Governments and Central Ministries/Departments.

While recommending price policy, the CACP considers, *inter alia*, a number of important factors which include cost of production, trends in market prices, demand

and supply situation, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living etc. MSP is recommended by CACP based on objective criteria, considering variety of relevant factors. Hence, prescribing an increase of at least 50% on cost may distort market.

Measures taken for growth in agriculture sector

168. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to take measures for pushing growth in agricultural sector; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to promote the income of farmers in the country by ensuring that they shift towards high value agricultural produces?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to increase growth in the agriculture sector by enhancement in the production and productivity of crops in the country, the Government is implementing, through State Governments, various Schemes/Programmes such as National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP), National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), National Agriculture Market Scheme (e-NAM), Price Support Scheme (PSS), etc.

Suicide by farmers in Maharashtra

169. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per official statistics, 80 per cent of farmers' suicides are due to debt, loans from banks and not money lenders;

(b) if so, the details thereof with special reference to Maharashtra; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to correct this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs compiles and disseminates information on suicides, in its publication titled 'Accidental Death and suicides in India' (ADSI). These Reports on suicides upto 2015 are available at its website. As per ADSI Report, the reason for suicide by farmers are manifold, which

inter alia include, indebtedness, crop failure, drought, socio-economic and personal reasons.

During the year 2015, the total number of suicide of farmers in all the States due to various causes is 8007. Out of these, 3097 suicides were due to debt/bankruptcy, which is approximately 39% of the total farmer suicides. Out of 3097 suicides, those due to loans taken from money lenders is 302, due to loans taken from financial institutions is 2474 and due to loans taken both from moneylenders and financial institutions is 321. Therefore, in the category of suicides of farmers due to debt/bankruptcy, nearly 80% of farmer suicides are due to debt against loans taken from financial institutions.

In Maharashtra State, the total number of suicides due to various reasons is 16970. Out of this, the number of suicides by farmers and agricultural labourers (due to various causes) is 4291, which is 25% of the total number of suicides in the State. Out of 4291, the number of farmer suicides is 3030 and that of agricultural labourers is 1261. The various causes of farmer suicides are as follows:—

(i)	Farming related issues	795
(ii)	Bankruptcy or Indebtedness	1293
(iii)	Other reason	942
TOTAL		3030

Approximately 42% farmer suicides are due to debt. Out of 1293 farmer suicides (due to debt), the details are as follows:—

(i)	Bankruptcy due to loan taken from financial institutions	1237
(ii)	Bankruptcy due to loan taken from money lenders	14
(iii)	Bankruptcy due to loan taken from both financial institutions as well as lenders	42

(c) Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

During the last two years, the strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices

on their produce. The Department has, therefore, been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, viz. Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme, Neem Coated Urea, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), the National Agriculture Market Scheme (e-NAM), the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) etc.

Under PMFBY, the Scheme would provide insurance cover for all stages of crop cycle including post harvest risks in specified instances. A total number of 381.61 lakh farmers have been covered and 386.75 lakh hectares area insured with a sum of ₹ 1,41,883.3 crore under PMFBY/Weather Base Crop Insurance Scheme during Kharif 2016.

Apart from the above schemes, the Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to ₹ 3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Out of total outlay of ₹ 15,000 crore under Interest Subvention Scheme, a sum of ₹ 12,558.63 crore has been released to NABARD/RBI for settling audited claims, as of date. Balance amount of ₹ 2441.37 crore has been utilised as upfront subsidy for PMFBY. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to provide relief to the farmer on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is also notified for both Kharif and Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP). The Commission collects and analyses data and recommends MSP. In addition, the Government has declared bonus on pulses for Kharif 2016 over and above the MSP. Even last year, the Government offered bonus over and above the MSP in case of pulses.

The Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations' to protect the interests of the farmers. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the MSP on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

Mission for integrated development of horticulture

170. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation made, funds released and utilized for Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) during last two years, State-wise;

(b) the status of physical progress under the said Mission in the State of West Bengal during last two years, district-wise;

(c) whether the Ministry maintains data of the beneficiaries of various components under the said Mission; and

(d) if so, the details of beneficiaries receiving benefits under the said Mission in West Bengal during last two years, district-wise and component-wise and if not, the reasons for not maintaining such data?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) A Statement showing State-wise allocation made, funds released and utilized under National Horticulture Mission and Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States and National Agro Forestry and Bamboo Mission of Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) during last two years is given in Statement-I, II and III respectively (*See below*).

(b) Physical Progress in respect of major components/interventions under National Horticulture Mission in West Bengal for the year 2014-15 and 2015-16 is given in Statement-IV (*See below*).

(c) and (d) The Ministry does not maintain component-wise beneficiary data.

Statement-I

*State-wise allocation made, funds released and utilized under
MIDH - National Horticulture Mission (NHM)*

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	State	2014-15			2015-16		
		Allocation (GOI)	Releases (GOI)	Utilization (GOI)*	Allocation (GOI)	Releases (GOI)	Utilization (GOI)*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	74.59	64.68	69.99	71.50	55.75	63.20
2.	Bihar	42.50	17.00	20.28	28.50	4.00	18.67

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3.	Chhattisgarh	120.70	111.88	117.95	80.00	77.55	80.27
4.	Goa	4.68	0.00	2.78	3.00	2.30	2.03
5.	Gujarat	130.90	109.47	78.11	78.71	47.82	82.75
6.	Haryana	112.20	65.45	73.40	71.50	50.75	59.47
7.	Jharkhand	68.00	49.69	44.18	45.00	25.79	27.38
8.	Karnataka	124.95	96.08	104.78	81.50	67.69	72.85
9.	Kerala	85.00	40.00	33.48	40.50	25.00	29.33
10.	Madhya Pradesh	93.50	42.22	53.41	51.00	40.50	44.04
11.	Maharashtra	158.95	140.00	141.04	102.50	96.25	86.25
12.	Odisha	93.50	71.75	71.47	57.50	54.45	43.96
13.	Punjab	70.13	58.55	39.27	46.00	30.35	44.62
14.	Rajasthan	89.25	42.66	47.83	55.00	45.00	35.57
15.	Tamil Nadu	107.95	55.36	110.65	61.50	58.73	39.87
16.	Telangana	59.71	45.00	30.95	40.50	35.25	34.68
17.	Uttar Pradesh	68.00	37.32	34.56	40.00	22.00	32.59
18.	West Bengal	42.50	18.74	16.85	28.50	28.00	22.19
19.	Delhi	2.55	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00
20.	Puducherry	1.70	0.85	0.66	1.00	0.50	0.90
21.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	5.00	1.42	1.18	5.00	2.50	0.95
22.	Lakshadweep	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1.11	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL		1558.37	1068.10	1092.82	991.21	770.17	821.57

Note: Utilization includes unspent balance of previous year.

* Provisional and subject to change as per audit.

Statement-II

State-wise allocation made, funds released and utilized under MIDH – Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States (HMENH)

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	State	2014-15			2015-16		
		Allocation (GOI)	Releases (GOI)	Utilization (GOI)*	Allocation (GOI)	Releases (GOI)	Utilization (GOI)*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	50.00	23.77	0.00#	35.50	35.50	38.17

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2.	Assam	48.00	29.09	25.95	30.50	20.00	30.41
3.	Manipur	50.00	44.17	24.17	37.50	35.75	38.75
4.	Meghalaya	40.00	27.60	38.15	28.00	18.00	39.63
5.	Mizoram	52.00	41.00	41.00	34.50	34.50	34.50
6.	Nagaland	52.00	34.76	26.00	34.50	17.25	11.56
7.	Sikkim	49.00	44.50	20.41	34.50	33.25	49.71
8.	Tripura	54.00	37.00	37.00	37.50	32.75	32.24
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	60.00	45.00	20.13	62.00	52.00	70.79
10.	Himachal Pradesh	48.00	42.42	23.98	31.50	24.49	35.17
11.	Uttarakhand	46.00	32.73	28.62	22.50	22.50	25.94
TOTAL		549.00	402.02	285.41	388.50	325.99	406.87

Note: Utilization includes unspent balance of previous year.

Utilization figures reported as per audited UC furnished by the State Government.

* Provisional and subject to change as per audit.

Statement-III

State-wise allocation, released and expenditure during last two years i.e. 2014-15 and 2015-16 under National Agroforestry and Bamboo Mission (NABM)

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	State	2014-15			2015-16		
		Allocation	Releases	Expenditure	Allocation	Releases	Expenditure
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	83.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.	Bihar	76.49	0.00	0.00	0.00		
3.	Chhattisgarh	512.40	380.00	380.00	514.95	513.00	513.00
4.	Goa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
5.	Gujarat	439.06	291.16	291.16	476.00	476.00	459.57
6.	Himachal Pradesh	135.71	81.08	81.08	116.72	116.72	114.55
7.	Jammu and Kashmir	203.31	77.41	57.46	0.00		
8.	Jharkhand	198.45	40.00	0.00	0.00		
9.	Karnataka	616.09	464.62	464.62	400.00	400.00	400.00
10.	Kerala	112.53	109.54	109.54	0.00		
11.	Madhya Pradesh	684.34	681.10	681.10	1030.00	1029.25	1029.25

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12.	Maharashtra	268.80	58.61	58.61	245.70	175.00	68.42
13.	Odisha	564.43	388.14	340.74	498.00	498.00	498.00
14.	Punjab	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
15.	Rajasthan	219.84	31.24	30.80	68.42	68.42	
16.	Tamil Nadu	120.72	15.00	15.00	35.00	35.00	32.68
17.	Telangana				50.00	50.00	
18.	Uttar Pradesh	257.67	50.00	50.00	126.55	126.55	92.60
19.	Uttarakhand	99.25	28.58	0.00	0.00		
20.	West Bengal	93.19	0.00	0.00	0.00		
21.	Arunachal Pradesh	1376.29	1281.90	1281.90	350.00	350.00	350.00
22.	Assam	1065.23	296.64	296.64	70.00	70.00	21.00
23.	Manipur	1023.22	861.57	861.57	695.97	695.97	695.97
24.	Meghalaya	308.85	96.62	96.62	0.00		
25.	Mizoram	1396.00	1230.00	1230.00	830.21	830.21	830.21
26.	Nagaland	1136.66	1135.91	1135.91	872.50	872.50	871.00
27.	Sikkim	301.46	56.76	56.76	256.99	245.60	129.77
28.	Tripura	198.73	80.60	72.52	124.33	124.33	
TOTAL		11492.67	7736.48	7592.03	6761.34	6676.55	6106.02

Statement-IV

*Year-wise and component-wise physical progress in NHM
under MIDH in West Bengal*

Sl. No.	Components	Units	2014-15	2015-16
1.	Area Coverage	Ha.	3262	3776
2.	Rejuvenation	Ha.	260	460
3.	Protected Cultivation	Ha.	143	377
4.	Adoption of Organic Farming	Ha.	0	0
5.	Integrated Pest Management	Ha.	0	0
6.	Nurseries	Nos.	0	15
7.	Post Harvest Management	Nos.	6	123
8.	Water Resources	Nos.	15	122
9.	Market Infrastructures	Nos.	0	0

Source: Data uploaded by the State in NHM Portal www.nhm.nic.in.

Impact of demonetization on farmers' income

171. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of net loss in farmers' income due to dropping prices in November and December due to demonetization, State-wise;

(b) whether there has been an increase in farmers' income in the previous year, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the impact on farmers' income due to restrictions on co-operative banks to exchange or deposit demonetized currency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) The income of farmers/agricultural households in the country is estimated by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) through the "Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households" conducted from time to time. The average monthly income per agricultural household as per the Survey was ₹ 2115 in 2003 and ₹ 6426 in 2013. State-wise details of average monthly income per agricultural household during the two survey periods are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) The restrictions placed on Cooperative Banks in exchanging or depositing demonetized currency resulted in temporary inconvenience to the farmers. In order to ameliorate the impact of demonetization on farmers' income, several measures have been taken by the Government. These include, *inter alia*, grant of interest waiver of 60 days (November and December, 2016) on all short term loans availed from Cooperative Banks between 01.04.2016 to 30.09.2016 and upfront deposit of the same in the accounts of the concerned farmers; additional grace period of 60 days as prompt repayment incentive @3% for farmers whose crop loan dues fall between 01.11.2016 to 31.12.2016, if such farmers repay the same within 60 days from their due date in this period; and provision of interest subvention @1.8% per annum and 0.2% administrative cost to National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in 2016-17 on short-term borrowing of up to ₹ 20,000 crore at market rate for onward lending to Cooperative Banks at 4.5% per annum, provided Cooperative Banks made available short term crop loan of up to ₹ 3.00 lakh to farmers at 7% per annum.

In addition, Government has advised banks with currency chests to ensure adequate cash supply to the District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs); and all commercial banks to provide adequate cash for rural branches

and for bank branches located in Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMCs) to facilitate smooth procurement.

Statement

State-wise details of average monthly income per agricultural household

States/UTs	Average Monthly Income per Agricultural/Farmers Household (₹)	
	SAS 2003	SAS 2013
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	1634	5979
Arunachal Pradesh	7455	10869
Assam	3161	6695
Bihar	1810	3558
Chhattisgarh	1618	5177
Gujarat	2684	7926
Haryana	2882	14434
Himachal Pradesh	3309	8777
Jammu and Kashmir	5488	12683
Jharkhand	2069	4721
Karnataka	2616	8832
Kerala	4004	11888
Madhya Pradesh	1430	6210
Maharashtra	2463	7386
Manipur	2741	8842
Meghalaya	4496	11792
Mizoram	4862	9099
Nagaland	3590	10048
Odisha	1062	4976
Punjab	4960	18059
Rajasthan	1498	7350
Sikkim	3258	6798
Tamil Nadu	2072	6980

1	2	3
Telangana	—	6311
Tripura	1742	5429
Uttarakhand	3351	4701
Uttar Pradesh	1633	4923
West Bengal	2079	3980
Group of UTs	3235	8568
ALL-INDIA	2115	6426

Source: NSSO.

Notes: (i) For SAS 2013: Income includes salary/wages, net receipt from cultivation, net receipt from farming of animals and net receipt from non-farm business.

(ii) For SAS 2003: Income is excluding income from non-economic activities such as interest, dividend, etc.

Schemes to boost income of farmers

172. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the average income of farmers in the country in the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Ministry is taking any steps or implementing any schemes for farmers to boost their incomes, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Ministry is taking any steps to help farmers obtain credit or cash for labour, fertilizers and seeds in the light of the recent demonetization, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) The average income of farmers/agricultural households in the country is estimated by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) through the "Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households" conducted in 2003 and 2013. As per the results of the two Surveys, the average monthly income per agricultural household from various sources is estimated at ₹ 2115 in 2003 and ₹ 6426 in 2013. State/UT-wise details of average monthly income per agricultural household during the two survey periods are given in the Statement. [Refer to the Statement appended to USQ. No. 171 part (a) and (b)].

(b) Agriculture is a State subject and primary responsibility of the State Governments. Union Government, however, supplements their efforts through implementation of various Schemes and programmes to increase the income of

farmers. These, *inter alia*, include: Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana, Soil Health Card Scheme, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Neem Coated Urea, National Food Security Mission, creation of a unified National Agriculture Market (e-NAM), etc. Further, Government has progressively increased the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) of major agricultural commodities to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers.

(c) Government has taken several steps to ease the pressure on farmers due to the recent demonetization. These include, *inter alia*, enhancement of withdrawal limit for farmers to upto ₹ 25000/- per week in cash from their loan (including Kisan Credit Card limit) or deposit accounts; interest waiver of 60 days (November and December 2016) on all short term loans availed from Cooperative Banks between 01.04.2016 to 30.09.2016; additional grace period of 60 days as prompt repayment incentive @3% for farmers whose crop loan dues fall between 01.11.2016 to 31.12.2016, if such farmers repay the same within 60 days from their due date in this period; and provision of interest subvention @1.8% per annum and 0.2% administrative cost to National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in 2016-17 on short-term borrowing of up to ₹ 20,000 crore at market rate for onward lending to Cooperative Banks at 4.5% per annum, provided Cooperative Banks made available short term crop loan of up to ₹ 3.00 lakh to farmers at 7% per annum, etc. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare directed its concerned Departments and affiliated organisations to promote and facilitate cashless transactions in agri-business.

Suicide by farmers in Maharashtra

173. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of farmers' suicides recorded in each of the last ten years in Maharashtra, district-wise;

(b) the number of cases found eligible for compensation and amount of compensation paid, district-wise and year-wise for 2014, 2015 and 2016;

(c) in how many of the last ten years, drought has been declared in Maharashtra, district-wise and year-wise; and

(d) the amount of money spent since 2014 on farmers' suicide prevention in Maharashtra excluding compensation, the details of different schemes applicable and respective disbursements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND

FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs compiles and disseminates information on suicides (State-wise), in its publication titled 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' (ADSI). These Reports on suicides upto 2015 are available at its website. As per ADSI Reports, in the State of Maharashtra, during the last ten years, the number of suicides are as follows:

Year	Number of suicides	
2006	4453	
2007	4238	
2008	3802	
2009	2872	
2010	3141	
2011	3337	
2012	3786	
2013	3146	
	Farmers	Labourers
2014	2568	1436
2015	3030	1261

(b) The number of cases eligible for compensation and compensation paid district-wise/year-wise is not maintained by the Central Government. However, as per the State Government's letter dated 2.8.2016, the State of Maharashtra gives *Ex-gratia* relief of ₹ 1.00 lakh to the heirs of the deceased farmer as per scheme of the State Government. The three norms of eligibility for *Ex-gratia* are crop failure, debt and inability to repay agriculture related loans. ₹ 30,000/- is given immediately by cheque and ₹ 70,000/- is deposited in post/bank monthly income saving plans in the name of the heirs of the farmer.

(c) The details of drought affected districts in the State of Maharashtra during the last ten years is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(d) The amount of money spent since 2014 in the State of Maharashtra for farmer suicide prevention is not maintained by the Central Government Agriculture being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support. The Government believes that farmers' welfare will improve if there is increase in net income from

the farms. With this end in view, the approach is to reduce cost of cultivation, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. The Department has, therefore, been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, viz. Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, Neem Coated Urea, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), the National Agriculture Market Scheme (e-NAM), the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) etc.

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is notified for both Kharif and Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP). The Commission collects and analyses data on cost of activation and recommends MSP. The Government has also declared bonus on pulses for Kharif 2016 over and above the approved MSP. Even during last year, Government offered bonus over and above the MSP in case of pulses.

Further, the Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations'. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the MSP Scheme, on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

Statement

Details of drought affected districts in the State of Maharashtra during the last ten years

Sl. No	Years	No. of Districts declared	Names of Districts
1	2	3	4
1.	2006-07	—	—
2.	2007-08	—	—
3.	2008-09	—	—
4.	2009-10	28	Akola, Aurangabad, Pune, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, Wardha, Nanded, Latur, Jalna, Beed, Parbhani, Osmanabad, Hingoli, Chandrapur, Yavatmal, Thane, Raigad, Nadurbar, Jalgaon, Amravati, Buldhana, Washim, Gadchiroli, Kolhapur, Nashik, Dhule, Ahmednagar.

1	2	3	4
5.	2010-11	—	—
6.	2011-12	15 (209 taluks)	Nashik, Dhule, Nandurbar, Ahmednagar, Latur, Osmanadbad, Pune, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, Nagpur, Gondia, Gadchiroli, Amravati, Buldhana
7.	2012-13	16 (Kharif) (125 taluks)	Nasik, Dhule, Jalgaon, Ahmadnagar, Pune, Satara, Sangli Buldhana, Aurangabad, Jalna, Parbhani, Hingoli, Nanded, Beed, Latur, Osmanabad.
		9 (Rabi) (3905 villages)	Pune, Satara, Sangli, Ahmadnagar, Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed, Osmanabad, Solapur.
8.	2013-14	—	—
9.	2014-15	26	Nasik, Dhule, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Pune, Satara, Aurangabad, Jalna, Parbhani, Hingoli, Nanded, Beed, Osmanabad, Latur, Buldhana, Akola, Yavatmal, Washim, Amravati, Nagpur, Wardha, Bhandara, Gondia, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli.
10.	2015-16	Kharif-27 (15747 village)	Nashik, Dhule, Nandurbar, Jalgaon, Ahmednagar, Pune, Satara, Sangli, Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed, Latur, Osmanabad, Nanded, Parbhani, Hingoli, Buldhana, Akola, Yavatmal, Nagpur, Gadchiroli, Amaravati, Washim, Wardha, Bhandara, Chandrapur, Goandia
		Rabi-2	Sholapur, Ahmednagar

Compensation to farmers for loss due to demonetization

174. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the average prices of major agricultural commodities including pulses, cereals, grains and vegetables as on 8 November, 30 November, 15 December and 30 December, 2016;

(b) whether the Ministry will undertake a study to determine the effect of demonetization on prices of various agricultural commodities;

(c) if so, how and when, if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether farmers would be compensated for loss in income due to fall in prices of their produce in the open market after demonetisation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) The All India average wholesale prices of major agricultural commodities as on 8 November, 30 November, 15 December and 30 December, 2016 are as under:

(₹ Per Quintals)					
Commodities	8 Nov., 2016	30 Nov., 2016	15 Dec., 2016	30 Dec., 2016	% change in 30 Dec. over 8 Nov., 16
Rice	2473	2541	2545	2544	2.9
Wheat	2152	2213	2214	2200	2.2
Gram Dal	11395	11562	11560	11404	0.1
Tur/Arhar Dal	10969	10704	10355	9847	-10.2
Urad Dal	11061	10702	10341	9954	-10.0
Moong Dal	7607	7477	7430	7246	-4.7
Masoor Dal	7461	7389	7262	7093	-4.9
Potato	1655	1463	1286	1135	-31.4
Onion	1156	1230	1178	1103	-4.6

Source: Deptt. of Consumer Affairs.

(b) to (e) The prices of agricultural commodities are determined by the market forces of supply and demand, quality of produce, seasonality etc. There is no direct link between demonetization and prices of agricultural commodities.

Guidelines on Bt. Cotton seed market

175. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Seed Association of India has opposed the draft guidelines on the Bt. Cotton seed market;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the existing Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act has adequate provisions to regulate the cotton seed market and other future technologies in the agriculture sector; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is no need for licensing agreement from the technology provider and even trait fee can be fixed by the plant protection authority?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) The National Seed Association of India has suggested that the trait value may be regulated under the provisions of Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act. The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority is a statutory Authority under the PPV&FR Act, 2001 and the matter is *sub-judice*.

Rabbit rearing by tribal and poor people

176. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ICAR-Central Sheep and Wool Research Institute, Avikanagar (Malpura) Rajasthan has stopped producing the breed of rabbit which was made available to the rabbit rearing tribals and poor people thereby depriving continuance of their profession; and

(b) if so, the strategy of Government to revive this for the benefit of tribal and poor people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has stopped breeding and research work on rabbits in its Institutes/Regional Stations *vide* order dated 26.06.14.

(b) The matter to revive breeding and research work on rabbits in ICAR Institutes is under consideration.

Scheme to improve agricultural system

†177. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in order to prevent wastage of fruits and vegetables and the resultant loss, Government is considering to enhance capacity of godowns and cold storages in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government has taken any steps in this regard till date; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) In order to prevent wastage of fruits and vegetables, Government is implementing the following schemes/missions for enhancing the storage capacity for perishable fruits and vegetables:

- (i) Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) of DAC&FW
- (ii) Integrated Cold Chain Scheme of MOFPI.
- (iii) Scheme of Agricultural Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under Ministry of Commerce
- (iv) Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM)

(b) an (c) Under these schemes, financial assistance is provided to farmers/entrepreneurs for setting up cold storages/cold chain infrastructure. Under MIDH credit linked back ended subsidy @ 35% of the project cost in general areas and 50% in case of hilly and schedule areas is available for creation post harvest management infrastructure like cold storage/cold chain infrastructure. The component is demand/entrepreneur driven from entrepreneurs, private companies, cooperatives, farmers groups etc. through commercial ventures for which Government assistance is credit linked and back ended.

Further, the Government is implementing Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI), subsuming of erstwhile Grameen Bhandaran Yojana (GBY) (in existence since 01.04.2001) and Scheme for Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization (AMIGS) (in existence since 20.10.2004). Under the scheme, the subsidy is provided @ 25% of the capital cost for general category beneficiaries and @ 33.33% for special category beneficiaries for construction/creation of scientific godowns, their renovation and other infrastructure in field of agricultural marketing in the country. However, the assistance for renovation is restricted to storage infrastructure projects of cooperatives only. Currently, the scheme is not available for general category promoters w.e.f. 05.08.2014 and for promoters of other categories w.e.f. 31.12.2016.

Reduction in cultivable area

178. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the area under cultivation in the country has been drastically getting reduced over a period of time, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this is because of less interest shown in agriculture and growing urbanization; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to arrest this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As per report on Land Use Statistics for 2013-14 (latest available), area under cultivation (cultivable land) in the country has declined only marginally from 182.48 million hectares in 2006-07 to 181.85 million hectares in 2013-14. The decline in cultivable land has been mainly due to diversion for non-agricultural purposes such as urbanization, roads, industries, housing etc. There is no evidence to show that decline in area under cultivation has been on account of less interest in agriculture.

(c) As per Seventh Schedule of Constitution of India, land comes under the purview of State Government. Therefore, the State Governments are to take suitable steps to check diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. However, under the National Policy for Farmers – 2007 (NPF-2007), State Governments have been advised to earmark lands with low biological potential such as uncultivable land, land affected by salinity, acidity, etc., for non agricultural developmental activities, including industrial and construction activities. National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy – 2007 (NRRP-2007) has also recommended that as far as possible, projects may be set up on waste land, degraded land or un-irrigated land. Acquisition of irrigated, multi-cropped agricultural land for non-agricultural uses may be kept to the minimum and avoided, to the extent possible.

Further, Ministry of Rural Development is implementing an Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) for development of rainfed/ degraded areas. From 2015-16, the IWMP has been converted as the Watershed Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

Government of India is also implementing National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) with a view to prevent soil erosion, land degradation and also to maintain balance in various types of land uses across the country. Under this Mission, all type of land including wastelands/barren land are developed with suitable need based soil and water conservation measures and partly such degraded lands developed are put to agricultural uses.

Drip irrigation system in Maharashtra

†179. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that use of drip irrigation system augments cultivable area on average by 8.41 per cent with same source of water, if so, whether on farm water management scheme has been started as a component of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture for promoting micro irrigation;

(b) if so, the number of districts of Maharashtra that have been connected under this scheme; and

(c) the total number of farmers in Maharashtra that have been benefited from this scheme during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) Yes, Sir. It is a fact that use of drip irrigation system augments cultivable area with the same source of water.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Micro Irrigation was launched in January, 2006 and in 2010, It was up scaled to National Mission on Micro Irrigation (NMMI), which continued till the year 2013-14. From 1st April, 2014, NMMI was subsumed under National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) and implemented as “On Farm Water Management” (OFWM). However from 2015-16, this component has been subsumed under Per Drop More Crop component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

(b) 22 districts of Maharashtra have been covered under the scheme.

(c) As per available reports 1,61,232 farmers in Maharashtra have been benefitted under the programme during the last 3 years.

Suicide by farmers

†180. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers are committing suicides due to economic crisis;

(b) if so, the number of such cases coming to the notice of Government since last three years till date, State-wise;

(c) the measures taken by Government to provide special assistance to farmers having small land holdings; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) the details of outcome with regard to measures adopted for providing assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs compiles and disseminates information on suicides, in its publication titled 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' (ADSI). These Reports on suicides upto 2015 are available at its website. The Report for the year 2016 has not been published yet. As per ADSI Reports for the years 2014 and 2015, the State-wise details of suicides have been compiled in the given Statement (*See below*). As per ADSI Report, the reasons for suicide by farmers are manifold, which *inter alia*, include indebtedness, crop failure, drought, socio-economic and personal reasons.

(c) and (d) Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

During the last two years, the strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. This strategy of Department is for all farmers including farmers having small land holdings. The Department has, therefore, been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, *viz.* Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme, Neem Coated Urea, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), the National Agriculture Market Scheme (e-NAM), the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) etc.

Under PMFBY, the Scheme would provide insurance cover for all stages of crop cycle including post harvest risks in specified instances. A total number of 381.61 lakh farmers have been covered and 386.75 lakh hectares area insured with a sum of ₹ 1,41,883.3 crore under PMFBY/Weather Base Crop Insurance Scheme during Kharif 2016.

Apart from the above Schemes, the Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to ₹ 3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Out of total outlay of ₹ 15,000 crore under Interest Subvention scheme, a sum of ₹ 12,558.63 crore has been released to NABARD/RBI for settling audited claims, as of date. Balance amount of ₹ 2441.37 crore has been utilised as upfront subsidy for PMFBY. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to

provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is also notified for both Kharif and Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP). The Commission collects and analyses data and recommends MSP. In addition, the Government has declared bonus on pulses for Kharif 2016 over and above the MSP. Even last year, the Government offered bonus over and above the MSP in case of pulses.

The Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations' to protect the interests of the farmers. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the MSP on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

Statement

Number of suicides under Sub-head Self-employed Persons (Farmers)

State/UT	2014			2015		
	Farmers	Labourers	Total	Farmers	Labourers	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh	160	472	632	516	400	916
Arunachal Pradesh	0	3	3	7	3	10
Assam	21	38	59	84	54	138
Bihar	0	10	10	0	7	7
Chhattisgarh	443	312	755	854	100	954
Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	45	555	600	57	244	301
Haryana	14	105	119	28	134	162
Himachal Pradesh	32	31	63	0	46	46
Jammu and Kashmir	12	25	37	0	21	21
Jharkhand	0	4	4	0	21	21

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Karnataka	321	447	768	1197	372	1569
Kerala	107	700	807	3	207	210
Madhya Pradesh	826	372	1198	581	709	1290
Maharashtra	2568	1436	4004	3030	1261	4291
Manipur	0	0	0	1	0	1
Meghalaya	0	2	2	2	1	3
Mizoram	0	5	5	0	1	1
Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0	0
Odisha	5	97	102	23	27	50
Punjab	24	40	64	100	24	124
Rajasthan	0	373	373	3	73	76
Sikkim	35	0	35	15	3	18
Tamil Nadu	68	827	895	2	604	606
Telangana	898	449	1347	1358	42	1400
Tripura	0	32	32	1	48	49
Uttar Pradesh	63	129	192	145	179	324
Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0	2	2
West Bengal	0	230	230	0	0	0
TOTAL (STATES)	5642	6694	12336	8007	4583	12590
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	8	0	8	0	0	0
Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delhi (UT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0
Puducherry	0	16	16	0	12	12
TOTAL (UTs)	8	16	24	0	12	12
TOTAL (ALL INDIA)	5650	6710	12360	8007	4595	12602

Source: Report on 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' for relevant years, National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs.

Compensation given by insurance companies to farmers

†181. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of the amount of premium paid by farmers, Central and State Governments to insurance companies and the number of farmers and the amount of compensation given to them after the launch of new agriculture insurance policy;

(b) the additional amount of premium having to be paid by farmers under new agriculture insurance policy, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of high risk States and the increase in amount of premium in those places, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) Under recently launched Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS), the premium payable by farmers has been substantially reduced and simplified and there is one premium rate on pan-India basis for farmers which is maximum 1.5%, 2% and 5% for all Rabi, Kharif and annual horticultural/commercial crops, respectively. Premium over and above the farmers share is shared by the Central and State Governments equally. The actuarial premium rate on the basis of which the insurance company is selected for implementation of the scheme in the selected clusters/areas is decided through bidding process by concerned States/Union Territories. The bidded/actuarial premium is dependent on the perception of risk by the concerned insurance company, whether it treats it as high, low or medium risk based on past data. States where there have been high claims in the past are treated as high risk States *viz.* Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan etc. State-wise provisional details of premium paid by farmers alongwith Central and State share payable under PMFBY and RWBCIS during Kharif 2016 season are given in the Statement (*See below*).

As per the PMFBY guidelines claims are to be processed, approved and settled by the concerned insurance companies within three weeks from receipt of yield data which is to be provided by the State Government within one month from final harvest. As yield data from most of the States is yet to be provided, therefore the claims can only be settled thereafter. However, admissible claims arising due to localized calamities, mid-season adversities and prevented sowing have already been settled by the insurance companies. Likewise for RWBCIS, claims are settled based on weather data received from Automatic Weather Stations/Automatic Rain-Gauges from the States/3rd party weather data providers.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

State-wise provisional details of premium paid by farmers alongwith share of Central and State Governments to Insurance Companies during Kharif 2016 season under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS)

Sl. No.	States	PMFBY Kharif 2016				RWBCIS Kharif 2016			
		Farmers Premium	GOI Share	State Share	Total	Farmers Premium	GOI Share	State Share	Total
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11950.33	15402.31	15402.31	42754.96	10361.63	14216.71	14216.71	38795.05
2.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.	Assam					164.66	62.70	62.70	290.07
4.	Bihar	12977.31	49189.72	49189.72	111356.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5.	Chhattisgarh	13551.53	7899.83	7899.84	29351.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6.	Goa	6.73	0.31	0.31	7.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7.	Gujarat	21881.30	95964.55	105663.81	223509.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
8.	Haryana	12966.12	5264.78	8491.96	26722.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9.	Himachal Pradesh	258.29	18.23	18.23	294.75	207.01	63.53	63.53	334.08
10.	Jharkhand	3790.88	11400.47	11400.47	26591.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
11.	Karnataka	14257.44	31091.91	31091.91	76441.26	4228.98	2819.63	2819.63	9868.23
12.	Kerala	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	246.96	181.12	181.12	609.21

13.	Madhya Pradesh	39597.61	123915.85	123915.85	287429.30	5423.43	2984.14	2984.14	11392.38
14.	Maharashtra	57126.73	168784.30	168784.30	394695.33	3332.28	9464.17	9464.17	22260.62
15.	Manipur	73.88	142.69	142.69	359.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16.	Meghalaya	1.04	1.01	1.01	3.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
17.	Odisha	13769.48	19742.17	19742.17	53253.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
18.	Rajasthan	22518.72	107826.79	107826.79	238172.31	361.80	1895.96	1895.96	4153.71
19.	Tamil Nadu	567.21	226.19	226.19	1019.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
20.	Telangana	6105.08	5391.42	5391.42	16887.91	2791.25	1799.36	1799.36	6389.98
21.	Tripura	4.92	0.06	0.06	5.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
22.	Uttar Pradesh	26550.42	20166.10	20166.10	66882.62	137.59	178.87	178.87	495.32
23.	Uttarakhand	579.36	2.79	2.79	584.94	891.50	541.77	541.77	1975.04
24.	West Bengal	10624.78	6602.06	9426.79	26653.63	17.88	5.44	5.44	28.76
TOTAL		269159.16	669033.54	684784.70	1622977.45	28164.97	34213.40	34213.40	96592.44

Written Answers to

[3 February, 2017]

Unstarred Questions 111

Budgetary provision for women farmers

182. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to make budgetary provision for women farmers to meet their specific needs and to achieve socio-economic and technology empowerment, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has taken steps to ensure flow of funds to the tune of 30 per cent for the benefit of women farmers under all centrally sponsored schemes for development of Agricultural sector, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government has conducted any study on women participation and their contribution to agriculture in the country, if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The guidelines of various Schemes including Support to States Extension programmes for Extension Reforms, National Food Security Mission, National Mission on Oilseed and Oil Palm, National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, Sub-Mission for Seed and Planting Material, Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture stipulate that States and other Implementing Agencies are required to incur at least 30% expenditure on Women Farmers. 'Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP), which is a sub-component of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), has special budgetary provisions to meet the specific need of women farmers and help them achieve socio-economic and technology empowerment. Funding support to the tune of up to 60% (90% for North Eastern States) for such projects is provided by the Government of India.

(c) Government has not conducted any such study. Nevertheless, workforce participation rate as reflected in Census 2011 Report indicates women's participation and contribution in agriculture sector, both-as agricultural labourers and cultivators.

Soil Testing Labs in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

183. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even a single Soil Testing Lab (STL) has not been sanctioned for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the criteria adopted in sanctioning of Soil Testing Labs and Mobile Soil Testing Labs; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that some States have been sanctioned more STLs, if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) State Government of Andhra Pradesh has been sanctioned 17 Soil Testing Labs (STLs) (5 static + 12 mobile labs) and Telangana has been sanctioned 3 mobile STLs under Soil Health Management (SHM) Scheme.

Under SHM Scheme, funds allocation is made to States on the basis of net area sown. Based on funds allocation, State Governments submit Annual Action Plans. The Annual Action Plans are examined and approved by the Executive Committee set up at the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare.

**Use of space technology and Geo informatics for
assessment of damage to crops**

184. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has launched a pilot project called Kisan Crop Insurance using space technology and Geo informatics, if so, the salient features of the project;

(b) the names of States covered under the said Pilot project;

(c) whether the project will help in assessment of damage to crops of apple, pear, mango, peach, etc.;

(d) if so, the details thereof and whether Government proposes to cover Himachal Pradesh under the project; and

(e) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The Government has launched a pilot project called KISANC (C(K)rop Insurance using Space technology and geo informatics). The project aims to use high resolution remote sensing data (from Satellite and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle-UAV) for better yield estimation and is being implemented by Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre (MNCFC). The objectives of Project are:—

- To explore use of remote sensing derived yield zones data for planning of Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs).
- To explore the use of UAV based high resolution imaging for crop assessment.
- To develop a composite (Weather cum Remote Sensing based) crop yield assessment model.

- To formulate optimum sampling plan for CCEs.
- To provide yield estimates at block level.
- To develop/evaluate an approach/index for index-based insurance.

The pilot study was carried out in 4 districts (1 district each) in 4 States (Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra) during Kharif 2015 and 8 districts (2 districts each) during Rabi 2015-16 season for rice, wheat and Rabi sorghum crops. Perennial horticultural crops like apple, pear, mango, peach etc. are not considered under this pilot study due to issues like multipicking nature of these crops and non-availability of past yield data. Hence, Himachal Pradesh was not included in the study for these crops.

Shortage of organic manure for farming

185. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that mechanization of farming has led to a decrease in domestication of cattle by farmers resulting in insufficient availability of cow dung manure for farming;

(b) whether cow dung manure has scientifically proved to be better than chemical fertilizers for crops and soil both; and

(c) the special incentives Government has planned to meet the shortage for domestication of cattle by farmers in large number, not only to have milk and its byproducts, but also organic manure in sufficient quantity to be used in agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) As per the country's census record, the cattle population is increased from 155.3 million (1951) to 190.90 million (2012). The cattle population in different years is enclosed as Statement (*See below*). Taking into consideration of decreasing trend of cattle population 204.58 million (1992) to 190.90 million (2012) there is minor impact observed on domestication of cattle by farmers which may be due to farm mechanization as one of the reason.

(b) As per the study of ICAR, the response to the fertilizers could be raised significantly with balanced application of fertilizer nutrients along with organic manures. The average response ratios (kg grain/kg nutrient) were 8.1, 10.1, 12.8 and 15.2 respectively under N, NP, NPK and NPK+FYM. Besides, it corrects micro and secondary nutrient deficiencies in soils, enhances nutrient-use efficiency, maintains soil health and enhances crop yields and farmers' profitability.

The organic materials most commonly used which include Farm Yard Manure (FYM), animal wastes, crop residues, urban organic wastes, green manures, bio-gas

spent slurry, microbial preparations, vermin-compost and biodynamic preparations improve the soil conditions and fertility.

(c) In order to compliment and supplement the efforts made by the State in preservation and development of bovine population the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DAHD&F) has formulated various Programmes and Schemes such as National Programme on Bovine Breeding and Rashtriya Gokul Mission and also set up National Kamdhenu Breeding Centre and further in order to improve productivity and enhance milk production the Government has also introduced National Mission on Bovine Productivity (NMBP) and National Diary Plan Phase-I (NDP-I).

The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) is also encouraging for preparing organic manure from bio-waste under the Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme (CISS) of “National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)” Programme. Under this Scheme, the financial assistance is provided @ 100% upto a maximum limit of ₹ 190.00 lakh to State Government/Government Agencies and @ 33% upto a maximum limit of ₹ 63.00 lakh per unit to individuals/private agencies through NABARD as capital investment for setting up of mechanized Fruit/Vegetable market waste/Agro waste compost production unit of 3000 TPA production capacity.

The Government is also promoting on-farm production of vermi-compost through various Schemes of DAC&FW such as Soil Health Management of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana.

Statement

Cattle Population (in million)

Category of Bovines	1951	1956	1961	1966	1972	1977	1982	1987	1992	1997	2003	2007	2012
Cattle	155.3	158.7	175.6	176.2	178.3	180	192.45	199.69	204.58	198.88	185.18	199.08	190.90

Source: DAHD&F

Assistance to Himachal Pradesh for promoting fruit crops

186. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has fixed any target for production of fruits and vegetables in various States of the country, including Himachal Pradesh, during the current Five Year Plan period, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of the fruits and vegetables production in various States, including Himachal Pradesh, during the last three years and the current year; and

(c) the details of assistance likely to be provided by Government to Himachal Pradesh for promotion of fruit crops during the current Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) For the Twelfth plan period, the overall target for enhancement of production of horticultural crops was fixed at 310 million metric ton in the country. This target was to be achieved by 2016-17 by various States of the country including Himachal Pradesh.

To achieve this target, States in turn prepare detailed Annual Action Plan (AAP) under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), fixing targets for various activities for promotion of horticulture.

(b) The details of fruits and vegetables production in various States, including Himachal Pradesh, during the last three years and the current year is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) The details of assistance provided by Government to Himachal Pradesh for promotion of fruit crops during the current Five Year Plan period is as under:

(₹ in lakh)

Year	Total allocation	GoI Share	Release
2012-13	3000	3000	2755.41
2013-14	3200	3200	2618.59
2014-15	4800	4800	4241.66
2015-16	3444.44	3150	2449.4
2016-17	3555.6	3200	2125

Statement

Details of State-wise production of fruits and vegetables, production in various States, including Himachal Pradesh

[Production in '000 Tonnes]

States/UTs	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16 (Final Est.)	
	Fruits	Veg.	Fruits	Veg.	Fruits	Veg.	Fruits	Veg.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Andhra Pradesh	13939.1	12104.7	10510.6	8149.8	9121.6	4592.6	10088.8	5442.8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Arunachal Pradesh	312.2	37.6	321.3	35.0	331.4	41.0	306.3	33.0
Assam	2073.8	3415.1	2007.8	3031.9	2030.1	4469.7	2077.8	3821.7
Bihar	4249.2	16325.7	4013.6	15097.8	3990.0	14467.1	4230.6	14400.1
Chhattisgarh	1702.3	4993.9	1930.2	5465.9	2071.1	5812.3	2294.7	6318.4
Gujarat	8413.2	10520.7	8002.0	11571.2	8300.6	11861.2	8477.2	13401.4
Haryana	516.1	5011.3	554.9	5565.9	703.7	5305.6	0.0	6129.4
Himachal Pradesh	555.7	1521.1	866.3	1635.9	751.9	1585.4	928.8	1715.2
Jammu and Kashmir	1742.1	1395.5	2073.9	1395.5	1779.4	1395.5	2115.7	1386.4
Jharkhand	889.7	4325.4	890.0	4238.1	898.1	4279.3	961.2	3373.8
Karnataka	6619.6	7841.9	6652.4	7500.7	6799.9	8828.4	7023.7	7804.6
Kerala	2583.9	3446.9	2889.5	3572.7	2554.1	1645.1	2532.9	2088.7
Madhya Pradesh	5450.0	12574.0	5696.0	13019.3	6119.0	14199.0	5783.1	15568.3
Maharashtra	9785.0	8008.0	13457.9	10161.8	11089.5	8783.0	9749.8	9452.1
Manipur	440.6	219.8	515.7	271.0	521.6	268.0	467.8	316.5
Meghalaya	316.6	403.4	348.0	515.3	377.2	534.0	395.4	494.9
Mizoram	292.9	236.7	343.9	254.1	350.9	273.8	330.3	179.0
Nagaland	276.0	207.7	411.0	492.4	411.0	492.4	374.1	494.6
Odisha	2210.4	9464.0	2148.3	9433.7	2156.5	9413.5	2386.9	8755.5
Punjab	1502.5	3782.6	1541.2	3936.2	1644.6	4167.6	1790.9	4301.6
Rajasthan	716.8	873.5	581.8	1114.1	735.6	1433.2	681.6	1986.7
Sikkim	24.0	132.5	24.0	134.5	0.0	130.1	23.5	106.9
Tamil Nadu	6699.9	7897.9	7369.9	8678.8	5963.9	7521.0	6635.1	6976.1
Telangana			4441.0	3647.3	5287.7	3005.3	4319.9	3195.4
Tripura	697.9	754.1	786.4	780.5	819.1	811.1	854.0	793.2
Uttar Pradesh	5176.1	19571.6	6887.5	18545.0	7559.0	26120.2	10296.1	26251.0
Uttarakhand	805.7	1059.6	678.5	1016.8	786.0	1109.7	659.1	945.4
West Bengal	3172.5	25466.8	2909.7	23045.0	3313.7	26354.6	3516.7	22825.4
Others	121.5	594.8	124.0	590.7	134.2	578.6	143.2	505.8
TOTAL	81285.3	162186.6	88977.1	162896.9	86601.7	169478.2	89445.2	169063.9

Source: Horticulture Statistics Division, DAC&FW.

Promotion of fruit production in Maharashtra

187. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Maharashtra is far behind in fruit production, except for banana, oranges and grapes in organized manner in comparison to other States despite potential, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government has initiated any programme/scheme for increase in fruit production in Maharashtra or there is something in store for the near future, which may go a long way in further improvement of the economic condition of the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) As far as fruits production in the country is concerned, the State of Maharashtra was at first position during 2013-14 and 2014-15. However, during 2015-16, it was at third position in total fruit production in the country. The area and production of total fruits in Maharashtra has declined during 2014-15 and 2015-16 mainly due to drought condition in the State during these years.

(b) The Government is taking several steps to ensure enhanced quality and productivity of fruits and vegetables in all the States including Maharashtra. Some of these steps are as under:—

- In order to boost the production of vegetables and fruits in the country, Government is implementing a Scheme called “Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture” (MIDH) which provides support to all the States including Maharashtra, for production of quality planting material, improved quality seed production, rejuvenation of senile orchards, protected cultivation, creation of water resources, creation of infrastructure to prevent post harvest losses of horticultural crops, adoption of Integrated Nutrient Management (INM)/Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and organic farming including insitu generation of organic inputs.
- Government is also providing assistance to farmers for increasing horticulture production under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) Scheme.
- Government of Maharashtra, in particular, has been implementing area expansion programmes like Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) since 1990-91 and Maharashtra Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MREGS)

since 2011-12 for development of various dry land and irrigated fruit crops on the basis of 100% subsidy starting from planting stage up to 3 years maintenance of fruit orchard.

Scheme for development and production of fodder

188. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any scheme/programme for the development and production of animal fodder, especially in the context of prevailing widespread drought in various States, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether pasture land in villages is on the decline on account of degradation and/or encroachment resulting in scarcity of animal fodder, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of rural pastures/grazing land, State-wise, along with action taken for removal of encroachment on such land at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DADF), Government of India has already taken necessary steps to increase fodder production in various parts of the country by providing financial assistance to the farmers/Co-operatives through the States/UTs under Centrally Sponsored National Livestock Mission with a Sub Mission on Feed and Fodder Development under the following components.

Sl. No.	Name of the Components
1.	Fodder Production from Non-forest Wasteland/rangeland/grassland/non-arable land
2.	Fodder Production from Forest land
3.	Fodder Seed Procurement/Production and Distribution
4.	Introduction of Hand Driven Chaff-Cutter
5.	Introduction of Power Driven Chaff-Cutter
6.	Distribution of Low Capacity, Tractor Mountable Fodder Block Making Units, hay baling machines/reapers/forage harvesters
7.	Establishment of Silage Making Units
8.	Establishment of by-pass Protein Production Units

Sl. No.	Name of the Components
9.	Establishment of Area Specific Mineral Mixture/Feed Pelleting/Feed Manufacturing Unit.
10.	Establishment/Modernization of Feed Testing Laboratories

Additional Fodder Development Programme (AFDP) as a Sub-Scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) of Department of Agriculture, Co-operation and Farmers Welfare is also being operational since 2014-15 to mitigate the adverse impacts of drought in drought affected States which is continuing during the current year 2016-17 with a budgetary allocation of ₹ 100 crore.

(b) and (c) As per the latest report furnished by Directorate of Economics and Statistics Department of Agriculture, Co-operation and Farmers Welfare in their Land Use Statistics, there is marginal decrease in the total permanent pasture and other grazing land in the country from 10,311 Thousand Ha. in 2011-12 to 10,256 Thousand Ha in 2013-14. State-wise area under pasture and other grazing land in the country are given in the Statement (*See below*).

The responsibility to safeguard against encroachment of land lies with the State Governments. However, under National Livestock Mission financial assistance is provided to the State Governments and Union Territories for fodder production from Non-forest wasteland/rangeland/grassland/non-arable lands. These funds can be utilised for conservation and development of pasture lands.

Statement

State-wise area under pasture and other grazing land in the country

(in thousand Ha.)

States/UTs	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Andhra Pradesh	553	515	212
Arunachal Pradesh	18	18	18
Assam	160	160	168
Bihar	16	16	15
Chhattisgarh	863	861	882
Goa	1	01	1
Gujarat	851	851	851
Haryana	28	25	26

States/UTs	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Himachal Pradesh	1508	1508	1510
Jammu and Kashmir	123	114	114
Jharkhand	121	114	114
Karnataka	908	908	906
Kerala	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	1321	1286	1291
Maharashtra	1244	1245	1242
Manipur	1	1	1
Meghalaya			
Mizoram	5	5	5
Nagaland			
Odisha	508	536	524
Punjab	4	5	5
Rajasthan	1694	1694	1694
Sikkim			
Tamil Nadu	110	110	110
Telangana			302
Tripura	02	02	1
Uttarakhand	199	192	192
Uttar Pradesh	66	66	65
West Bengal	4	3	2
Union Territories			
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	4	4	4
Chandigarh			
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1	1	1
Daman and Diu	0		
Delhi	0	0	
Lakshadweep	0		
Puducherry	0	0	
TOTAL	10311	10240	10256

Monsoon failure in Tamil Nadu

189. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the monsoon failure in Tamil Nadu;
- (b) if so, whether any evaluation has been conducted to assess the damage caused due to drought in Tamil Nadu; and
- (c) whether it is a fact that there was no prior forecast of monsoon failure by IMD, if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) to (c) As reported by India Meteorological Department (IMD), Tamil Nadu received deficit rainfall (-19% of Long Period Average) during South West Monsoon (June – September, 2016) and deficit rainfall of 62% Long Period Average during North East Monsoon (October – December, 2016). The State Government declared drought in all the 32 districts in the State and submitted a Memorandum seeking Central assistance of ₹ 39565.00 crores. An Inter-Ministerial Central Team has recently visited the affected areas in the State for assessment of the drought situation and requirement of financial assistance. Further action will be taken in accordance with the established procedure.

Unscientific and excessive use of pesticides

190. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the problems associated with the unscientific and excessive use of pesticides have not been addressed properly by Government;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the system for registration of pesticides does not address the systemic deficiency; and
- (c) whether Government is considering to review the Insecticides Act, 1968 as the pesticide sector needs better regulation to safeguard the environment and public health, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) The Insecticides Act, 1968 has been enacted to regulate the import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution and use of insecticides with a view to prevent risk to human beings or animals, and for matters connected therewith. As per provision under Section 5 of the Act, the Government has constituted Registration Committee (RC). The Committee

registers pesticides after considering the data on different parameters such as chemistry, bio-efficacy, toxicity, packaging and processing to ensure efficacy and safety to human beings and animals. If pesticides are used as per approved label claims they do not cause any hazard to human beings, live stocks and matters related therewith. In addition, to sensitize farmers about indiscriminate use of pesticides, the Government is implementing “Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India” through 35 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (CIPMCs) of Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage established across the country with an aim to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach. CIPMCs *inter alia*, produce biological agents for release in the fields, conserve natural bio-control agents, promote bio-pesticides as an alternative to chemical pesticides and advocate judicious and safe use of chemical pesticides as a last resort. These activities are implemented through Farmers Field Schools (FFSs), 2 days and 5 days training programmes and season long training program for State Agriculture Extension Officers and NGOs/Private Bodies. A ‘Grow Safe Food’ campaign has been initiated to carry the message of safe and judicious use of pesticides to farmers and other stakeholders. Package of practices for control of pests and diseases in 87 crops have been revised to include techniques to reduce dependence on chemical pesticides and encourage use of bio-pesticides and other alternative plant protection measures. Further, the State Agriculture authorities are sensitized on judicious use of pesticide and enforce regulatory provisions with regard to pesticides in the Zonal and National Conferences.

The Pesticides Management Bill, 2008 is pending in the Parliament with a view to substitute the Insecticides Act, 1968. The Bill, *inter alia*, has proposed time bound safe disposal of pesticides and more stringent punishment for import, manufacture, sale etc. of spurious/misbranded/sub-standard pesticides.

Decline in production of foodgrains due to drought

191. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrains production has come down during the last two years due to drought conditions, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the number of reported farmer's suicides during the last two years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) On account of deficit/deficient rainfall during monsoon season, unseasonal rains/hailstorms and adverse temperature conditions etc., the production of foodgrain during 2014-15 and 2015-16 declined to

252.02 million tonnes and 252.22 million tonnes respectively as compared to record foodgrains production of 265.04 million tonnes achieved during 2013-14.

(b) As per latest Report on 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' of National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs, the details of State-wise number of reported farmers/cultivators suicides during 2014 and 2015 are given in the Statement.

Statement

*State/UT-wise number of reported farmers/cultivators suicides
during 2014 and 2015*

Sl. No.	State/UT	Number of reported suicides	
		2014	2015
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	160	516
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	7
3.	Assam	21	84
4.	Chhattisgarh	443	854
5.	Gujarat	45	57
6.	Haryana	14	28
7.	Himachal Pradesh	32	0
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	12	0
9.	Karnataka	321	1197
10.	Kerala	107	3
11.	Madhya Pradesh	826	581
12.	Maharashtra	2568	3030
13.	Manipur	0	1
14.	Meghalaya	0	2
15.	Odisha	5	23
16.	Punjab	24	100
17.	Rajasthan	0	3
18.	Sikkim	35	15
19.	Tamil Nadu	68	2
20.	Telangana	898	1358

1	2	3	4
21.	Tripura	0	1
22.	Uttar Pradesh	63	145
23.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	8	0
TOTAL		5650	8007

Source: Report on 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' of National Crime Records Bureau, M/o Home Affairs.

Providing market intelligence to farmers

192. SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether several State Governments have submitted a Memorandum to Central Government to provide market intelligence to farmers to help them to get remunerative prices for the agricultural produce;

(b) if so, the details thereof, along with the status of the proposal; and

(c) whether a demand has also been made for setting up an Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) unit in the region to study and solve the problems of farmers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) No such proposal has been received from any State Government. However, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing Marketing Research and Information Network (MRIN) Scheme since March, 2000 under which daily price and arrival data from Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) is being captured on the Agmarknet portal. This scheme has the coverage of 3288 markets spread all over the country and more than 2700 markets are reported in December, 2016. Efforts are made to provide latest and live mandi prices to farmers and other stakeholders to take appropriate marketing decisions. The price data is disseminated through Kisan Call Centres, Kisan Suvidha and Agrimarket mobile Apps. The latest mandi prices are displayed on the DD Kisan portal on scrolling mode. Agmarknet data is hosted on open data platform and intended users are obtaining live mandi prices from the portal (data.gov.in). Spot and Future prices are provided through Price Ticker Boards in the major APMC Markets.

(c) There is no proposal to set up additional units of Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR). The Social Science Network Project on Market Intelligence is currently being implemented in 14 State Agricultural Universities and ICAR Institutes

with the capacity to provide pre-sowing and pre-harvest price forecasts to the farmers for selected agricultural commodities.

Distress sale of pulses

193. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the increase in Kharif production of pulses has resulted in sharp drop in their prices, falling even below the MSP in several mandis;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to lack of effective procurement mechanism, the farmers are compelled to distress sale of their produce; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken to set in place an urgent procurement mechanism to avert imminent misery to farmers growing pulses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) to (c) Some Reports indicate that prices of Kharif pulses in some of the mandis are ruling below Minimum Support Price (MSP). However, in most of the mandis prices are above the MSP.

Government implements Price Support Scheme (PSS) and Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) for procurement of pulses directly from the farmers through Central agencies viz. National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), Small Farmers' Agri-business Consortium (SFAC), Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC), National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF) and Food Corporation of India (FCI). The procurement of pulses is undertaken by these Central agencies at MSP as and when prices fall below MSP.

Procurement of Kharif pulses viz. Tur, Moong and Urad for Kharif Marketing Season of 2016-17 (as on 30.01.2017) is given below:

Pulses	Procurement (Metric Tonnes)			
	FCI	NAFED	SFAC	Total
Tur	34663.58	82848.53	14228.76	131740.87
Moong	53714.40	124485.18	26226.88	204426.46
Urad	17856.81	55750.87	9627.77	83235.45
TOTAL	106234.80	263084.57	50083.41	419402.78

Adoption of scientific and modern farming

194. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken to improve technical competence of farmers, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of steps taken, if any, to promote scientific farming and adoption of modern approach to agriculture by farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established a network of 663 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) at district level in the country aiming at capacity development of farmers in view of their location specific requirements. The KVKs impart training to farmers to improve their skills for improved farming. Besides, the Government has started several schemes/programmes to promote scientific farming and adoption of modern approach by farmers. Such modern approaches are as follows:—

- Per drop more crop to enhance the water use efficiency through Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY).
- Covering the risk of crop failure and minimise the monetary loss by Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).
- Promotion of organic farming through Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and Organic Value Chain for North Eastern Region.
- Maintaining soil health by promotion of Soil Health Cards Scheme.
- Electronic mode of transactions of agricultural commodities by electronic National Agriculture Market (eNAM).
- Enriching farmer scientist interfaces through Farmer FIRST programme.
- Entrepreneurial development of rural youth through Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA).

Throwing away of potatoes and tomatoes by farmers

195. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that agricultural produces like tomato and potato are being thrown away by farmers in some parts of the country as they are not getting even handling charges of their produce, due to demonetization;

(b) if so, the details of Government plan to protect farmers' economy; and

(c) if not, whether Government wishes to find out about poor marketing system of agriculture produce to ensure farmers' interest in tune with Government's commitment to double the farmers' income?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) As per the data available with the Government of India, the price trends of potato and tomato during the year 2014, 2015 and 2016 always showed declining trend during the months of November and December. The modal prices of both potato and tomato have been reported by and large above their production costs during the demonetization period.

(b) and (c) In order to protect the interest of farmers, the Government announces Minimum Support Price (MSP) for agricultural crops. However, potato and tomato are not covered under MSP. Government of India implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of horticultural and agricultural commodities including potato and tomato which are perishable in nature and not covered under Price Support Scheme (PSS). The objective of the intervention is to protect the farmers from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop during the peak arrival period when the prices tend to fall below economic levels and cost of production. The condition is that there should be either at least a 10% increase in production or a 10% decrease in the ruling market prices over the previous normal year. The scheme is implemented at the request of a State/UT Government which is ready to bear 50% of the loss (25% in case of North Eastern States), if any, incurred on its implementation.

Suicide by farmers in Maharashtra

196. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether spate of farmers' suicide in Vidarbha, particularly in Yavatmal and Pimpri Buti is on the rise;

(b) if so, the number of suicides taken place in Maharashtra in the last two years; and

(c) the concrete steps Government is taking to address the woes of debt ridden farmers whose crops have failed in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs compiles and disseminates information on suicides, in its publication titled 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India' (ADSI). These Reports on suicides upto 2015, are available at its website. As per ADSI Reports for the years 2014 and 2015, the total number of suicides by farmers and agricultural labourers in the State of Maharashtra is 4,004 in the year 2014 and 4,291 in the year 2015. The ADSI Report does not provide

district-wise data on the suicides occurring in the States.

(c) Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

Disbursement of relief to the farmers who lose their crops in various parts of the country is implemented by the State Governments. For such purposes, the States have been made available funds under State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). While SDRF ensures ready availability of funds with the States for taking immediate measures in the wake of natural calamities, assistance from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) is, over and above SDRF, for natural calamities of severe nature and is considered on the basis of Memorandum received from the State Governments in accordance with established procedure. The assistance from SDRF and NDRF is in the form of relief and not compensation. Responsibility of distribution of relief rests with the State Government.

The Government is implementing the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) from Kharif 2016. PMFBY has addressed all the shortcomings in the earlier schemes and is available to the farmers at very low rates of premium. This scheme would provide insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks in specified instances. The Government also provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to ₹ 3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss, in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is also notified for both Kharif and Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP). The Commission collects and analyses data and recommends MSP. In addition, the Government has declared bonus on pulses for Kharif 2016 over and above the MSP. Even last year, the Government offered bonus over and above the MSP in case of pulses.

The Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations' to protect the interests of the farmers. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the MSP on the request of State/UT Government.

The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

Training in modern farming technology

†197. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has prepared any plan for adopting advanced farming keeping in view the small land holdings of farmers, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government has been running any scheme to impart training to farmers with regard to farming with the help of modern technology in Rajasthan, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is giving top priority to assist farmers in adopting improved farming practices through demonstrations, farmers' trainings and subsidized inputs. In order to propagate improved crop production technologies in the country, Government of India has been implementing various crop development programmes, such as National Food Security Mission (NFSM), National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) and National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). The details on these schemes are available on website (www.agricoop.nic.in).

In addition, the Government has also setup Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) in 652 districts for imparting training to farmers and large scale dissemination of agricultural technology.

Moreover, the provision of training to farmers on modern technology is also a component in the Government schemes including NFSM, NMOOP, RKVY, MIDH, SMAM and NMSA. Besides, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established 663 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in the country. The activities of KVKs include testing and demonstration of latest farming practices in farmers field and also imparting training to farmers. As far as the State of Rajasthan is concerned, the Government has set-up one ATMA and a KVK in each of the 33 districts and one additional KVK in 9 districts.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Rabi and Kharif crops claims under agricultural insurance scheme

198. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of claims received under National Agricultural Insurance Scheme during Kharif 2015 and Rabi 2015-16 from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, State-wise and year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that not even a single claim has been settled during Kharif 2015 in the above two States, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the status of above claims during 2015-16?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) Under National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) claims of Kharif 2015 and Rabi 2015-16 of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are not settled due to the reasons mentioned in the following table:—

State	Total Claims		Reasons
	Kharif 2015	Rabi 2015-16	
Andhra Pradesh	84.37	Yield data received and claims are under process by Insurance Company <i>i.e.</i> Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd. As per provisions of the scheme.	Awaiting State Government share of claims for Kharif 2015.
Telangana	395.00	-do-	Claims of Kharif 2015 are pending due to reconciliation between State Government and implementing agency of area sown/insured area data.

Training to farmers for scientific cultivation

†199. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has made several announcements to promote the agriculture, if so, the details thereof;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government has provided training to farmers for scientific cultivation; and

(c) whether farmers have been informed in this regard, if so, the names of districts of Bihar wherein this programme has been implemented by Government, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) The Government is already implementing several schemes to promote agriculture in the country. The details of the schemes are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) and (c) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established a network of 663 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) at district level in the country aiming at technology assessment and demonstration for its application and capacity development as per the location specific requirements. As part of important activities, KVKs also impart training to farmers for scientific cultivation.

Besides, the Government has set-up 652 Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMAs) at district level including State of Bihar for imparting training to farmers and large scale dissemination of technologies among farming community. The farmers are also informed about training programmes of KVKs and ATMAs through Focused Publicity Campaigns, Kisan Call Centres (KCCs), Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres (ACABCs) of entrepreneurs, Agri Fairs and Exhibitions, Kisan SMS Portal, DD Kisan TV Channel and Radio Stations.

Statement

The details of schemes to promote agriculture in the country

- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY):** PMKSY embarks upon 'per drop more crop' and has been implemented to enhance the water use efficiency in agriculture.
- **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):** PMFBY is implemented to cover the risk of crop failure and minimize the monetary loss to the farmers.
- **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY):** PKVY is an elaborated component of Soil Health Management of Major project National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). Under PKVY Organic farming is promoted through adoption of organic village by cluster approach and PGs certification.
- **Organic Value Chain for North Eastern Region:** The Scheme aims at development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of entire value

chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing marketing and brand building initiative.

- **National Food Security Mission (NFSM):** The Mission has targets of additional production of 25 million tons of food grains comprising of 10 million tons rice, 8 million tons of wheat, 4 million tons of pulses and 3 million tons of coarse cereals by the end of Twelfth Five Year Plan.
- **Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI):** BGREI is being implemented with objectives to increase production and productivity of rice and wheat by adopting latest crop production technologies; promote cultivation in rice fallow area to increase cropping intensity and income of the farmers; create water harvesting structures and efficient utilization of water potential; and promote post harvest technology and marketing support.
- **National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP):** National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP) envisages increase in production of vegetable oils sourced from oilseeds, oil palm and TBOs from 7.06 million tonnes (average of 2007-08 to 2011-12) to 9.51 million tonnes by the end of Twelfth Plan (2016-17).
- **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY):** RKVY aims at achieving and sustaining desired annual growth during the Twelfth Plan period by ensuring holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors.
- **Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH):** MIDH aims to promote holistic growth of horticulture sector, including bamboo and coconut through area based regionally differentiated strategies, which includes research, technology promotion, extension, post harvest management, processing and marketing, in consonance with comparative advantage of each State/region and its diverse agro-climatic features; Encourage aggregation of farmers into farmer groups like FIGs/FPOs and FPCs to bring economy of scale and scope. Enhance horticulture production, augment farmers, income and strengthen nutritional security; Improve productivity by way of quality germplasm, planting material and water use efficiency through Micro Irrigation. Support skill development and create employment generation opportunities for rural youth in horticulture and post harvest management, especially in the cold chain sector.
- Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM).
- **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA):** National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) aims at making agriculture more productive, sustainable and climate resilient; conserving natural resources; adopting

comprehensive soil health management practices; optimizing utilization of water resources; etc.

- **Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Scheme:** Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established a network of 653 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) district-wise in the country aiming at technology assessment and demonstration for its application and capacity development. The activities undertaken by the KVKs are On-farm testing to identify the location specificity of technology under various farming systems; Frontline demonstration to establish the production potential of improved agricultural technologies on the farmers fields; Capacity development of farmers and extension personnel; Functioning as a knowledge and resource centre of agricultural technologies; and Provide farm advisories using ICT and other media means on varied subjects of interest to farmers.

Milk production in Himalayan States

†200. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the quantity of milk being produced in Himalayan States at present;
- (b) whether it is sufficient for supply to the States;
- (c) if not, whether Government will provide funds and other facilities to increase the milk production in these Himalayan States; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) and (b) The total milk production and per-capita availability of milk in States such as Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim and Uttarakhand during 2015-16 is given below:

States	Milk Production (figures in 000 tonnes)	Per-capita availability of milk (figures in gram/day)
Arunachal Pradesh	50.13	105
Himachal Pradesh	1282.86	505
Jammu and Kashmir	2273.35	395
Sikkim	66.74	282
Uttarakhand	1655.81	434

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The Department Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries is implementing the following schemes for dairy development under which financial assistance is provided to States/UTs including Himalayan States for creation and strengthening of infrastructure for enhancing milk production and procurement.

(i) National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPBBD).

(ii) National Dairy Plan-I.

(iii) Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme (DEDS).

(d) Does not arise.

Cashless transactions in agriculture sector business

201. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to introduce/promote cashless transaction in agriculture sector business in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether any transaction fee waiver has been proposed on cashless transactions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) Subsequent to demonetization, workshops on cashless transactions have been carried out in 323 Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs). As per information received from the States, 85-90% of the trade value has been traded in cashless mode after demonetization. Under Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE)/ Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) initiatives have been taken towards introduction/promotion of cashless transactions at the level of ICAR Headquarters, ICAR research institutes and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs). All institutes/establishments under ICAR have already adopted cashless transactions in making payments. All payments including the wages of contract workers, scholarships/stipend to students/trainees, awards to students/scientists and farmers etc. are made only through electronic mode. For handling petty contingent expenditure also, the prepaid cards are provisioned to the concerned imprest holders in the various divisions/sections and no payment above ₹ 5000 made in cash. While receiving payments also, cashless transactions are promoted by making provisions for POS (swipe) machines and the adoption of other cashless means at points of sale. Till date, 143 POS machines have already been installed at 27 ICAR institutes, 20 KVKs and 18 State Agricultural Universities (SAUs). Under National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) Scheme, electronic payment gateway is available for transactions by various stakeholders. DARE/ICAR has also not proposed any transaction fee waiver on cashless transactions.

Ban on use of certain pesticides

202. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an expert committee headed by a Professor of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) has recommended to ban some pesticides in the country as they involve risk to humans and animals; and

(b) if so, the details of those pesticides, for what purpose they are being used and the measures being taken for banning them with immediate effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Agriculture and Famers Welfare constituted an expert committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Anupam Verma, Former Professor, IARI, to review 66 Pesticides which are banned/restricted in other countries but continued to be registered for domestic use in India. The Committee, *inter alia*, recommended a complete ban on 12 pesticides whereas, 6 other pesticides to be phased out by 2020. The details are given in the Statement-I and II, respectively. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has issued a notification inviting objections and suggestions from the public/stakeholders with regard to completely banning/phasing out of recommended pesticides.

Statement-I*Details of twelve pesticides recommended to be completely banned*

Sl. No.	Name of the Pesticide	Formulation of Pesticide	Crop Name/Usage
1	2	3	4
1.	Benomyl	Benomyl 50 % W.P.	Wheat, Groundnut, Tobacco, Grapes, Beans, Cucurbits, Chillies, Brinjal, Sugar Beat, Peas
2.	Fenarimol	Fenarimol 12% E.C.	Apple
3.	Carbaryl	Carbaryl 5% D.P.	Paddy, Cotton, Sorghum, Bhindi, Cabbage, Cauliflower
		Carbaryl 10% D.P.	Paddy, Sorghum, Tur, Cotton, Sesamum, Bhindi, Cabbage
		Carbaryl 4% G.R.	Maize
		Carbaryl 50% W.P.	Maize, Paddy, Cotton, Jute, Sorghum, Tomato, Chillies, Brinjal, Bhindi, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Wheat

1	2	3	4
		Carbaryl 85% W.P.	Maize, Paddy, Cotton
4.	Diazinon	Diazinon 0.5% m/m + Pyrethrum 0.1% m/m	Insects
		Diazinon 25% Micro Encapsulation	House Hold Insecticide
5.	Fenthion	Fenthion 82.5% E.C.	Mosquitoes, Larvae, Adult Mosquitoes. Flies
		Fenthion 2% GR	Mosquito, Larvae
		Fenthion 2% Spray	Ready to use household insecticide
6.	Methyl Parathion	Methyl Parathion 2% D.P.	Paddy, Cotton, Black Gram, Green Gram, Mustard
		Methyl Parathion 50% E.C.	Paddy, Wheat, Cotton
7.	Sodium Cyanide	Sodium Cyanide	Agriculture Land and Grain Storage
8.	Thiometon	Thiometon 25% E.C.	Brinjal
9.	Linuron	Linuron 50% W.P.	Pea
10.	Trifluralin	Trifluralin 48% E.C.	Cotton, Soyabean
11.	MEMC (Methoxy Ethyl Mercury Chloride)	Methoxy Ethyl Mercury Chloride 6% F.S.	Sugarcane, Potato
12.	Tridemorph	Tridemorph 80% E.C.	Mango, Rose, Wheat

Statement-II*Details of six pesticides recommended to be phased out by 2020*

Sl. No.	Name of the Pesticide	Formulation of Pesticide	Crop Name/Usage
1	2	3	4
1.	Alachlor	Alachlor 50% E.C.	Cotton, Maize, Groundnut, Soybean
		Alachlor 10% G.R.	Cotton, Maize, Groundnut, Soybean

1	2	3	4
2.	Dichlorvos	Dichlorvos 76% E.C.	Paddy, Wheat, Soybean, Castor, Groundnut, Mustard, Sunflower, Cucurbit Cashew
3.	Phorate	Phorate 10% C.G.	Bajral, Barley, Maize, Paddy, Sorghum, Wheat, Black Gram, Green Gram, Pigeon Pea, Soybean, Sugarcane, Cotton, Groundnut, Mustard, Sesamum, Brinjal Cauliflower, Chillies, Potato, Tomato, Apple, Banana, Citrus
4.	Phosphamidon	Phosphamidon 40% S.L. Phosphamidon 40% + Imidacloprid 2% S.P.	Paddy, Brinjal Paddy
5.	Triazophos	Triazophos 20% E.C. Triazophos 40% E.C.	Rice Cotton, Rice, Soybean
6.	Trichlorfon	Trichlorfon 5% G.R. Trichlorfon 5% DUST Trichlorfon 50% E.C.	Castor, Groundnut, Wheat, Vegetables (Brinjal, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Cucurbits, Tomato) Castor, Groundnut, Wheat, Vegetables (Brinjal, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Cucurbits, Tomato) Castor, Groundnut, Wheat, Vegetables (Brinjal, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Cucurbits, Tomato)

Agreements with foreign countries to strengthen agricultural ties

203. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has entered into agreements with foreign countries to strengthen agricultural ties; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry

has entered into 84 MoUs/Agreements with 74 countries for cooperation in the fields of agriculture and allied sectors.

The areas for cooperation in these MoUs/Agreements *inter alia* include cooperation in research and development, increasing productivity, post-harvest management, value addition/food processing, plant protection, animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries, enhancing trade, mutual exchange visits by scientist, mutual exchange of technical expertise, exchange of Germ-plasm, transfer of technology, setting up of centres of excellence in different fields to demonstrate new technologies etc.

Pricing of stents

204. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of the recent directive of the High Court of Delhi to fix price for stents which otherwise are not controlled as per the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013;

(b) if so, the steps the Ministry has taken to fix the price of stents in the country; and

(c) how domestically manufactured stents are comparable with imported stents from United States and the European Union?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government notified inclusion of coronary stents in the National List of Essential Medicines, 2015 (NLEM, 2015) *vide* notification dated 19th July, 2016 and subsequently in the First Schedule of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013) *vide* notification dated 21st December, 2016.

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) is presently engaged in the process of fixing the ceiling prices of coronary stents.

(c) As per the provisions of the DPCO, 2013, no distinction is made between imported and domestic medicines including stents. Further, the Sub-Committee of NLEM Core Committee has not distinguished between domestic and imported stents nor has it attributed any difference in therapeutic output between domestic and imported stents.

Dependence on China for APIs

205. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China supplies 70 per cent of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) for manufacture of drugs in the country, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether interrupted imports from China may lead to a plausible scenario of drugs shortage in the country; and

(c) whether Government has taken steps to produce APIs in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) The country is dependent on imports of Bulk Drugs/Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) for producing certain essential medicines from China. As India is a signatory to the WTO and TRIPs agreement, the import restrictions have been removed and imports made on economic considerations have slowly resulted in the present dependence.

(b) This type of scenario is not expected as there are various other suppliers of the Bulk Drugs/APIs in the world.

(c) The Government has withdrawn exemption of customs duty on certain categories of Bulk Drugs/APIs to provide a level playing field to the domestic manufacturers.

Subsidy on fertilizers

206. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers are getting requisite benefit of subsidy on fertilizers, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether some companies resort to tactics of indicating lower production capacity and on the basis of percentage production obtain huge subsidy;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure that the poor and marginal farmers get the maximum benefit of subsidy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Urea is provided to farmers at a statutory price of ₹ 5360/MT (excluding taxes etc.). This price is much below the actual delivered cost. The Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers are also provided to farmers at subsidized prices. The Maximum Retail Price printed on each bag of these subsidized fertilizers is exclusive of the subsidy and any farmer, who purchases these fertilizers, gets the benefit of the subsidy.

(b) and (c) At present, there is no linkage between subsidy payment and capacity utilization of the fertilizer units. The subsidy is being paid to fertilizer units based on the quantity of fertilizers sold for agricultural purpose.

(d) Subsidy on fertilizers are provided to all the farmers irrespective of their landholding and economic status.

Direct Benefit Transfer in fertilizer sector

207. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government would undertake a pilot project in 16 districts across the country to introduce Direct Benefit Transfer in fertilizer sector, if so, the details thereof, and

(b) whether unlike the DBT in LPG and other schemes, it cannot be introduced easily in fertilizer sector, if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Yes Sir, the pilot project has been undertaken in 16 districts to introduce DBT in fertilizer sector. Details are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) The DBT being implemented in fertilizer subsidy payment is slightly different from the normal DBT being implemented in LPG subsidy. Under the DBT in fertilizer sector, the subsidy will be released to the fertilizer companies instead of the beneficiaries, after the sale is made by the retailers to the beneficiaries. At present direct transfer of subsidy to beneficiaries like in LPG cannot be introduced in fertilizer sector as the beneficiaries and their entitlement is not clearly defined. Multiple subsidized products., urea and 21 grades of Phosphatic and Potassic fertilizers have different subsidy rates and subsidy rate in respect of urea vary from company to company due to different production processes, energy efficiencies of plants, vintage etc. Amount of subsidy in some fertilizers particularly Urea is more than double the MRP. It will be a huge financial burden on the farmers to pay the MRP and subsidy

upfront and receive the subsidy amount subsequently.

Statement

Names of districts where DBT Pilot Project is under implementation

Sl. No.	District	State
1.	Una	Himachal Pradesh
2.	Kishanganj	Bihar
3.	Hoshangabad	Madhya Pradesh
4.	Karnal	Haryana
5.	Kurukshetra	
6.	Kannur	Kerala
7.	Nasik	Maharashtra
8.	Raigarh	
9.	Tumkur	Karnataka
10.	Rangareddy	Telengana
11.	Krishna	Andhra Pradesh
12.	West Godavari	
13.	Maldah	West Bengal
14.	South 24 Paraganas	
15.	Narmada	Gujarat
16.	Pali	Rajasthan

Closure of Pharma PSUs

208 SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state: whether it is a fact that Government has decided to close down the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL) and Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (RDPL), if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): Yes Sir. The Government has decided to close Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited (IDPL) and Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited (RDPL). A Committee of three Ministers considered future course of action on pharma PSUs and noted that all Pharmaceutical PSUs, except Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceutical Limited (KAPL), were sick or

incipient sick and their earlier revival/rehabilitation packages had failed to achieve desired results. The Government has decided to sell that much of surplus land of IDPL and RDPL to Government agencies as would be required to clear the outstanding liabilities, implement Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS)/Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) to pave way for their closure, manage the remaining land in accordance with guidelines of Department of Investment and Public Assets Management/Department of Public Enterprises and if need be, vest it in a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The Government has decided that after liabilities have been met, balance sheet cleansed and VRS/VSS effected, IDPL and RDPL be closed.

Fulfilment of Government Assurances

209. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the number of assurances given by Ministers on floor of the House in the last three years;

(b) the details of the number of assurances that have not yet been fulfilled and are pending;

(c) the reasons for such pendency; and

(d) the steps being taken to follow-up with respective Ministries for fulfilment of pending assurances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): (a) and (b) Details of number of assurances given by Ministers on floor of the House in the last three years and number of assurances that have not yet been fulfilled and are pending:—

Year	Total no. of Assurances	No. of Assurances Implemented	No. of Assurances Dropped	Pending
2014	1189	779	126	284
2015	907	440	154	313
2016	970	152	238	580
2017	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

(c) The responsibility of Implementation of Assurances primarily lies with the Ministries/Departments concerned with the Assurances. The Ministry does not pursue individual assurances.

(d) While forwarding the extracts of each assurance, the Ministry informs the concerned Ministry that the assurance is required to be fulfilled within a period of three months from the date of assurance and that the time limit has to be strictly adhered to. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs also holds meetings with officers of various Ministries/Departments from time to time to review the pendency position of the assurances with a view to expedite their implementation.

Funding of PCPIR project in Odisha

210. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that at present the Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemical Investment Regions (PCPIR) Policy envisages funding for Viable Gap Funding (VGF) under the PPP Mode;

(b) whether the Ministry has received proposal from the Government of Odisha for funding the same in the shape of grant instead of VGF for successful implementation of the PCPIR project at Paradeep in Odisha; and

(c) whether the Ministry would furnish the status of the request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Yes, Sir. The existing policy on Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemical Investment Regions (PCPIR) provides for Viable Gap Funding (VGF) for creation/upgradation of external physical infrastructure in PCPIRs under Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has received a proposal from Government of Odisha for budgetary support amounting to ₹ 1147 crore from Government of India instead of VGF support. Government of India had approved VGF support amounting to ₹ 716 crore to Odisha PCPIR at various stages. However, there is no provision to adjust VGF against Grants. As part of revision of existing PCPIR policy, this Department has incorporated to make provision of grants/budgetary support to the tune of ₹ 1000 crore for each PCPIR, including the existing PCPIRs, in the draft revision of policy.

Growth rate of Indian drug formulation market

211. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian drug formulation market grew by 15.3 per cent in August to ₹ 9643 crore over the corresponding month last year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the growth was driven by 9.1 per cent expansion on volumes, 2.9 per cent rise in prices and 3.3 per cent in new launches; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Indian companies grew by 17.1 per cent against 9 per cent growth for multinational companies, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) No, Sir. As per the information provided by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), for the month of August, 2016 and August, 2015, the Indian drug formulation market grew by 10.52% based on MAT (Moving Annual Turnover) Value. The MAT Value has grown to ₹ 1,02,536 crore in August 2016 as compared to corresponding figure of ₹ 92,780 crore in August 2015.

(b) No, Sir. As per the information provided by NPPA, the increase in volumes represented by MAT unit as per the market based database is 2.73%. The sale in unit of formulations has increased to 20445052 thousand units in August 2016 as compared to 19902526 thousand units in August 2015. Total MAT value of new products launched during the period August 2015 to August 2016 is ₹ 2,457 crore and percentage increase in MAT value of newly launched product is 2.40% during this period.

(c) As per the information provided by NPPA, the market share of Indian pharmaceutical companies increased to ₹ 79,919 crore in August 2016 as compared to ₹ 71,671 crore in August 2015 resulting in increase of 11.51% in total market share. Similarly, market share of multinational companies increased to ₹ 22,617 crore in August 2016 as compared to ₹ 21,108 crore resulting in increase of 7.15% in total market share.

Revival of defunct fertilizer plants

212. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any comprehensive and constructive plan to revive the defunct fertilizer plants of the Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited (FCIL) and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFCL); and

(b) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has decided to revive closed fertilizer units of Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited

(FCIL) and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFCL). At present five units which include Talcher, Ramagundam, Gorakhpur and Sindri Units of FCIL and Barauni unit of HFCL are being revived.

(b) Details of the revival of these units are as under:—

I. Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni Units:

In 2011, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) had approved the Draft Rehabilitation Scheme for revival of all the Units of FCIL and HFCL. CCEA in its meeting held on 9.5.2013 had approved revival of all closed units of FCIL and also, *inter alia*, approved that proposal/action plan on revival of HFCL units will be taken up once revival of FCIL units is on track.

Cabinet in its meeting held on 25.05.2016 approved Financial Restructuring of HFCL by way of waiver of the GoI loans and the outstanding interest thereon. This decision of the Cabinet helped in making net-worth of HFCL positive and resulted into discharge of HFCL from the purview of BIFR. Therefore, it has been decided to revive Barauni Unit of HFCL also.

In terms of poor response during bidding process in respect of Gorakhpur and Sindri, it was considered that it is not feasible to revive these units on 'bidding route' as decided earlier by the Union Cabinet. Therefore, for the timely revival of these units, the Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 13.07.2016 approved to revive Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni Units by means of a Special Purpose Vehicle of Public Sector Units namely, National Thermal Power Corporation, Coal India Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Fertilizer Corporation India Limited/Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited, through nomination route. In pursuance to the decision of the Government of India, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) by name of Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Limited (HURL) has been formed by a consortium of Public Sector Undertakings namely, National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Coal India Limited (CIL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and FCIL/HFCL, through nomination route. Pre-project activities to revive Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni Units are in progress.

II. Talcher Unit:

- (i) Talcher Unit of FCIL is being revived on 'Nomination basis' by a Consortium of PSUs namely RCF, GAIL, CIL and FCIL by setting up a coal based fertilizer plant of 1.27 MMTPA capacity.
- (ii) JV Company named "Talcher Fertilizers Limited (TFL)" has been formed.
- (iii) Selection of Coal Gasification Technology is in progress.

III. Ramagundam Unit:

- (i) Ramagundam Unit of FCIL is being revived on 'nomination basis' by consortium of PSUs namely Engineers India Limited (EIL), National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) and FCIL by setting up a gas based fertilizer plant of 1.27 MMTPA capacity.
- (ii) JV Company named "Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited" has been formed.
- (iii) Project activities are in progress.

New system in place of NPPA

213. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a major overhaul of the country's drug policy, Government has taken a decision to disband the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) and set up a new system in its place; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of reply to (a) above, does not arise.

Bringing stents under NLEM

214. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has added coronary stents to the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), 2015 by bringing them under price control;

(b) if so, the details of price formula fixed by Government for various types of stents in the country;

(c) whether manufacturers/suppliers of stents have opposed this price formula for stents;

(d) if so, the details of their objections and Government's response thereto; and

(e) the details of further steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government for making affordable and quality stents available in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) and (b) Ministry of Health

and Family Welfare has included coronary in National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), 2015 *vide* its notification dated 19.07.2016. Subsequently Department of Pharmaceuticals has included coronary stents (i) Bare Metal Stents (BMS) and (ii) Drug Eluting Stents (DES) which include metallic DES and Bioresorbable Vascular Scaffold (BVS)/Biodegradable Stents in Schedule-I of Drug (Prices Control) Order, 2013. The ceiling prices of these stents shall be fixed as per the provisions in Drug (Prices Control) Order, 2013.

(c) and (d) Some of the manufacturers have asked for separate price because of the better technology involved in manufacture of their product. The Government shall take into consideration all the representation and take a decision within the framework of Drug (Prices Control) Order, 2013.

(e) The Government has rationalized the duty structure for raw materials for medical devices in January, 2016 for making available quality and affordable medical devices including stents domestically.

Digital India

215. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of steps Government has taken for cashless payments and Digital India;
- (b) whether only 3 per cent of the population has access to the internet;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (d) how Digital India is possible without access to internet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Debt of MTNL

216. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is fact that Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) is facing serious debt problem and is borrowing money to meet its day to day requirements;

(b) whether it is also a fact that MTNL has been going slow in upgradation of equipments during the last four to five years due to severe financial problems; and

(c) whether due to non-investment in access network of fixed lines, there are service quality issues, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) is borrowing money to meet its day to day requirement, the year-wise debt details since 2012-13 is as under:

(Figures in ₹ crores)

Year	Long term	Bonds	Short Term/Over Draft	Total
2012-13	7235.35	1005	3304.95	11542.30
2013-14	4365	3745	6010.44	14120.44
2014-15	2495	7513.97	6595.43	16604.40
2015-16	2495	7513.97	7993.08	18002.05
2016-17 (upto 31.12.2016)	2195	7513.97*	9709.26	19418.23

* includes sum of ₹ 4533.97 crores raised through bonds for which principal and interest are payable by the Government of India.

(b) Due to debt burden and funds crunch, MTNL has gone slow in upgradation of equipments during last 4-5 years.

(c) One of the reasons for service quality is due to non-investment in access network of fixed lines.

Telecom and internet connectivity in Naxal-affected areas

†217. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking any steps to promote the connectivity of telephones, mobiles and internet in the Naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the number of mobile towers presently operating and the number of such towers required in Naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh and, whether any steps are being taken by Government to meet any requirement of additional towers, if so, the details thereof?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Government is taking many steps to promote mobile connectivity and internet services in the Naxal affected areas of the country including Chhattisgarh:—

- (i) Under Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Project, 2186 mobile towers have been set up in 10 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected States, including 490 mobile towers in Chhattisgarh. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has been further asked to set up 156 mobile towers in LWE States as an extension of the project, which includes 35 towers in Chhattisgarh.
- (ii) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) Project, renamed as BharatNet, has been planned to establish a network infrastructure by connecting all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media for providing broadband connectivity.

The project is planned to be implemented in three phases. Under first phase of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are targeted to be connected by laying underground Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) by March, 2017. Under second phase, connectivity will be provided to remaining 1.5 lakh GPs in the country using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media, by December, 2018. A state-of-the-art network, future-proof network, including fibre between districts and blocks for 5G services and Internet of Things era with underground OFC in ring architecture, is planned to be completed by 2023 under third phase.

In phase-I, 4004 GPs out of 9770 GPs of Chhattisgarh will be covered. Remaining GPs are to be covered in phase-II. As on date, OFC has reached to 1836 GPs in Chhattisgarh.

Porting out of MTNL

218. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who have ported out/opted out from GSM mobile service run by MTNL during the last three years;

(b) whether a large number of complaints have been received by MTNL regarding poor coverage of its mobile service network which has deteriorated further during the last three years; and

(c) whether Government has taken or contemplating any action to improve the 2G, 3G and 4G services at the earliest for the benefit of its subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) The details of subscribers ported out from network of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) through mobile number portability (MNP Scheme) during the last three years and the current year are given as below:

Year	Number of Subscribers		
	Ported-Out	Ported-in	Net
2013-14	78184	16328	(-) 61856
2014-15	76722	24245	(-) 52477
2015-16	76325	23868	(-) 52457
2016-17	85449	23073	(-) 62376
(upto Dec. 16)			

(b) As far as complaints regarding poor coverage of mobile service network are concerned, MTNL is not maintaining the complaints regarding poor coverage separately. However, the total mobile network complaints received during last three years and current year in MTNL are given below:

Year	Number of complaints received
2013-14	45432
2014-15	50543
2015-16	66840
2016-17	55611
(upto Dec., 16)	

(c) MTNL has taken following steps to improve its 2G and 3G mobile network capabilities and provide better quality of service to its customers:

- (i) **Expansion of GSM/3G RF network in Delhi:** For expansion of mobile network, purchase order for 1080 number of 3G sites for higher data handling capacity has been placed.
- (ii) **3G Network Up-Gradation in Mumbai:** To upgrade the existing 3G network in Mumbai to make it a high speed network of 'HSPA+ (High Speed Packet Access) version', MTNL has placed purchase order. After the proposed up-gradation, the customers will get a download speed of 21.1 Mbps and upload speed of 5.76 Mbps which will be 6 times faster than present download speed and 10 times faster than present upload speed.

- (iii) **Microwave Backhaul Connectivity:** Purchase order for adding 800 Microwave Hops in Delhi and 470 in Mumbai has been placed to augment and improve the mobile network.

Proposals for release of commemorative stamps

219. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is in receipt of a large number of proposals in connection with release of commemorative stamps recently, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of decisions taken on the proposals received so far; and
- (c) whether Government is contemplating to prune the guidelines for releasing of commemorative stamps, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Department of Posts receives large number of proposals for issue of Commemorative Postage Stamps. Proposals, once received, are placed before the Philatelic Advisory Committee (PAC) for consideration. Hence, proposals received upto November 2016 for issue of Commemorative Postage Stamps were placed before the PAC in its meeting held on 28.11.2016. Proposals approved by the competent authority on the recommendations of PAC for release in the year 2017 are given in the Statement (*See below*).

- (c) No Sir.

Statement

*Proposals approved in Philatelic Advisory Committee (PAC)
meeting held on 28.11.2016*

1. Jhala Manna
2. India's Participation in First World War
3. Mangalyan — 2014
4. Caves of Meghalaya
5. ICAR — Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI)
6. Acharya Bodhidharma and Efflorescence of Zen Culture in East Asia
7. Lala Thunthee Mull (Thantimal) — an Indian Behind "Evolution of Dak"
8. Raja Todarmal
9. Dajisahe @ Dr. Shivajirao Ganesh Patwardhan

10. Goan Tiatr “Drama-Form”
11. Centenary Celebrations of University of Mysore
12. Deeksha Bhoomi of Dr. B R Ambedkar
13. 145th Birth Anniversary of Kavi Muddana and Nannayya Bhatta and Draksharamam Temple
14. Birth Centenary of Krishan Chander and Birth Centenary of Shri Bhisham Sahni and Pandit Shrilal Shukla and Prof. Balwant Gargi and K. V. Puttappa
15. Dr. Mehr Chand Mahajan
16. Acharya Konda Laxman Bapuji
17. M. Balamuralikrishna
18. Four Dharmas
19. Shaktipeeth
20. 1942 Freedom Movement

Thematic issue approved for 2017

1. Bridal Costumes of India
2. Indian Cuisine
3. Puppets
4. Palace on Wheels
5. Holiday Destinations
6. Boats of India
7. Traditional Embroideries of India (Innovative)
8. Step Wells of India
9. Head gears
10. Traditional Hand Fans
11. Wild Life Flora and Fauna
12. Historical Gates of Indian Forts
13. Means of Transports through the Ages (Series)
14. Minerals of India (innovative)
15. Mehendi-Lawsonia Inermis
16. Beetles
17. Indian Fashion Industry

18. Solar System
19. Musical Instruments of the wandering Minstrels (Tumbi, Ektara, Dotara, Khartal, Chimta)
20. Jataka Tales
21. Indian Perfume
22. Aqua Culture
23. Terracotta Temples of India
24. UNESCO heritage sites

Defence Proposals approved for 2017

1. The Poona Horse
2. Pilatus Induction

Changing the name of postman as postmaster

†220. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has changed the designation of Postman distributing letters in villages to Postmaster;

(b) whether this change in designation has been done only in the State of Rajasthan or it has been done at national level;

(c) whether it is a fact that the pay scale of Postmaster ranges from ₹ 4500 to ₹ 13,000;

(d) whether this pay scale remains even lower than that a Central fourth class employee; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by Government to provide proper pay scale to Postmaster distributing mails from one village to another?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) No, Sir. Gramin Dak Sevak Branch Postmaster (GDS BPM) or Gramin Dak Sevak Mail Deliverer distribute letters in villages.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No, Sir.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) Yes Sir. However, there is no comparison in the pay scales of these two cadres since Central fourth class (now termed as Multi Tasking Staff – MTS) are regular employees whereas Gramin Dak Sevaks are part-time sevaks.

(e) The allowances of Gramin Dak Sewaks are revised periodically as in the case of Central Pay Commission.

Failure of public sector telecoms to provide quality service

†221. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public sector telecom companies have failed in providing quality services to their consumers because the number of complaints made by the consumers with regard to call drops, poor connection and the relatively slow speed of broadband is increasing, if so, the State-wise details thereof; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to install towers along borders of States as roaming charge is being levied due to low network in border areas of all States, including Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) monitors the performance of service providers, including BSNL and MTNL against the benchmarks for various quality of service parameters laid down by TRAI in the Quality of Service Regulations issued from time to time through Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) submitted by service providers.

As per PMR for the quarter ending September 2016, for 2G services, MTNL is meeting all the parameters in both Delhi and Mumbai service areas. In respect of BSNL, the service provider is meeting the benchmarks for all the parameters, except for the parameters, Worst affected BTSs due to downtime (%age) (Benchmark $\leq 2\%$) in Kolkata Service area, and Worst affected cells having more than 3% TCH drop (benchmark $\leq 0.1\%$) in West Bengal Service area only.

As per PMR for the quarter ending September 2016, for 3G services, MTNL is meeting all the parameters in both Delhi and Mumbai service areas. In respect of BSNL, the service provider is meeting the benchmarks for all the parameters except for the parameters Worst affected Nod B's due to downtime (%age) (Benchmark $\leq 2\%$) in Kolkata Service area and Worst affected cells having more than 3% Circuit Switched Voice Quality (CSV quality) (Benchmark $\geq 95\%$) in West Bengal Service area only.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

As per PMR for the quarter ending September 2016, for Basic Wireline Service, MTNL is meeting the benchmarks for all the parameters in both Delhi and Mumbai service areas except for the parameters Fault incidence (No. of Faults/100 subs/month) in Delhi service area, % Fault repaired within next working days (for urban areas) in Delhi service area and % Fault repaired within 5 days (for urban areas) in Delhi and Mumbai service areas. In respect of BSNL, the service provider is meeting all the parameters.

As per PMR for the quarter ending September 2016, for Broadband Services, MTNL is meeting all the benchmarks for all the parameters in both Delhi and Mumbai service areas except the benchmarks related to fault repair in Delhi and Mumbai service areas. In respect of BSNL, the service provider is meeting all the parameters.

(b) Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) including BSNL install mobile towers based on techno commercial viability including for the border area of state. BSNL does not charge throughout the country for incoming roaming as a facility to its customers including in Maharashtra.

Penalty for breach of license conditions

222. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has sought Attorney General's opinion on whether it has the authority to impose penalty for breach of license conditions, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that DoT may not make any move on setting up internal committees to examine the matter from commercial and technical aspects till such time it receives Attorney General's opinion on the larger issue of its authority to impose penalty, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) As the penalty for any breach under Section 7 of Indian Telegraph Act 1885, is limited to one thousand rupees, and in the case of a continuing breach, a further fine of two hundred rupees for every day after the first during the whole or any part of which the breach continues, which may not be deterrent enough in today's scenario having large financial implications for breach of license conditions by the access services licensee, a provision was made in Access Services License Agreements under Clause 10.2(ii) so that the Licensor may also impose a financial penalty not exceeding ₹ 50 crore for violation of terms and conditions of licence agreement. The power to impose penalty was derived from the

words “on such conditions and in consideration of such payments as it thinks fit” under section 4 of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

M/s Dishnet Wireless Ltd. in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 422 of 2012 has challenged the above mentioned provisions of the licence agreement in the Hon’ble High Court of Tripura at Agartala. The Hon’ble High Court in its order dated 08.01.2016 had held that aforesaid clause 10.2(ii) of the licence agreement is opposed to the public policy, ultra vires and against the statutory provisions. Further, the Hon’ble High Court has ordered that financial penalty clause 10.2(ii) and all consequential instructions emanating from this clause as unenforceable, inoperative and void.

The department has filed an appeal against the said judgement of High Court of Tripura and the matter is *sub-judice*. As such, the department sought opinion of Learned Attorney General on the issue of powers to impose financial penalty on various telecom service providers for violation of terms and conditions of license agreement in accordance with the TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) recommendations dated 21.10.2016.

Vide his opinion dated 23.12.2016, Learned Attorney General has opined that the order of High Court of Tripura is confined to the specific case and facts of M/s Dishnet Wireless Limited and does not have any application to the case in hand or all cases which may arise in future. Further, the Department can issue a show cause notice for imposing a financial penalty and impose financial penalty on the service providers.

(b) No Sir, the department constituted a Departmental Committee on 18th November, 2016 to examine the TRAI recommendations dated 21.10.16 in the light of license conditions, provisions of TRAI Act including regulations and rules made thereunder, Indian Telegraph Act as well as various jurisprudence on such matters.

Call drop

223. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has finally accepted that it is not possible to curb call drops completely;

(b) whether it is also a fact that call drop is a global phenomenon; and

(c) whether Government and TRAI are taking all possible steps with the help of telecom operators to address the problem of call drop and bring it down within the permissible limit, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (c) Sir, the dropping of calls in wireless network is a world-wide phenomenon and happens in every wireless network due to various reasons including poor radio coverage, radio interference, loading of available spectrum, change in pattern of traffic, shutdown of sites due to power failures etc.; however, both the Government and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) are taking all possible steps and pursuing with the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) to address the problem of call drop and bring it down within the permissible limit.

TRAI monitors the performance of service providers through quarterly performance monitoring reports and publishes the same on its website www.trai.gov.in. From analysis of the quarterly performance monitoring reports of September 2015, December, 2015, March, 2016 and June 2016 available on TRAI website, it has been noticed that there has been consistent improvement in the performance of service providers in meeting the benchmark for call drop parameters.

For addressing call drop issue, TRAI also regularly undertakes the drive tests of mobile networks in select cities; highways and railway routes to assess the Quality of Service and coverage around the areas covered in the drive test routes. The results of drive tests are shared with the service providers for improving Quality of Service and coverage in the areas identified in the Drive Tests. Detailed reports of these Independent Drive Tests are also published on TRAI's website www.trai.gov.in under Head - "Notification" Sub-Head - "RF Drive Test Portal – Reports".

TRAI imposes financial disincentives for non-compliance with the benchmarks for Quality of Service parameters including call drops. The details of financial disincentives imposed on the Cellular Service Telecom providers (2G and 3G) for non-compliance with the Quality of Service Benchmarks are given below:

	Total ₹ (in lakhs)
2G Services	
Aircel	302.50
Bharti Airtel	40.00
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL)	227.00
Idea	25.50
Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.	1.50
Reliance Com	132.50
Reliance Telecom	32.00
Sistema	3.00

	Total ₹ (in lakhs)
2G Services	
Tata	89.00
Telewings	13.50
Vodafone	84.00
TOTAL	950.50
3G Services	
Aircel	156.50
BSNL	70.00
Vodafone	2.50
TOTAL	229.00

Sir, the Government is also constantly monitoring the progress of telecom operators in respect of addressing the call drop issue and periodic review meetings are held in this regard. During the review, the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have reported that they have already installed more than 1,60,000 additional BTSs (Base Transceiver Stations) across the country during 6½ month period from 15th June, 2016 to 31st December, 2016 and further plan to install about 1,10,000 additional BTSs across the country up to 31st March, 2017. The TSPs have also informed that about 4,97,000 BTSs have been optimized for improvement in Network Performance from June 2015 onwards and in addition, frequency re-planning done for more than 4,25,000 BTSs for handling interference issues.

In addition to the above, for obtaining direct feedback from subscribers, an IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System) has been launched by Department of Telecommunications on 23.12.2016 in Delhi, Mumbai, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and Goa. It has been extended to all the States on 12.01.2017 except Punjab and Manipur which shall also be covered after elections in these States. The system automatically calls the subscribers, with Calling Line Identification (CLI) number 1955 on random basis to get feedback about problem of call drop and its location. During first three weeks (23 December, 2016 to 14 January, 2017) about 2 lakh IVRS calls have been answered by unique subscribers, out of which, about 16% (33,598) participated in the survey. The feedback so received has been forwarded to TSPs for necessary corrective action.

Growth of mobile subscriber base post demonetization

224. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that demonetization has affected the growth of mobile subscriber base, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that demonetization has cut mobile phone growth forecast, as per study of a research firm in the field of telecommunications, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) do not foresee any link between demonetization and growth of mobile subscriber base. As such, DoT will not comment on any study by any research firm in this regard.

Recovery of dues from telecos

225. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to recover the dues from telecom companies, which misreported their income and paid less amount to Government, as indicated by CAG, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has any plans to identify such type of mis-reporting by companies in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes Sir, Department of Telecom has issued demand-cum-show cause notices to six private telecom companies for a total amount of ₹ 29474 crore on account of License Fee (LF); taking into account CAG Report No. 4 of 2016, terms and conditions of license agreement, status of litigation etc.

(b) Yes Sir, the special audit has been ordered by the Department of Telecom for three Financial Years *i.e.* 2008-09 to 2010-11 of six major Telecom Service Providers.

BSNL towers in Rajasthan

†226. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the district-wise number of BSNL towers in Rajasthan along with the number of towers non-operational and by when these towers would start working; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether BSNL proposes to install new towers, if so, the number of towers proposed to be installed in Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) A total of 3911 towers of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) are working in the State of Rajasthan. District-wise details of these towers is given in the Statement (*See below*). Out of these 3911 towers 182 towers are non-operational. These towers shall start working on availability of equipment and resolution of various public land disputes.

(b) BSNL has plans to install 1744 number of BTSs (Base Transceiver Stations) at various sites for future expansion of GSM (Global System for Mobile communication) projects in Rajasthan Telecom Circle based on techno commercial feasibility.

Statement

District-wise Details of Numbers of BTSs installed in Rajasthan circle

Sl. No.	Name of District under Rajasthan Telecom Circle	Total towers
1.	Ajmer	171
2.	Alwar	159
3.	Banswara	55
4.	Baran	64
5.	Barmer	136
6.	Bharatpur	98
7.	Bhilwara	148
8.	Bikaner	191
9.	Bundi	68
10.	Chittaurgarh	98
11.	Churu	107
12.	Dausa	62
13.	Dhaulpur	31
14.	Dungarpur	48
15.	Ganganagar	110
16.	Hanumangarh	106
17.	Jaipur	437
18.	Jaisalmer	78

Sl. No.	Name of District under Rajasthan Telecom Circle	Total towers
19.	Jalor	92
20.	Jhalawar	61
21.	Jhunjhunun	119
22.	Jodhpur	293
23.	Karauli	73
24.	Kota	123
25.	Nagaur	195
26.	Pali	139
27.	Pratapgarh	27
28.	Rajsamand	60
29.	Sawai Madhopur	88
30.	Sikar	156
31.	Sirohi	66
32.	Tonk	70
33.	Udaipur	182
GRAND TOTAL		3911

Distribution of foodgrain under TPDS

†227. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there were lots of discrepancies and irregularities in the process of identification of poor beneficiaries under Targeted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS) that have been completely resolved now, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether foodgrain is being distributed to all the poor beneficiaries of TPDS without any discrepancy or irregularity, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. The operational responsibilities

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

for allocation and distribution of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Governments.

The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) has been notified which provides for all India coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population of the country for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains. Corresponding to above coverage, State/UT-wise coverage for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains was determined by the then Planning Commission. Total 81,34,91,135 number of beneficiaries under NFSA/Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) are to be identified by respective State/UT Governments and State/UT-wise number of beneficiaries are fixed.

TPDS (Control) Order, 2015 and PDS (Control) Order, 2001, stipulate that State/UT Governments are required to review the lists of beneficiaries every year for the purpose of deletion of ineligible families and inclusion of eligible families. State/UT Governments have been requested from time to time to carry out drives for reviewing the list of beneficiaries under TPDS. The exercise of deletion of bogus/ineligible cards and inclusion of eligible families is a continuous process and State/UT Governments are to periodically carry out the same.

As per the information received from State/UT Governments, as a result of the continuous exercise of reviewing the list of Ration Cards, a total of 2.33 crores ration cards have been deleted during the period 2013 to 2016 [upto 15.11.2016].

As and when complaints are received by the Government from individuals and organizations as well as through press reports, these are referred to the State/UT Governments for inquiry and appropriate action.

To prevent the violation of provisions of TPDS [Control] Order 2015 and NFSA 2013, the Department of Food and Public Distribution is implementing a Plan Scheme on 'End-to-end Computerisation of TPDS Operations' under Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) on cost sharing basis with the States/UTs. The Scheme comprises of activities namely, digitization of ration cards/beneficiary and other databases, computerisation of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals and grievance redressal mechanisms and installation of ePoS devices at Fair Price Shops and issuance of foodgrains through biometric authentication. Besides above, all States/UTs have been also requested to seed the Aadhaar numbers in Ration Card database. The scheme will enable removal of bogus/ineligible ration cards and better targeting of food subsidy, facilitate availability of foodgrains to intended beneficiaries

at Fair Price Shops (FPS), check leakages and diversions etc. As on date 24.01.2017, 100% digitization of ration cards and 72.97% seeding of Aadhaar has been achieved and 1.78 lakh ePOS are currently operating at Fair Price Shops.

Wastage of onion, tomato and potatoes due to lack of storage capacity

†228. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large quantities of onion, tomato and potatoes go waste every year for want of sufficient storage capacity due to which farmers don't get even the production cost, while at the same time prices of these vegetables become uncontrolled due to difficulty in supply, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government is going to introduce a new National cold storage policy for solving these problems, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) A study commissioned by Ministry of Food Processing Industries and carried out by Central Institute of Post-harvest Engineering and Technology (CIPHET), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), published in 2015, estimated that quantum of quantitative harvest and post harvest losses of were 8.20% for onion, 12.44% for tomato and 9.51% for potato.

No proposal for National cold storage policy is under consideration of this Department. However, to prevent wastage of vegetables, Government is implementing the following schemes for increasing storage capacity for perishable:

- (i) Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) of DAC&FW
- (ii) Integrated Cold Chain Scheme of MOFPI
- (iii) Scheme of Agricultural Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under Ministry of Commerce
- (iv) Scheme of National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) under DAC&FW
- (v) Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM)

Under these Schemes, financial assistance is provided to farmers/entrepreneurs for setting up cold storages/cold chain infrastructure.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Wastage of wheat and rice

229. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge volumes of wheat and rice stock get wasted on account of poor storage capacity, if so, the details thereof for the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the steps taken, during the last two years, to ensure that the wastage is reduced to the minimum and by when it is likely to be stopped completely?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) There is no report of huge damage to foodgrains due to shortage of storage facilities. Adequate storage capacity is available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Agencies for storage of Central Pool Stocks.

State-wise details of the foodgrains (wheat and rice) accrued as damaged/non-issuable due to various reasons *viz* long storage, storage pest's attack, leakages in godowns, natural calamities, negligence of concerned personnel, etc., during last three years are given in Statement-I (*See* below).

(b) The steps taken by FCI for safe storage and management of procured food grains to avoid damage are given in Statement-II (*See* below).

The Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) has also issued instruction to FCI and State Government agencies for the proper preservation of the Central Pool Stock of Foodgrains are given in Statement-III.

Statement-I

Region-wise and Commodity-wise (wheat and rice) stock accrued as non-issuable (damaged) in FCI for last three years

(Fig. in MTs)

Sl. No.	Regions	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
		Wheat	Rice	Wheat	Rice	Wheat	Rice
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Bihar	802.758	3106.65	8.67	694.98	21.891	24.5
2.	Jharkhand	617.562	4.53	0	2.67	0	0
3.	Odisha	159.41	925.38	3929.47	3179.339	18.804	7.14

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4.	West Bengal	7930.69	4609.16	60.72	59.77	0	12.4
5.	Assam	3.038	177.7	9.3	87.322	92.149	27.756
6.	NEF	477.557	1350.211	0	95.416	0.357	210.028
7.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	3.3	0	0	0	0
8.	Nagaland*	2.829	29.429	0	38	0	10.6
9.	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Delhi	34.328	0	2.591	0	15.56	0.491
11.	Haryana	0	0	0	0	0	0
12.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	952	5168	0	0
14.	Punjab	53.747	18.884	7.168	37.425	11.351	18.38
15.	Rajasthan	13.019	0	2.761	0	0.215	2.19
16.	Uttar Pradesh	941.332	168.24	301.924	20.11	50.021	66.047
17.	Uttarakhand	90.021	0	7.531	0	0	0
18.	Andhra Pradesh	246.939	228.57	48.826	2213.298	683.867	1518.357
19.	Kerala	58	297	62.698	334.987	13.369	165.542
20.	Karnataka	8.481	37.155	697.597	50.228	4.85	30.376
21.	Tamil Nadu	54.803	238.983	220.072	156.914	15.04	15.331
22.	Gujarat	405.453	38.505	192.588	2.658	14.999	0.617
23.	Maharashtra	1178.1	56	35.339	68.642	56.347	0
24.	Madhya Pradesh	54.077	22.865	0	80.183	0	0
25.	Chhattisgarh	197.297	53.452	16.421	1.6	6.252	0.857
TOTAL		13329.441	11366.014	6555.684	12291.542	1005.072	2110.612

*N&M for 2013-14.

Statement-II*Steps taken by FCI for safe storage and management of
procured foodgrains to avoid damage*

Before the commencement of Rabi and Kharif Marketing Seasons, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India issues uniform specifications for procurement of foodgrains for the Central Pool. These uniform specifications are circulated to F.C.I.

and all State Government's/Agencies with instructions to ensure that foodgrains are procured strictly in accordance with the uniform specifications.

2. Foodgrains procured by F.C.I. and State Government's./Agencies are stored in covered godowns as well as in CAP (cover and plinth).

3. During storage, the following steps are taken for safe storage and preservations of foodgrains:—

- (i) All godowns are constructed as per specifications.
- (ii) Foodgrains are stored by adopting proper scientific code of storage practices.
- (iii) Adequate dunnage materials such as wooden crates, bamboo mats, polythene sheets are used to check migration of moisture from the floor to the foodgrains.
- (iv) Fumigation covers, nylon ropes, nets and insecticides for control of stored grain insect pests are provided in all the godowns.
- (v) Prophylactic (spraying of insecticides) and curative treatments (fumigation) are carried out regularly and timely in godowns for the control of stored grain insect pests.
- (vi) Effective rat control measures, both in covered godowns as well as in CAP storage are used.
- (vii) Foodgrains in 'Cover and Plinth' (CAP) storage are stored on elevated plinths and wooden crates are used as dunnage material. Stacks are properly covered with specifically fabricated low-density black polythene water-proof covers and tied with nylon ropes/nets.
- (viii) Regular periodic inspections of the stocks/godowns are undertaken by qualified and trained staff and all senior officers. The health of the foodgrains is monitored at regular intervals by a system of checks and super checks at different levels. Following Checks and Super checks are conducted in the godowns by FCI to ensure proper preservation of foodgrains in the storage.
 - (a) Fortnightly inspection of stocks on 100% basis by Technical Assistant.
 - (b) Monthly inspection by Manager (QC)
 - (c) Quarterly inspection by AGM (QC)
 - (d) Super Checks by Regional, Zonal and FCI Hqrs Squads.

- (ix) The principle of “First in First Out” (FIFO) is followed to the extent possible so as to avoid longer storage of foodgrains in godowns.
- (x) Only covered rail wagons are used for movement of foodgrains so as to avoid damage during transit.
- (xi) Damage Monitoring Cells have been set up at District, Regional and Zonal levels to regularly monitor quality of stocks and reduce damages.

Statement-III

Details of precautionary and remedial steps that are mandated to be followed by FCI and State Government agencies for proper preservation of Central Pool Stocks of foodgrains

- (i) All godowns are to be constructed as per specifications.
- (ii) Foodgrains are to be stored by adopting proper scientific code of storage practices.
- (iii) Adequate dunnage materials such as wooden crates, bamboo mats, polythene sheets are to be used to check migration of moisture from the floor to the foodgrains.
- (iv) Fumigation covers, nylon ropes, nets and insecticides for control of stored grain insect pests are to be provided in all the godowns.
- (v) Prophylactic (spraying of insecticides) and curative treatments (fumigation) are to be carried out regularly and timely in godowns for the control of stored grain insect pests.
- (vi) Effective rat control measures, both in covered godowns as well as in CAP storage are to be used.
- (vii) Foodgrains in ‘Cover and Plinth’ (CAP) storage are to be stored on elevated plinths and wooden crates are to be used as dunnage material. Stacks are to be properly covered with specifically fabricated low-density black polythene water-proof covers and tied with nylon ropes/nets.
- (viii) Regular periodic inspections of the stocks/godowns are to be undertaken by qualified and trained staff and all senior officers.
- (ix) The principle of “First in First Out” (FIFO) is to be followed to the extent possible so as to avoid longer storage of foodgrains in godowns.
- (x) Only covered rail wagons are to be used for movement of foodgrains so as to avoid damage during transit.

Inclusion of AAY cardholders in food security law

†230. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that only AAY cardholders have been included under the ambit of food security law, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (b) if not, the details of those who are included under the food security law; and
- (c) the details of existing number of APL, BPL and AAY cardholders in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage of upto 75% of rural and 50% of urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains. Coverage under the Act is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) to the extent specified by the Central Government and the remaining households as priority households to be identified by the State Governments/ Union Territories (UT) Administrations as per criteria evolved by them, within the coverage determined for the State/UT.

(c) There are no BPL and APL categories under NFSA. As stated above, coverage under the Act is under two categories. Households covered under AAY are entitled to receive 35 kg of foodgrains per household per month at ₹ 1/2/3 per kg for coarsegrains/wheat/rice respectively, under the Act. The priority households are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month at the above prices. The Act is being implemented in all the States/UTs and covers 2.36 crore AAY households and 70.57 crore persons belonging to priority households.

Achieving “Zero Hunger” target

231. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether eminent agriculturists have urged the Government to review the country's food policy, especially the distribution system, to achieve Zero Hunger across the country, if so, the details thereof and the response of Government thereto; and
- (b) whether people living in rural areas have to depend on the Public Distribution System due to fluctuation in the environmental conditions of the country such as severe heat, rains and drought?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Food Security is based on continuous reforms of Public Distribution System, effective storage of foodgrains and a sustained effort to improve agricultural productivity.

With an objective to provide food and nutritional security to the people of the country at affordable prices, Government of India enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA) which came into effect on 5th July, 2013. It provides coverage of population upto 75% in rural areas and 50% in urban areas, thereby covering 2/3rd population of the country. Under the Act, foodgrains are allocated to the States/Union Territories (UTs) @ 5 kg per person per month belonging to priority category and 35 kg per family per month for Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families at subsidized prices of ₹ 1 per kg, ₹ 2 per kg and ₹ 3 per kg for coarse grains, wheat and rice respectively. The Act also has special focus on nutritional support to women and children upto 14 years of age, pregnant women and lactating mothers who are entitled to meals as per nutritional norms. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are also entitled to receive maternity benefit of not less than ₹ 6000. Apart from this, the Government has been providing food grains at subsidized prices to the targeted population under various Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) such as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls, Annapurna Scheme, etc.

The Government also allocates additional foodgrains at subsidized prices for distribution to the people affected by natural calamities like drought; flood etc. on request of the concerned States/UTs.

To meet the distributional requirement of foodgrains under TPDS/OWS and to maintain operational stock for this purpose in sustained manner for better food management, the Government has formulated foodgrain stocking norms.

The Government has prioritized the development of technology such as the unique identity number in order to tackle misuses of the system and effective implementation of the scheme. Availability of PDS documents in the public domain, introduction of computerized records, biometrics and smart cards are being developed for enabling monitoring and evaluation. Under Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) Government has approved a Plan Scheme on End-to-End Computerization of TPDS Operations to make Food and Public Distribution System more transparent. The component-I of the Scheme comprises of activities namely digitization of ration cards/beneficiary and other database, computerization of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals and grievance redressal mechanism, etc.

Public Distribution System plays a critical role in supplementing access to staple food, especially to poor households. In an unforeseen event of natural calamity, dependence on PDS increases if the supply of foodgrains falls below the requirement.

Protection of consumer rights under e-commerce

232. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE:

SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the consumer rights and protection with respect to the e-commerce, are not effectively being dealt within the existing Consumer Protection Act;

(b) if so, the details in this regard along with the measures taken by Government to protect the rights of e-consumers; and

(c) how Government is planning to address the issues such as the place of business, jurisdiction, non-availability of common dispute resolution system, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 covers all goods and services and all modes of transaction including e-commerce. Under the provisions of the Act, a three tier quasi-judicial mechanism has been set up at the District, State and National levels to provide simple, speedy and inexpensive resolution to consumer disputes. In addition, the Department of Consumer Affairs has been operating a National Consumer Helpline through the Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration to empower and educate the consumers about their rights and responsibilities and to redress the consumer grievances. The Department has also supported a project of the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru for setting up of Online Consumer Mediation Centre (OCMC) for resolving consumer disputes, especially relating to e-commerce transactions.

(c) Keeping in view the changes in the market and the rapid development of e-commerce leading to new challenges for the consumers, the existing Consumer Protection Act is being amended providing, *inter alia*, for provisions for regulating e-commerce. The Consumer Protection Bill, 2015, already introduced in Parliament, provides for:—

- (i) Setting up of a Central Consumer Protection Authority to protect the rights of the consumers and to prevent unfair trade practices including initiating class action;

- (ii) Provision for mediation as an Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism;
- (iii) Provision for product liability action to make manufacturers liable for injury caused from unsafe products; and
- (iv) Simplification of consumer dispute adjudication process in the consumer fora which include, among others, filing complaints in consumer fora that have jurisdiction over the place of residence of the complainant.

Lack of storage facilities

†233. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of foodgrains get rotten due to lack of storage facilities in the country, including Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(b) the details of provision of funds for this purpose during the last three years and the amount spent out of this by December, 2016, State-wise; and

(c) the provision of funds made by Government for warehouses in 2017-18 Budget and the steps taken for suitable storage of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) There is no report of damage to huge quantities of foodgrains due to shortage of storage facilities. Adequate storage capacity is available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Agencies for storage of Central pool stocks.

State-wise details of the foodgrains accrued as damaged/non-issuable in FCI including Maharashtra during last three years and current year are given in Statement-I (*See below*).

A quantity of 7942.008 MT had become non-issuable during 2016-17 (upto Dec'16) in Maharashtra region due to negligence in handling and a claim of ₹ 22.29 crores has been recovered from the concerned agency.

(b) Department of Food and PD is implementing Plan Scheme 'Construction of Storage Godowns' under which the provision of fund allocated/released/utilized State-wise, during the last three years and current financial year (by December, 2016) is given in Statement-II (*See below*).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) ₹ 60.00 crores has been projected in budget 2017-18 for 'Construction of Storage godowns by FCI (₹ 47.00 crores) and State Government (₹ 13.00 crores) in North East Region'.

Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) projected an outlay of ₹ 108.00 crores for enhancing storage capacity from its own sources.

Steps taken for suitable storage of food grains is given in Statement-III. [Refer to the Statement appended to USQ No. 229 part (b) Statement-III].

Statement-I

Region-wise foodgrains stock accrued as non-issuable (damaged) in FCI for last three years and current year

(Figs. in MTs)

Sl. No.	Region	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (upto 1.01.2017)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Bihar	3909.408	703.65	46.391	0
2.	Jharkhand	622.092	2.67	0	0
3.	Odisha	1084.79	7108.817	25.944	1.361
4.	West Bengal	12539.85	120.49	12.4	0
5.	Assam	180.738	96.622	119.905	205.161
6.	NEF	1827.768	95.416	210.385	21.458
7.	Arunachal Pradesh	3.3	0	0	0
8.	Nagaland	32.258	38	10.6	3
9.	Manipur	0	0	0	0
10.	Delhi	34.328	2.591	16.051	11.924
11.	Haryana	0	0	0	0
12.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	0	6120	0	0
14.	Punjab	72.631	44.593	29.731	8.488
15.	Rajasthan	13.019	2.761	2.405	124.8
16.	Uttar Pradesh	1109.572	322.034	116.068	46.357
17.	Uttarakhand	90.021	7.531	0	0
18.	Andhra Pradesh	475.509	2262.124	2202.224	4.530

1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	Kerala	355	397.685	178.911	88.142
20.	Karnataka	45.636	747.825	35.226	9.281
21.	Tamil Nadu	293.786	376.986	30.371	53.169
22.	Gujarat	443.958	195.246	15.616	118.045
23.	Maharashtra	1234.1	103.981	56.347	7942.008
24.	Madhya Pradesh	76.942	80.183	0	0
25.	Chhattisgarh	250.749	18.021	7.109	6.213
TOTAL		24695.455	18847.226	3115.684	8643.937

Statement-II

Details of funds allocated/released/utilized for construction of godowns under plan scheme State/UT-wise during last three years and current year in the Twelfth FYP

A. Funds allocated to North East States

(Fig in ₹ crores)

Sl. No.	Funds allocated	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (upto Dec'16)	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Unspent funds available from previous year	42.76	11.82	7.18	38.48	—
2.	Funds allocated/released by Government of India	—	71.84	67.70	34.00	173.54

State-wise funds utilized against released in respect of North East regions

1.	Assam	15.83	59.74	23.25	30.12	128.94
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	4.31	6.69	3.94	0.32	15.26
3.	Manipur	1.41	0.19	0.63	3.22	5.95
4.	Meghalaya	2.65	0.91	0.54	—	4.10
5.	Mizoram	—	—	—	—	0
6.	Nagaland	3.69	6.95	4.90	0.91	16.45
7.	Sikkim	0.31	—	—	—	0.31
8.	Tripura	2.74	2.00	3.14	0.21	8.09
TOTAL expenditure		30.94	76.48	36.40	34.78	179.10

B. Funds allocated to other than North East States

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Unspent funds available from previous year	17.42	9.40	23.41	22.50	—
2.	Funds allocated/released by Government of India	3.00	15.00	—	—	18.00
State-wise funds utilized against released in respect of other than North East Regions						
1.	Odisha	4.54	—	—	—	4.54
2.	Kerala	6.48	0.99	0.91	0.84	9.22
3.	Himachal Pradesh	—	—	—	—	0
TOTAL expenditure		11.02	0.99	0.91	0.84	13.76

Availability of essential commodities at affordable prices

†234. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of essential commodities along with sugar, edible oil, cereals and vegetables are rising continuously inspite of the efforts made by Government for controlling their prices due to which the difference between inflation rate and per capita income is increasing considerably; and

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to provide more powers to pricing regulatory authority and take steps to improve the availability of essential commodities and control their prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Over the last six months, all India average retail prices of potato, onion and tomato in vegetables; groundnut oil and sunflower oil in edible oils have declined. While prices of rice and wheat in cereals; mustard, vanaspati, soya and palm oil in edible oil; and, sugar has increased. Details are given in the Statement (*See below*). There is no price regulatory authority for these essential food items. However, prices and availability of these items are reviewed regularly at high level Committees such as Committee of Secretaries (CoS) headed by Cabinet Secretary and Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) comprising of various stakeholders for timely and appropriate policy intervention.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

As per the Central Statistics Office (CSO) estimates, per capita income at constant prices, which is adjusted for inflation, has increased over last three years.

Statement

All India Average Retail Prices of Select Essential Food items

Price: ₹/Kg.

Commodities	Price As On	6 Months Ago	% Variation over 6 Months
	30.01.2017	30.07.2016	
Rice	28.66	27.18	5.45
Wheat	24.63	23.27	5.84
Sugar	41.48	40.08	3.49
Groundnut Oil (Packed)	135.07	135.32	-0.18
Mustard Oil (Packed)	110.8	108.51	2.11
Vanaspati (Packed)	77.5	74.67	3.79
Soya Oil (Packed)	86.51	82.69	4.62
Sunflower Oil (Packed)	94.39	94.58	-0.2
Palm Oil (Packed)	71.51	68.9	3.79
Potato	14.3	22.88	-37.5
Onion	14.99	16.68	-10.13
Tomato	15.15	35.72	-57.59

Source: State Civil Supplies Departments.

Import of wheat

235. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has relaxed wheat import norms, if so, the details thereof indicating the increased quantum of imports allowed during the current year in comparison to the previous years; and

(b) whether the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is holding surplus stock of 29 million tonnes of wheat as against its obligation of 20 million tonnes under the Public Distribution System during the current year, if so, the details thereof along with the fate of remaining stock in view of import of cheaper wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) The Customs duty on import has been reduced from 25% to 10% with effect 23rd September, 2016 and from 10% to Zero with effect from 8th December, 2016 to ensure availability of adequate wheat in the country and to ease pressure on prices.

(b) Food Corporation of India has only 9.47 lakh tonnes surplus stock over and above the stocking norms of 128 lakh tonnes as on 1st January, 2017. This surplus stock is being issued under Open Market sales scheme to keep the domestic price under check.

Disposal of non-issuable foodgrains

236. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large quantity of foodgrains procured by FCI has become non-issuable due to various reasons, including negligence in handling, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government is taking proper precautions in disposing these foodgrains to avoid re-circulation; and

(c) the quantity of foodgrains declared non-issuable and disposed of during the last five years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) Adequate precautions are taken to minimize damage of foodgrains. However some quantity becomes Non-issuable due to various reasons viz., storage pest's attack, leakages in godowns, exposure to rains, floods, negligence on the part of concerned persons in taking precautionary measures. A quantity of 7942.008 MT had become non-issuable during 2016-17 (upto Dec'16) in Maharashtra region due to negligence in handling and a claim of ₹ 22.29 crores has been recovered from the concerned agency.

Statement showing stocks accrued as damaged/non-issuable due to various reasons during last three years is given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

(b) Yes Sir, Parties registered with FCI for purchase of Non-Issuable (damaged) foodgrains are eligible to participate in the tender for sale of Non-Issuable (damaged) foodgrains floated by the FCI. In order to avoid misuse/re-circulation of damaged foodgrains stocks by the buyers, it is mandatory for the tenderers to give an undertaking

for proper utilization of the damaged foodgrains purchased from FCI. Failure on the part of the buyer to render full and satisfactory accounts of utilization of the damaged stocks and below 'D' category wheat will constitute a breach of the contract and in such an event the security deposit of the buyer is forfeited without prejudice to the Right of the Food Corporation of India to initiate legal proceedings, both civil and criminal against the buyer. It is mandatory for the buyers to give full information about the movement of damaged foodgrains from FCI to the place of utilization/manufacture/processing etc. to Area Office/Regional Office/Zonal Office, FCI as well as the Collector of the District for exercising proper vigilance over their movements and proper utilization thereof, as per disposal instructions given in the Statement-II (See below).

(c) Statement showing foodgrains stocks accrued as Non-issuable (damaged) and disposal thereof with FCI w.e.f 2011-12 to 2015-16 is given in the Statement-III.

Statement-I

*Reasons for accrual of damaged foodgrains in
FCI during last two years and current year*

(Figs. in MTs)

Reasons	Quantity		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (upto 1.1.17)
1. Natural Calamities			
(i) Rain	130	119	127
(ii) Flood	6144	0	204
(iii) Cyclone	9251	2039	0
TOTAL	15525	2158	331
2. Prolonged Storage	318	31	30
3. Quality Complaints	551	354	53
4. Transit Damage	516	416	85
5. Negligence	1746	79	7998
6. Other	191	77	147
TOTAL	3322	957	8313
GRAND TOTAL	18847	3115	8644

Statement-II*Procedure for disposal of non-issuable (damaged) foodgrains in FCI*

On identification of damaged foodgrains by concerned Technical Assistant at the depot, the following procedure of categorization/disposal are followed:

A. Categorization

1. The three tier categorization at Depot level, Regional level, Zonal level shall be as under:
 - (a) On identification/categorization of damaged foodgrains by TA/M (QC) at the depot, 100% stock should be further categorized by the District Categorization Committee (DCC) consisting of Area Manager, M (QC), District Lab, M (QC) of concerned depot and M (Fin./ACs) within 15 days from the date of detection/categorization of damaged foodgrains at depot. If the lot size is 5 MT or less, categorization is to be done by DCC and shall be certified by AGM (QC) concerned.
 - (b) Regional Categorization Committee (RCC) consisting of AGM (QC), AGM (Fin./A/Cs) of Regional Office concerned and Area Manager/AGM (QC) of concerned District will test check 20% of the total stock categorized by the DCC. If the quantity is more than 5 MT and upto 50 MT, to be categorized by RCC.
 - (c) Zonal Categorization Committee (ZCC) consisting of QC officers nominated by ED (Zone), AGM (QC) of R.O. and AGM (QC)/Area Manager of the concerned District will test check 5% of the stocks categorized by the DCC within 15 days from the receipt of the report from GM (Region) concerned. If the quantity is more than 50 MT and upto 1000 MT, to be categorized by ZCC.
 - (d) RCC/ZCC will test check and submit the report with specific recommendations to the General Manager (Region), through their respective offices.
 - (e) The categorization of damaged foodgrains will be deemed/treated as final only on the receipt of categorization reports of RCC and ZCC by the General Manager (Region).
2. F.C.I. Headquarters shall depute Vigilance Squad in case accrual of damaged foodgrain is more than 1,000 MT in a particular Region.

Categorization of damaged foodgrains is based on the % of sound grain.

Category	: % age of sound grains other than foreign matter and damaged foodgrains
Feed-I	: 85% to less than 94% (in wheat)/95% (in rice)
Feed-II	: 70% to less than 85%
Feed-III	: 55% to less than 70%
Industrial Use	: 30% to less than 55%
Manure Use	: 10% to less than 30%
Dumping	: less than 10% (to be offered as Manure before dumping)

B. Disposal of Damaged Foodgrains:

- (i) GM (Region) is competent Authority for disposal of damaged foodgrains for quantity where the price received in the tender/auction is above the reserve price.
- (ii) Wherever, the rates of damaged foodgrains received in tender inquiry/auction are below the reserve price, such rates shall invariably be approved by the next higher authority *i.e.* Executive Director (Zone).
- (iii) GM (Region) can dispose the damaged foodgrain under Rate Running Contract (RRC) on accrual. However, if at any given time accrual is more than 500 MT, it is to be disposed off through tenders only.
- (iv) FCI has to confirm that the parties involving tender enquiry including State Departments and Agencies have feed stock manufacturing plants.
- (v) Besides above, Executive Director (Zone) shall be competent to take decision on extension of period for lifting of stocks by Registered Parties/RCC holders beyond stipulated period of 30 days provided the concerned parties have deposited the requisite cost of damaged foodgrains as per terms and conditions of the contract. However, this should be decided on merit of each case not in routine.
- (vi) Wherever, the rates of damaged foodgrains received in tender inquiry/auction are below the reserve price, such rates shall invariably be approved by the next higher authority *i.e.* Executive Director (Zone).

C. Reserve Prices

The Reserve Price of damaged foodgrain is as under:—

- (i) Feed-I - 60% of MSP of the Crop Year for Wheat.
60% of derived MSP of the Crop Year for Rice.
- (ii) Feed-II - 50% of MSP of the Crop Year for Wheat.
50% of derived MSP of the Crop Year for Rice.
- (iii) Feed-III - 40% of MSP of the Crop Year for Wheat.
40% of derived MSP of the Crop Year for Rice.
- (iv) Industrial Use - 30% of MSP of the Crop Year for Wheat.
30% of derived MSP of the Crop Year for Rice.
- (v) Manure - 10% of MSP of the Crop Year for Wheat.
10% of derived MSP of the Crop Year for Rice.

Statement-III

*Region-wise foodgrains stock accrued as non-issuable (damaged)
and its sales/disposal in FCI for last five years*

(Fig. in MTs)

Sl. No.	Regions	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1.	Bihar	0	997.3	3909.408	703.65	46.391
2.	Jharkhand	29	3.43	622.092	2.67	0
3.	Odisha	36	1	1084.79	7108.817	25.944
4.	West Bengal	477	45	12539.85	120.49	12.4
5.	Assam	442	51.54	180.738	96.622	119.905
6.	NEF	0	195	1827.768	95.416	210.385
7.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	3.3	0	0
8.	Nagaland	0	0	32.258	38	10.6
9.	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Delhi	10.9	39.86	34.328	2.591	16.051
11.	Haryana	0	148.04	0	0	0
12.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	6120	0
14.	Punjab	37	123	72.631	44.593	29.731

Sl. No.	Regions	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
15.	Rajasthan	30	120.83	13.019	2.761	2.405
16.	Uttar Pradesh	258	18.3	1109.572	322.034	116.068
17.	Uttarakhand	72	221	90.021	7.531	0
18.	Andhra Pradesh	4.33	24.72	475.509	2262.124	2202.224
19.	Kerala	200	0	355	397.685	178.911
20.	Karnataka	0	141.76	45.636	747.825	35.226
21.	Tamil Nadu	29	749.66	293.786	376.986	30.371
22.	Gujarat	226	195	443.958	195.246	15.616
23.	Maharashtra	1473	61	1234.1	103.981	56.347
24.	Madhya Pradesh	0	3.02	76.942	80.183	0
25.	Chhattisgarh	13.78	8.98	250.749	18.021	7.109
TOTAL		3338.01	3148.44	24695.46	18847.23	3115.684
DISPOSAL/SALE*		1369.703	9684.383	15470.84	24521.99	3737.244

* As per audited accounts.

Allocation of foodgrains to Kerala

237. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the current allocation of foodgrains to Kerala by Food Corporation of India (FCI);

(b) the allocation of foodgrains, including ad-hoc allocation to Kerala before implementation of the National Food Security Act; and

(c) whether Government is considering additional allocation of foodgrains to Kerala to adjust the deficiency in supply of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) State of Kerala has implemented National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 w.e.f 1st November, 2016 onwards and is getting a monthly allocation of 68880.668 tons of rice and 16579.217 tons of wheat under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority category alongwith a tide over allocation of 33294.198 tons of rice (total-1,18,754.083 MT per month). The Tide Over allocation of 33294.198 tons per month is being made to protect the average annual offtake of foodgrains of last 3 years prior to the date when NFSA came into effect.

Before implementation of NFSA, State of Kerala has been getting following monthly allocation under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS):

Foodgrains	AAY	BPL	APL	Total
Rice	20855	26566	36056	83487
Wheat	0	6963	11777	18740
TOTAL	20855	33529	47833	102217

In addition, Kerala was also allocated additional quantity of foodgrains per month for Above Poverty Line (APL) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families during 2015-16 and till June, 2016 as under:

Category	Foodgrains per month (in tons)		
	Rice	Wheat	Total
Additional BPL allocation	7082	2849	9931
Additional APL allocation	15458	5049	20507

Consequent upon implementation of NFSA in Kerala *w.e.f* 1st November, 2016, a total annual allocation of 14.25 lakh MT of foodgrains to Kerala is being made covering 91.87 lakh NFSA beneficiaries in rural and 62.93 lakh NFSA beneficiaries in urban areas *i.e.* 154.80 lakh NFSA beneficiaries in Kerala, which is the maximum no. of accepted NFSA beneficiaries in the State of Kerala.

In case, the State Government requires any additional allocation of foodgrains for distribution, as per existing policy it can be made available by this Department at economic cost only subject to availability of foodgrains in the Central pool. The State Government can also participate in sale of foodgrains through auction under OMSS.

Availability of commodities under PDS

238. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to increase the quantity and number of items available through Public Distribution System (PDS) after demonetization to strengthen PDS and make better availability of commodities to public; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b)

No Sir, there is no such proposal at present. The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage of upto 75% of rural and 50% of urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains. No other item is included for distribution through PDS under NFSA. States/UTs are however free to distribute any other item out of their own resources.

Cashless transactions in ration shops

239. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is going to equip all ration shops for cashless transactions before March, 2017, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of plan of action since cashless payments are mandated only in 38,000 ration shops out of the total 5.27 lakh shops across the country; and

(c) whether any consultations have been held with State Governments in this regard, if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) This Department has prepared a detailed roadmap and an action plan along-with State-wise targets to implement the various modes of cashless transactions. However, complete roll out of the strategy for cashless mechanism depends on readiness of the States/UTs, availability of adequate infrastructure, status of financial inclusion, level of Aadhaar seeding, awareness level of beneficiaries and telecom coverage etc. Accordingly, all States/UTs Governments have been advised to adopt a phase-wise approach, starting with Metropolitan Cities, Municipal Corporations, Municipalities, District Headquarters and other urban areas where the conditions allow for an effective implementation and then eventually expanding it to semi-urban and rural areas.

(c) This Department had briefed all Food Secretaries of States/UTs through Video Conferencing to adopt various modes of cashless transactions at all Fair Price Shops. Secretary (F&PD) also shared roadmap with State-wise targets to all Chief Secretaries/Administrators. A national level Conference was also held on 19.01.2017 on 'PDS Reforms and Cashless Environment' with State Food Ministers and Secretaries of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs of all States/UTs at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. Hon'ble Food Ministers of all States/UTs have been requested to enable cashless transactions in all FPSs and to monitor the progress.

Digital Literacy Mission

240. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has launched Digital Literacy Mission for the rural people of the country with a view to make them digitally literate, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of institutes/labs functioning in the country as on date, State-wise; and

(c) whether any survey has been conducted to be shared with companies investing in startup projects to propagate digital literacy and if so, the details thereof, State-wise, including Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) Hon'ble Finance Minister, while presenting the Union Budget 2016-17, has announced to launch a new Digital Literacy Mission Scheme for rural India to cover around 6 crore additional households within the next three years. As a follow-up to this announcement, a new scheme to cover 6 crore rural households in consultation with various stakeholders is under formulation.

(b) The Government has implemented two digital literacy schemes viz. National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM) and Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (DISHA). The implementing agency for these schemes is CSC e-Governance Services India Limited (CSC-SPV). The State-wise details of training partner/training centers affiliated with CSC-SPV is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) has published the 71st Round Survey Report titled 'Social Consumption - Education Survey 2014', which *inter alia* covers IT Literacy. The report is available on the website of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation at <http://mail.mospi.gov.in/index.php/catalog/160>.

Statement

State-wise details of NDLM/DISHA Training Partners and Training Centers affiliated with CSC e-Governance Services India Limited (CSC-SPV)

Sl. No	State	Training Partner	Training Center
1.	Jharkhand	64	3604
2.	Nagaland	7	189

Sl. No	State	Training Partner	Training Center
3.	Assam	33	1796
4.	Mizoram	5	92
5.	Maharashtra	88	8416
6.	Chhattisgarh	43	3231
7.	Bihar	148	9176
8.	Manipur	9	478
9.	Goa	9	74
10.	Gujarat	73	6296
11.	Arunachal Pradesh	8	112
12.	Madhya Pradesh	211	7122
13.	Meghalaya	8	64
14.	Haryana	76	3652
15.	Uttar Pradesh	212	19405
16.	West Bengal	114	6508
17.	Tamil Nadu	40	3042
18.	Uttarakhand	59	2129
19.	Karnataka	50	3206
20.	Rajasthan	100	7111
21.	Himachal Pradesh	24	2007
22.	Odisha	53	3354
23.	Chandigarh	11	231
24.	Tripura	12	360
25.	Punjab	73	2489
26.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	2	10
27.	Andhra Pradesh	58	2920
28.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	2	1
29.	Daman and Diu	2	4
30.	Jammu and Kashmir	18	1075
31.	Kerala	16	1188
32.	Lakshadweep	1	1

Sl. No	State	Training Partner	Training Center
33.	Delhi	102	1635
34.	Puducherry	7	75
35.	Sikkim	7	170
36.	Telangana	60	2436
TOTAL		1805	103659

**Electronic system design and manufacturing incubation
centre in Odisha**

241. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal on Electronic System Design and Manufacturing incubation centre of Government of Odisha is pending with the Ministry; and

(b) by when the same will be approved to start the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) A proposal for setting up of Electronic System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) Incubation Centre at Bhubaneswar, Odisha by Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has been received by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) with a total outlay of ₹ 22.44 crore including Grant-in-Aid from MeitY for ₹ 11.22 crore.

The said proposal for setting up of ESDM Incubation Centre at Bhubaneswar, Odisha was examined by MeitY and clarifications on some of the observations in the proposal were sought from STPI. In response, the revised Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been received from STPI on 17th January, 2017 and is under examination.

Digi-Dhan Abhiyan

242 SHRI T. G. VENKATESH : Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has introduced Digi-Dhan Abhiyan programme recently with a view to increase the digital literacy among the public, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the programme has got the expected momentum among the public, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Government has taken up several initiatives under Digi-Dhan Abhiyan which includes the following:

- (i) **Digital Finance for Rural India: Creating Awareness and Access through CSCs:** Government approved a sub component named 'Digital Finance for Rural India. Creating Awareness and Access through CSCs' under the Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA) in November 2016 for conducting awareness sessions on digital finance options available for rural citizens as well as enabling various mechanisms of digital financial services such as Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD), Unified Payment Interface (UPI), Cards/ Point of Sales(PoS), Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AEPS) and eWallet etc. So far, 1.98 crore beneficiaries and 6.59 lakh merchants have been trained/enabled under this programme. Further, sensitization drives have been carried out at 650 Districts and 5,512 Blocks through out the country.
- (ii) A 24-hour TV channel named "DigiShala" and a website called "www.cashlessindia.gov.in", dedicated for facilitating awareness to citizens on cashless payment options and their use, have been launched on 9th December, 2016.
- (iii) **Digi-Dhan Melas:**
 - The Digi-Dhan Mela brings together various stakeholders of digital payment systems such as banks, e-wallet operators, telecom providers and institutions like Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), Common Services Centres (CSCs) and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to promote digital payments. The objective is to enable citizens and merchants to undertake real time digital transactions through the Digi-Dhan Bazaar and encourage them to use digital platforms for day to day transactions.
 - A Two day awareness camp 'Digi-Dhan Mela' was organised on 17th-18th December, 2016 at Major Dhyanchand National Stadium, Delhi, to mark the start of the urban campaign to promote digital payments. It primarily aimed at targeting the urban populace, supplementing the Rural Digital Financial Literacy Campaign led through Common Service Centres.
 - Lucky Grahak Yojana/ Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana: The Government has launched the Lucky Grahak Yojana for consumers and Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana for merchants on 25th December, 2016 at the Digi-Dhan Mela organized at Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi. These schemes provide daily and weekly awards to citizens and merchants for undertaking digital transactions made through Rupay cards, AEPS, UPI Apps and USSD.

The objective is to incentivise citizens and merchants to adopt digital payment platforms. NPCI is the designated implementing agency for the schemes. So far, 4.33 Lakh consumers and 28,000 merchants have been declared as winners under these schemes.

- The Digi-Dhan Melas are being organised in 100 cities till 14th April, 2017, which will be concluded with a mega draw. The overall coordination of the event is being done by the State Advisors of NITI Aayog and NPCI in collaboration with MeitY. MeitY has launched a website www.digidhan.mygov.in which provides the latest updates on demonetisation and the consumer and merchants can check the rewards under the LuckyGrahak and Digidhan Vypar Yojana.
 - So far, around 4.56 Lakh citizens/merchants have participated in Digi-Dhan Mela.
- (iv) **BHIM - Bharat Interface for Money:** Government has launched a new digital payment app named “BHIM-Bharat Interface for Money” at the Digi-Dhan Mela on 30th December, 2016 at the Talkatora Stadium, Delhi. BHIM App has been developed by NPCI. This is a unified app for UPI through which the users can make simple, easy and quick payment transactions using Unified Payments Interface (UPI). User can easily make direct bank to bank payments instantly and collect money using Mobile number; Aadhaar Number; Payment address (VPA–Virtual Private Address). BHIM App is having operational functionality of UPI on smartphones and also it could be accessed through *99# for feature phones users. So far, total transaction count in BHIM app is 16,56,750 and amount transacted through BHIM from 29th December, 2016 to 29th January, 2017 is ₹ 325.83 crore.
- (v) **Digital Payments Security Division in MeitY:** A separate Digital Payments Security Division has been set up in MeitY for handling cyber security incidents in digital payments. 17 advisories have been published by CERT-In since Nov 27, 2016 for security safeguards covering POS, Micro ATMs, Electronic Wallets, online banking, smart phones, unified payment interface, wireless access points/routers, mobile banking and cloud. Cyber Crisis Management Workshop and exercises have been carried out for banks, NPCI and Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT). A workshop on “Digital Payments Security in India” was conducted on 26th December, 2016 for Pre Payment Instruments (PPIs), Banks, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Reserve Bank of India (RBI) along with the participation of banking technology providers and consultants.

New APPS and digital services post demonetization

243. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of new apps and digital services developed so far in view of rising digital payments post demonetization;
- (b) how far these apps and digital services ensure cyber security;
- (c) whether wallets and mobile banking applications used in the country do not use hardware level security; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken in this regard to ensure online transactions to be more secure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) In order to enable digital payments by citizens, 30 banks have launched mobile app based on Unified Payment Interface (UPI). In addition, Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) has been developed by National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) for providing basic banking feature based on UPI. Various banks and entities authorized for providing Prepaid Payment Instruments are providing apps and digital services for digital payments.

(b) All authorised entities/banks issuing Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) in the country have been advised by the Reserve Bank of India to carry out audit by the empanelled auditors of Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) on a priority basis and take immediate steps thereafter to comply with the findings of the audit report and ensure implementation of security best practices. In addition, they have been advised to implement additional measures dynamically depending upon the risk perception or threats as they emerge.

In addition all organizations providing digital payment services have been mandated to report cyber security incidents to CERT-In expeditiously.

(c) and (d) Most of the UPI based apps are using device identifier and app binding feature to provide security control. Apart from audits and incident reporting, Government has taken various steps to enhance user awareness to ensure security of apps and digital services. These include:

- (i) Advisories have been issued regarding safeguards for users and institutions to secure digital payments.

- (ii) Cyber security awareness sessions have been conducted under the Digishala Awareness Campaign.
- (iii) Workshop held for banks and PPIs regarding security of digital payments systems.
- (iv) Security tips have been published for citizens to secure their mobile/smart phones.

Increase in cyber crimes

244. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the number of cyber crime cases in the country have increased four-fold in the last three years;
- (b) whether Government has any mechanism to guide and fund State Government to ensure security of digital Government data, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of steps Government has taken to guard against external cyber attacks; and
- (d) the details of money spent over past three years, State-wise, for improving the cyber security?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) With the proliferation of Information Technology and related services there is a rise in instances of cyber crimes in the country like elsewhere in the world:

- (i) As per the data maintained by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 5693, 9622 and 11592 cyber crime cases were registered during the years 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively.
- (ii) RBI has registered a total of 9500, 13083, 16468, and 8689 cases of frauds involving credit cards, ATM/debit cards and internet banking during the year 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 (upto December, 2016), respectively.
- (iii) CBI has registered a total of 93 cases during 2013–2016 under Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000.
- (iv) As per the information reported to and tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), a total no. of 44679, 49455 and 50362 cyber security incidents including phishing, scanning, malicious code, website intrusion, Denial of Service etc., were reported during the year 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively.

(b) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has well defined system/guidelines to support/fund State/UT Governments for their e-Governance initiatives under the Digital India Programme. The security of the overall system developed is an integral component of such e-Governance projects.

(c) Government has taken various steps in the form of legal framework, emergency response, awareness, training, and implementation of best practices to guard against external cyber-attacks. Such steps include:

- (i) The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 provides a comprehensive legal framework to address the issues connected with cyber crime, cyber attacks and security breaches of information technology infrastructure.
- (ii) Government is implementing a Framework for Enhancing Cyber Security, with a multi-layered approach for ensuring defence-in-depth and clear demarcation of responsibilities among the stakeholder organizations in the country.
- (iii) Government has established National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) as per the provisions of Section 70A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 for protection of Critical Information Infrastructure in the country.
- (iv) With respect to the banking sector, in order to focus more attention on IT related matters, Reserve Bank of India has set up a Cyber Security and IT Examination (CSITE) Cell within its Department of Banking Supervision in 2015. The Bank has issued a comprehensive circular on Cyber Security Framework in Banks on June 2, 2016 covering best practices pertaining to various aspects of cyber security. The circular requires banks to have among other things, a cyber-security policy, cyber crisis management plan, a gap assessment *vis-à-vis* the baseline requirements indicated in the circular, monitoring certain risk indicators in the area, report unusual cyber security incidents within 2 to 6 hours, ensure board involvement in the matter and robust vendor risk management. The progress of banks in scaling up their cyber security preparedness is monitored.
- (v) RBI carries out IT Examination of banks separately from the regular financial examination of banks from last year. This report has a special focus on cyber security. The reports have been issued to the banks for remedial action. RBI has also set up Cyber Crisis Management Group to address any major incidents reported including suggesting ways to respond and recover to/ from the incidents. Department of Banking

Supervision also conducts cyber security preparedness testing among banks on the basis of hypothetical scenarios with the help of CERT-In. RBI also has set up an IT subsidiary, which would focus, among other things, on cyber security within RBI as well as in regulated entities. The subsidiary is in the process of recruiting the experts.

- (vi) CERT-In issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats and countermeasures on regular basis. CERT-In has issued 372, 402 and 432 advisories during 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively. CERT-In has published guidelines for securing IT infrastructure, which are available on its website (www.certin.org.in). In order to detect variety of threats and imminent cyber attacks from outside the country, periodic scanning of cyber space is carried out.
- (vii) Government has formulated Crisis Management Plan for countering cyber attacks and cyber terrorism for implementation by all Ministries/ Departments of Central Government, State Governments and their organizations and critical sectors.
- (viii) Cyber security mock drills are being conducted regularly to enable assessment of cyber security posture and preparedness of organizations in Government and critical sectors. 11 such drills have so far been conducted by CERT-In where 110 organisations from different sectors such as Finance, Defence, Power, Telecom, Transport, Energy, Spaces and IT/ITeS participated.
- (ix) Government has established Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre to detect and clean infected systems in the country. The project is initiated in coordination with the Internet Service Providers and Industry.
- (x) Government is setting up National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC) to generate necessary situational awareness of existing and potential cyber security threats and enable timely information sharing for proactive, preventive and protective actions by individual entities.
- (xi) Cyber Crime Cells have been set up in all States and Union Territories for reporting and investigation of Cyber Crime cases.
- (xii) Government has set up cyber forensic training and investigation labs in the States of Kerala, Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Meghalaya, Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir for training of Law Enforcement and Judiciary in these States.
- (xiii) Industry associations such as Data Security Council of India (DSCI), NASSCOM, Cyber Forensic Labs, set up in certain States, have taken

up tasks of awareness creation and training programmes on Cyber Crime investigation. In academia National Law School, Bangalore and NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad is also engaged in conducting several awareness and training programmes on Cyber Laws and Cyber crimes for judicial officers.

- (xiv) A number of Cyber forensics tools for collection, analysis, presentation of the digital evidence have been developed indigenously and such tools are being used by Law Enforcement Agencies.
- (xv) CERT-In and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) are providing basic and advanced training to Law Enforcement Agencies, Forensic labs and judiciary on the procedures and methodology of collecting, analysing and presenting digital evidence.
- (xvi) Government has formulated a set of investigation manuals with procedures for Search, Seizure Analysis and Presentation of digital evidence in courts. The manuals have been circulated to Law Enforcement Agencies in all States.
- (xvii) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issues Circulars/advisories to all Commercial Banks on phishing attacks and preventive/detective measures to tackle phishing attacks. RBI also issues advisories relating to fictitious offers of funds transfer, remittance towards participation in lottery, money circulation schemes and other fictitious offers of cheap funds.
- (xviii) Government is implementing 'Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA)' Project to train professionals/Government officials and create mass information security awareness among citizens. The Project is implemented by 51 institutions across the country. 11,110 persons have been trained/undergoing training in various formal/non-formal courses focusing on Cyber Security till 2016. Through direct training programs 2,384 Government personnel have been trained. C-DAC Hyderabad has conducted 377 Awareness workshops for various user groups covering 42,379 participants from 22 States/UT till 2016.
- (xix) CERT-In is conducting cyber security trainings for IT/cyber security professionals including Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) of Government and critical sector organisations. 18 such training programs were conducted covering 580 participants during the year 2016. In addition a workshop on security of digital payments systems has been conducted for stakeholder organisations covering 110 participants.
- (xx) Currently 24 security auditing organizations are empanelled to support and audit implementation of Information Security Best Practices.

(xxi) NIC protects the cyber resources from possible compromises through a layered security approach in the form of practices, procedures and technologies that are put in place. NIC has deployed state-of-the-art security solutions including firewalls, intrusion prevention systems and anti-virus solution. Additionally, periodic security audits of resources are performed followed by subsequent hardening. These are complemented by round-the-clock monitoring of security events and remedial measures are carried out for solving the problems subsequently. A 24x7 security monitoring centre is in place at NIC for detecting and responding to security incidents. Restoration is done after detected incident is analysed and necessary remedial measures are taken.

(d) ₹ 500 crores has been allocated for Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) in the Twelfth Plan Period (2012-17) for Cyber Security Programme including Cyber Safety, Security and Surveillance, Cyber Crime Investigations and Cyber Forensics.

Legislation for protection of data and privacy

245. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of increasing cyber crimes involving breach of privacy and cheating, if so, the action taken in this regard; and

(b) whether there is any proposal to bring legislation regarding data protection and privacy in the digital domain, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) With the growth of technology and rise in usage of cyber space for businesses, the cyber crimes involving breach of privacy and cheating (such as phishing and identity theft, etc.) continue to occur in the country like elsewhere in the world. Cyber attacks such as phishing target users to trick them to divulge information such as online credentials:

- (i) RBI has registered a total of 9500, 13083, 16468, and 8689 cases of frauds involving credit cards, ATM / debit cards and internet banking during the year 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 (upto December 2016), respectively.
- (ii) As per the information reported to and tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) a total number of 1122, 534 and 757 phishing incidents were handled during the year, 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively.

- (iii) As per the data maintained by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 16 and 20 cases were registered under breach of confidentiality/privacy during the year 2014 and 2015, respectively and 1115 and 2255 cases were registered under Cheating involving computer as medium/target during the year 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Government has taken various steps in the form of legal framework, awareness, training, and implementation of best practices to address these issues. The steps include:

- (i) The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 provides a comprehensive legal framework to address the issues connected with cyber crime, cyber attacks and security breaches of information technology infrastructure.
- (ii) In order to focus more attention on IT related matters, Reserve Bank of India has set up a Cyber Security and IT Examination (CSITE) Cell within its Department of Banking Supervision in 2015. The Bank has issued a comprehensive circular on Cyber Security Framework in Banks on June 2, 2016 covering best practices pertaining to various aspects of cyber security. The circular requires banks to have among other things, a cyber-security policy, cyber crisis management plan, a gap assessment *vis-à-vis* the baseline requirements indicated in the circular, monitoring certain risk indicators in the area, report unusual cyber security incidents within 2 to 6 hours, ensure board involvement in the matter and robust vendor risk management. The progress of banks in scaling up their cyber security preparedness is monitored.
- (iii) RBI has been carrying out IT Examination of banks separately from the regular financial examination of banks. This report has a special focus on cyber security. The reports have been issued to the banks for remedial action. RBI has also set up Cyber Crisis Management Group to address any major incidents reported including suggesting ways to respond to and recover from the incidents. Department of Banking Supervision under RBI also conducts cyber security preparedness testing among banks on the basis of hypothetical scenarios with the help of The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In). RBI also has set up an IT subsidiary, which would focus, among other things, on cyber security within RBI as well as in regulated entities. The subsidiary is in the process of recruiting the experts.
- (iv) CERT-In issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats/vulnerabilities and countermeasures to protect computers and mobile phones on regular basis. Security tips have been published for users to secure their Desktops, mobile/smart phones and preventing phishing attacks. Advisories have also been issued regarding safeguards for users and institutions to secure digital payments.

- (v) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is conducting programs to generate information security awareness. Specific books, videos and online materials are developed for children, parents and general users about information security which are disseminated through Portals like “www.infosecawareness.in”, “www.secureelectronics.in” and “www.cert-in.org.in”.
- (vi) Government has established Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre to detect and clean infected systems in the country. The project is initiated in coordination with the Internet Service Providers and Industry.
- (vii) Government has formulated a set of investigation manuals with procedures for Search, Seizure Analysis and Presentation of digital evidence in courts. The manuals have been circulated to Law Enforcement Agencies in all States.
- (viii) Currently 24 security auditing organizations are empanelled to support and audit implementation of Information Security Best Practices.

(b) The IT Act, 2000 provides legal framework for data protection and privacy in the digital domain. Section 43, section 43A, section 72 and section 72A of the IT Act, 2000 provides for privacy and security of data in digital form. Further, the Government is in the process of drafting a legislation that will provide protection to individuals in case their privacy is breached through unlawful means, which is at consultation stage at present.

Scheme and projects under Digital India Programme

246. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of schemes and projects being implemented under the Digital India initiative;
- (b) the performance of the above in the last two years, quarter-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken to bring more private participation and to speed up digitization and network growth for quick delivery and implementation of e-governance services in rural areas of the country, the State-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Government of India has initiated an umbrella programme, namely Digital India to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. Significant

growth has been seen in various projects/schemes under Digital India programme. The digital footprint has gone up through Aadhaar seeding and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). Aadhaar enrolment has increased to more than 111 crores in January 2017 as against 73 crores in December 2014. Financial inclusion has been envisaged through JAM (Jandhan – Aadhaar – Mobile). In the field of Electronics Manufacturing, investment proposals of ₹ 1.28 lakh crores have been received involving 250 units in Dec 2016 as against ₹ 17390 crores involving 53 units in December, 2014. The e-Governance service transactions have increased to more than 90 crore per month in 2016 as against 29.4 crores per month in 2014.

Significant increase in interest in start ups in cutting edge areas of IT and Electronics including Internet of Things (IoT), Data analytics, Telemedicine e-Education etc. has been observed. e-Visa has been implemented resulting in significant growth in tourist inflow. The citizen participation has increased multiple times through citizen engagement programs like MyGov.

“e-Kranti” programme aims to make all Government services accessible to the common man, through Common Service Delivery outlets like Digital Seva Kendras (CSCs). 2.9 lakh CSCs have been made operational, out of which 1.60 lakh are at Gram Panchayat (GP) level. The BharatNet has been planned to connect all the 2.5 lakh GPs in the country by providing broadband connectivity. 1.72 lakh kms Optical Fibre Cable has been laid connecting 76,089 GPs.

Under e-Kranti, 44 Mission Mode Projects covering wide domains including Health, Education, Passport Seva, Trade, Income Tax, Excise and Customs, Corporate Affairs, India Post, e-Police, Land Records, e-Courts etc. are being implemented by various Central Ministries/Departments and State/UT Governments.

The status of major schemes/projects under Digital India as on 31.01.2017 is as follows:

Aadhaar: Aadhaar is a transformational e-governance initiative that involves establishing an identity infrastructure for providing unique digital identity to residents. So far, 111,15,84,242 Aadhaar have been generated.

Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT): 84 schemes of 17 Ministries/Departments have been registered. A total of ₹ 1,57,800 crore has been transferred to beneficiaries and saving of ₹ 36,144 crore has been recorded.

e-Hospital - Online Registration System (ORS): It includes online appointment and registration by new patients, viewing of lab reports, checking the status of blood availability and integration with payment gateway (PayGov). 60 hospitals

have been integrated and 46.64 lakh appointments have been availed.

Jeevan Pramaan: It is Aadhaar enabled Digital Life Certificate for Pensioners scheme envisages to digitize the whole process of securing the life certificate. More than 55 lakh pensioners have been registered for the scheme.

MyGov: MyGov aims to establish a link between Government and Citizens towards meeting the goal of good governance. 28 Mann Ki Baat, 61 Open Forums, 497 Creative Corners, 52 Groups, 645 Discussion themes, 583 Tasks, 211 Polls/Surveys, 104 Talks have been published on MyGov platform. Weekly newsletters are being sent to 39.74 lakh registered users.

Public wifi hotspots: 63 tourist places have been provided with Wi-Fi facility.

Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS): 250 applications, with investments amounting to ₹ 127889.71 crore have been received, out of which, 75 applications with investment of approximately ₹ 17996.82 crore have been approved as on 31st December, 2016.

Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) Scheme: 12 Greenfield EMCs and 1 Common Facility Center (CFC) in Brownfield EMC have been approved, while 16 EMCs have been accorded in-principle approval 31st December, 2016.

BPO Promotion Scheme: Under North East BPO Promotion Scheme (NEBPS), in-Principle Approval has been accorded for 1460 seats in North Eastern States. Under India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS), in-Principle approval has been accorded for 11,720 seats 31st December, 2016.

Digital Locker System: Digital Locker System serves as a platform to enable citizens to securely store and share their documents with service providers who can directly access them electronically. 42.35 lakh Digital Lockers have been opened and 60.82 lakh documents have been uploaded.

PayGov - National Payment Service Platform: 'PayGov-India' is a centralized Payment Gateway for online payments to avail Government services. 74 Departments/Agencies are live on portal with transactions worth ₹ 3894.04 crore.

eSign framework: eSign is an innovative initiative for easy, efficient and secure signing of electronic documents by an Aadhaar holder. 4 agencies have been empanelled as e-Sign service providers and over 39 lakh eSigns have been issued.

Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA): Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA) was launched in August 2014 in which more than 1 crore candidates enrolled, 82.74 lakh trained and 53.46 lakh certified.

e-Visa: e-Visa aims at enhancing the experience of in-bound travellers to India and outbound travellers from India. e-Tourist Visa (eTV) has been introduced for 150 countries and 16 airports. More than 14.09 lakh Visas have been issued.

Mobile Governance: The Mobile Seva platform delivers Government services over mobile devices using mobile applications installed on the user's mobile handsets. 3478 Government departments and agencies at Central, State and Local levels have been integrated with the Mobile Seva platform.

Open Government Data (OGD) Platform: It exposes Government data to citizens while increasing transparency in Government function. Under OGD, 55,056 resources across 104 Departments have been published which have been viewed more than 96 lakh times.

Biometric Attendance System (BAS): Aadhaar based biometric Authentication for attendance to ensure that the attendance of all the Government employees is visible in real time on the common attendance portal. BAS has been rolled out in 684 organizations with 212794 registered employees.

Unified Mobile App for New-age Governance (UMANG): UMANG is an initiative to build a common, unified platform and mobile app to facilitate single point of access for Government services through mobile.

Government e-Marketplace (GeM): GeM aims to facilitate on line procurement of Goods and Services required by various Government Departments/Organizations/PSUs. 19129 users, 1036 Government Organizations, 2580 Sellers and 8270 Products have been registered on the portal.

National Scholarships Portal (NSP): NSP portal is a one-stop solution to implement end-to-end disbursement of the scholarship to the beneficiaries. 23 schemes of 16 Ministries/Departments of the Government have been on-boarded on the portal.

National Centre of Geo-informatics (NCoG): It is a GIS platform for sharing, collaboration, location based analytics and decision support system for Departments. 8 applications across various domains are operational.

Agriculture: The major services of Agriculture MMP include Pesticide registration, Display on the Web of Seed Testing Results, Prices and arrival details, GIS based interface for price and arrival details, District level Agro-met advisories, Information on pesticides, Information on fertilizers/seeds, etc.

Land Records: The major services include real-time availability of land records, issuance of Record of Rights alongwith cadastral maps, certified copy of deed, non-encumbrance certificate and payment of stamp duties etc. 26 States have computerized their land records and placed in public domain and providing computerized copies of Records of Rights on demand.

e-Mandi: Government has launched e-Mandi portal to make procurement of agricultural products smoother and provide competitive remuneration, especially for small and marginal farmers. 250 Mandi's across 10 States are live on e-Mandi portal.

(c) The schemes/projects under Digital India have been initiated by Central Ministries/Departments and State/UT Governments. The implementation of these schemes/projects made successful through increased participation of various stakeholders such as private companies, industry experts, institutions etc. as per project requirement, implementation strategy and methodology.

The Government of India is implementing several schemes/projects to bring more private participation and to speed up digitization and network growth for quick delivery and implementation of e-Governance services in rural areas in the country. The following Schemes/projects are specially targeted in this regard:

- (i) **Common Services Centres (CSCs):** The CSCs are Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled kiosks with broadband connectivity to provide various Governments, private and social services at the doorstep of the citizen. The State-wise details are given below:

State/UT-wise CSC Roll Out Status as on 31st December, 2016

State/UT	No. of CSCs Set up including GP	No. of CSCs Set Up at GP
1	2	3
Uttar Pradesh	54501	37258
Maharashtra	36421	15066
Gujarat	16702	13352
Tamil Nadu	13570	12333
Madhya Pradesh	17710	12564
Chhattisgarh	12687	9734
Bihar	15372	7909
Rajasthan	39884	9535

1	2	3
West Bengal	11599	6406
Odisha	9896	5913
Haryana	6527	5675
Andhra Pradesh	8855	5613
Uttarakhand	6711	4567
Jharkhand	6663	4304
Punjab	5795	4029
Himachal Pradesh	3772	3454
Telangana	4955	2610
Karnataka	4455	2599
Assam	4965	1485
Jammu and Kashmir	1678	1219
Kerala	3146	1095
Tripura	655	410
Mizoram	474	376
Meghalaya	387	276
Manipur	709	248
Nagaland	238	230
Arunachal Pradesh	213	135
Sikkim	116	66
Goa	13	0
Puducherry	125	70
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	53	19
Lakshadweep	15	13
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	20	11
Daman and Diu	18	10
Chandigarh	54	1
Delhi	1196	0
TOTAL	290150	168585

- (ii) **BharatNet Project:** The BharatNet envisages to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats in the country for providing broadband connectivity in the Gram Panchayats. Non-discriminatory access to the network will be provided to all the telecom service providers. These access providers like mobile operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Cable TV operators, content providers can launch various services in rural areas. Various applications for e-health, e-education, e-governance etc. will be provided. The State-wise details are as follows:

State-wise status for BharatNet as on 29th Jan., 2017

Sl. No.	State/UT	Cable laid	GPs for which Cable laid
	1	2	3
1.	Assam	2743	962
2.	Bihar	8674	3330
3.	Chhattisgarh	5358	1861
4.	Haryana	6583	4143
5.	Jammu and Kashmir	261	140
6.	Karnataka	10935	5443
7.	Kerala	826	1129
8.	Madhya Pradesh	24367	8205
9.	Maharashtra	21420	9625
10.	Punjab	7606	5312
11.	Rajasthan	16222	5311
12.	Goa	-	-
13.	Uttar Pradesh	37792	18019
14.	Uttarakhand	2298	1226
15.	West Bengal	3634	1407
16.	Delhi	-	-
17.	Sikkim	-	-
18.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	-	-
19.	Tamil Nadu	-	-
20.	Chandigarh	19	12
21.	Lakshadweep	-	-

1	2	3	3
22.	Arunachal Pradesh	144	22
23.	Nagaland	934	232
24.	Manipur	73	24
25.	Mizoram	150	7
26.	Tripura	1426	672
27.	Meghalaya	278	80
28.	Gujarat	7188	3280
29.	Daman and Diu	-	-
30.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-	-
31.	Puducherry	92	98
32.	Andhra Pradesh	21	-
33.	Telangana	4225	1923
34.	Odisha	5601	2277
35.	Jharkhand	3131	1263
36.	Himachal Pradesh	256	86
TOTAL		172257	76089

**Delay in release of pension of retired employees of
North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur**

247. DR. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a delay in release of pension, revision of pensions, grant of MACP, pay fixation to the employees retired from North Eastern Railway (NER), Gorakhpur;

(b) if so, whether there have been such pending cases of Health Inspectors retired in July, 2016 from NER, Gorakhpur, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether representations/complaints regarding above cases are pending with Advanced Railway Pension Access Network (ARPAN) and NER; and

(d) if so, the action taken/being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) There is no delay in release of pension of retiring staff and grant of MACP. The pay fixation and revision of pension as per 7th CPC recommendations to the employees retired from North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur is being done in due course as and when received.

(b) No, Sir. There is no case of Health Inspector retired in July 2016 pending with North Eastern Railway.

(c) and (d) No complaint/representation regarding above cases has been reported on ARPAN to the office of FA&CAO, North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur so far.

**Restricting unauthorised access to official
information in Government offices**

248 DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government offices are equipped with standard information security measures to restrict unauthorized access to official information by the hackers, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the compliance status of the IPv6 protocol system in the country; and

(c) whether Government has taken/will be taking measures to restrict circulation of anti-social information from terrorist outfits like ISIS in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) National Informatics Centre, which provides IT/e-Governance related services to Government departments, protects the cyber resources from possible compromises through a layered security approach in the form of practices, procedures and technologies that are put in place. NIC has deployed state-of-the-art security solutions including firewalls, intrusion prevention systems, anti-virus solution. Additionally, periodic security audits of resources are performed followed by subsequent hardenings. These are complemented by round-the-clock monitoring of security events and remedial measures are carried out for solving the problems subsequently.

(b) NICNET is compliant with IPv6.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Security/Intelligence Agencies are regularly monitoring social media sites and other websites. Government takes action under section 69A of Information Technology (IT) Act 2000 for blocking of websites/Specific Web pages

with objectionable contents, whenever requests are received from designated nodal officers or upon Court orders for blocking of websites/Web pages under section 69A. This section of the Information Technology Act 2000 empowers Government to block any information generated, transmitted, received, stored or hosted in any Computer Resource in the interest of Sovereignty and Integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State-friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above.

Further, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011 under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act requires that the Intermediaries (such as social media) shall observe due diligence while discharging their duties and shall inform the users of Computer resources not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information that is harmful, objectionable and unlawful in any way.

Mega Food Parks in Jharkhand

249. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has decided to establish Mega Food Parks in Jharkhand, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the areas identified for the purpose; and
- (c) the quantum of funds sanctioned and released so far, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) and (b) The Government has approved two Mega Food Parks for establishment in Jharkhand. Mega Food Park located at Getalsud, Ranchi and implemented by M/s Jharkhand Mega Food Park Private Limited has been established in an area of 56 acres at a project cost of ₹ 114.74 crore. This project was accorded final approval on 30.03.2009 and has become operational on 15.02.2016. The second Mega Food Park approved for establishment at Bokaro in an area of about 127 acres by M/s Kaushal Triveni Food Park Ltd. has been accorded in-principle approval on 03.01.2017 against the Expression of Interest (EoI) invited by the Ministry on 31.07.2016.

- (c) The Government has approved a grant-in-aid of ₹ 50.00 crore to the Mega Food Park Project at Getalsud, Ranchi implemented by M/s Jharkhand Mega Food Park Private Limited and a grant of ₹ 43.78 crore has been released till date. The Mega Food Park at Bokaro to be implemented by M/s Kaushal Triveni Food Park Ltd. is in the process of meeting the conditions of final approval.

Attracting latest technology in food processing sector

250. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has held meetings with the Ambassadors and High Commissioners in the country to attract FDI into trading of food products;
- (b) if so, the details and outcome thereof;
- (c) whether Government plans to attract latest technologies in the Food Processing sector, if so details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken/issues considered with regard to raising farmer's income and generating more employment through FDI in the Food Processing sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Food Processing Industries had convened two meetings on 17.03.2016 and 03.08.2016 with Ambassadors/High Commissioners in India of various countries namely Australia, China, Canada, France, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Netherland, Poland, Russia, Singapore, UK, New Zealand, UAE, Thailand, Germany, Belgium, Brazil, USA and Malaysia. These meetings were facilitated by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and were attended by Ambassadors/High Commissioners/representatives of Embassies/High Commissions in India, of these countries.

During these meetings, the foreign Missions were apprised about the opportunities available in India in the Food Processing sector including under the new FDI policy allowing 100% FDI in trading, including e-commerce, in respect of food products manufactured/produced in India. They were asked to further disseminate the information in this regard to their country's investors.

(c) Ministry of Food Processing Industries has already sanctioned new Mega Food Parks, Cold Chain infrastructure and assisting Food Testing Laboratories, which are normally equipped with latest technology and modern infrastructure in their plants. The Ministry is also encouraging organization of seminars, workshops and conferences to exhibit opportunities in food processing sector and Make in India initiative in all fields including latest equipments and technologies. New policy initiatives such as Ease of doing business Make in India and 100% FDI policy in manufacturing of food products and trading of food products manufactured/produced in India, will also help to bring latest technologies to this sector.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries is attending various food related international

events from time to time and also interacting with foreign investors, which would further facilitate transfer of latest technologies to food processing sector in India.

(d) The recent decision of Government of India allowing 100% FDI in trading, including e-commerce, in respect of food products manufactured/produced in India, is likely to give impetus to increasing farmer's income and also generate more employment through food processing logistics, retail chains and local sourcing.

Promotion of food processing sector in Kangra, Himachal Pradesh

251. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is determined to promote and develop Food Processing sector in the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) whether Government proposes to set up any project in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) and (b) Yes Sir.

The Ministry is implementing various Central Sector Schemes for promotion and development of food processing sector in the country namely (i) Scheme for Mega Food Park (ii) Scheme for Modernization of Abattoirs (iii) Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure (iv) Scheme for Creation/Expansion of Food Processing and Preservation Infrastructure (v) Scheme for Quality Assurance (vi) Scheme for Human Resources and the Institutions.

(c) Ministry of Food Processing Industries does not set up projects on their own in any part of the country. Proposals for setting up of the projects under various Schemes of the Ministry are invited from the eligible entrepreneurs and entities and eligible proposals are selected based upon the criteria laid down in the respective Scheme guidelines.

Orange juice preservation plant in Nagpur

252. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any project in the pipeline for preservation of orange juice or pulp in Nagpur, Maharashtra;

(b) if so, how much is its capacity; and

(c) whether it will be sufficient for Nagpur and surrounding orange growing areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) does not maintain such data. However, under the Scheme of Technology Upgradation/Establishment/Modernization of Food Processing Industries under which committed liabilities of 11th Plan are being met in the Twelfth Plan period as the scheme has ceased to be in operation from 01.04.2012, Ministry of Food Processing Industries has been providing financial assistance over the years in the form of grant-in-aid to eligible food processing projects under Fruits and Vegetable Sector in Nagpur. The details of such Food Processing Units under Fruits and Vegetable Sector, assisted by MoFPI during last six years are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) and (c) Does not arise as Ministry does not maintain such data.

Totaliser machines for ballot counting

253. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has introduced, in consultation with the Election Commission, totaliser machines for the ballot counting in the forthcoming elections, on experimental basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure that these findings and statistics do not adversely affect the booth management system of political parties in the elections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Regulating finances of political parties

254. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any steps to effect electoral reforms;

(b) whether Government proposes to regulate the finances of political parties; and

(c) whether the Law Commission has given its opinion in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) The Law Commission of India in its 255th report has made several recommendations on "Electoral Reforms" which, *inter alia*, include regulation of finances of political parties. The recommendations of the Law Commission are under consideration of the Government.

Task Force for 'Judicial Impact Assessment'

255. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Task Force/Committee has been constituted to study 'Judicial Impact Assessment' in the country;

- (b) if so, the terms of reference and the composition of such Task Force;
- (c) the major recommendations made by the Task Force; and
- (d) the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) A Task Force on 'Judicial Impact Assessment' was constituted by the Government on the directions of the Supreme Court of India in the matter of Salem Advocates Bar Association *versus* Union of India under the Chairmanship of Justice M. Jagannadha Rao (Retd.), former Judge of the Supreme Court and formerly Chairman, Law Commission of India. Prof. (Dr.) N. R. Madhava Menon, former Director of the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, Prof. (Dr.) Mohan Gopal, Director of the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal, and Shri T.C.A. Anant, Member-Secretary of Indian Council of Social Science Research were the members of the Task Force and Dr. B. A. Agarwal, Additional Secretary in Legislative Department was the Member Secretary.

The Task Force was appointed with following Terms of Reference:

- (i) to suggest the methodology to assess the likely impact of legislation on the courts and also an appropriate framework so that every Bill introduced in Parliament be accompanied by a Judicial Impact Assessment;
- (ii) to suggest ways and means of preparation of Judicial Impact Assessment;
- (iii) to make an assessment of financial requirements so that the Financial Memorandum attached to each Bill reflects the budgetary requirements for meeting the expenses of additional cases (civil and criminal) which may arise in case the Bill is passed by the Legislature;
- (iv) to recommend the content for initiating a training program for laying down the foundation for the expertise to prepare Judicial Impact Assessment; and
- (v) to suggest any other measures for assessing the increase of the work load on the courts on passing of a new legislation.

(c) The Task Force submitted its report on 15th June, 2008, which was placed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The Task Force has, *inter alia*, recommended that 'Judicial Impact Assessment' must be made on scientific basis for the purpose of estimating the extra case-load which any new Bill or Legislation may add to the Judicial System. The expenditure required for adjudication of cases be estimated by the Government and adequate budgetary provisions be made for the purpose. Such impact assessment need to be made in respect of Bills which are introduced in Parliament as well as Bills introduced in the State legislatures. The Government of India, in view of Entry-11A of the Concurrent List and Article 247

of Constitution of India and the general scheme of the Constitution, must have such prior assessments made and make necessary financial provision, at the stage of the enactment/introduction of Bills, for implementation of Central Laws in respect of subjects in the Union List or the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. The State Governments should not be made to bear the financial burden of implementing Central laws passed under the Union List or Concurrent List by the Courts established by Governments in the States. The State Governments should be required to make adequate provision for meeting the expenditure of the Courts, at the stage of the Bills, for the implementation of the Laws made by the State Legislature with respect to subjects in the State List and Concurrent List.

(d) The views of the State Governments and High Courts were solicited on the Report of the Task Force. Based on the feedback received from State Governments and High Courts, the matter regarding implementation of the Report of the Task Force was deliberated upon in the meeting of the Advisory Council of National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms held in November, 2012. It was *inter alia* decided that the methodologies of the Judicial Impact Assessment as recommended by the Task Force may be gone into further by a Committee of Experts to assess the practicability of their implementation in the given circumstances. During the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices held in New Delhi in April, 2013 this matter was included in the Action Taken Report. It was mentioned that expert opinions received so far have expressed practical difficulties in making assessment of the impact of legislation on the workload of judiciary. The practicability of the idea needs to be established before it is implemented. Accordingly, a Committee of Experts was constituted in September, 2013 to examine the issue of implementability of methodologies of Judicial Impact Assessment and suggest further action in this regard. The Committee in its report submitted on 9th January, 2015 *inter alia* concluded that Judicial Impact Assessment was neither feasible nor desirable as a method of proper budgetary planning and allocation of funds for the judiciary. It suggested an alternative approach for budgetary planning for the judiciary involving the generation of periodic Access to Justice Reports to examine the needs of the judiciary in the light of their constitutional obligation to provide fair, quick and speedy justice. The above report has been circulated to the State Governments and the High Courts.

Filling up of posts of non-judicial staff in High Courts

256. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the large number of vacancies in clerical and office Assistant posts in many District and High Courts of the country;

(b) the details of the number of vacancies in clerical and office Assistant posts, District Courts-wise and High Courts-wise; and

(c) whether these vacancies have led to a large stagnation of cases in many Courts, if so, the steps taken by Government to rectify the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Information relating to vacancies in non-judicial staff in High Courts and subordinate judiciary is Centrally not maintained as the matter comes under the purview of the High Courts and State Governments.

(c) Disposal of pending cases in courts is within the domain of judiciary. The Government has adopted a co-ordinated approach to assist judiciary for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial systems, which, *inter alia*, involves better infrastructure for courts including computerisation, increase in strength of judicial officers/judges, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation and emphasis on human resource development.

Doing away with notary system

257. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU:

SHRI T. G. VENKATESH:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any recommendation from any quarters to do away with the system of Notary as it is no longer important to follow in the present scenario, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the stand of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) No such recommendation has been received in this Department till date.

(b) Question does not arise.

E-Services for petitioners

258. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state whether Government has introduced or proposes to introduce e-services for petitioners to avail certain legal services, if so, the details thereof?"

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): No, Sir. Legal services are not availed under the eCourts Mission Mode Project by the petitioners. Only electronic facilities for speedier and less costly processes are provisioned.

Status of Memorandum of procedure

259. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the status of Memorandum of Procedure(MoP) for appointment of Judges in High Courts and the Supreme Court of India;

(b) the bone of contention between the Government and the Judiciary on MoP; and

(c) the changes that the Judiciary wanted in the MoP and the constraints that the Government has to change the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) The Supreme Court *vide* its Order dated 16.12.2015 on improvement in the ‘Collegium System’ have directed that the Government of India may finalize the existing Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) by supplementing it in consultation with the Supreme Court Collegium taking into account aspects such as transparency, secretariat, eligibility criteria and complaint mechanism.

Accordingly, the Government of India has drafted modified MoP. The draft MoP was sent to the Supreme Court Collegium *vide* letter dated 22.3.2016. The response of the Collegium was received on 25.5.2016 and 1.7.2016. The Supreme Court Collegium has agreed with some of the suggestions made in the revised MoP while it has not accepted some other provisions. After examining the response, views of Government have been conveyed to Supreme Court on 3.8.2016.

The efforts of the Government is to supplement the existing MoP by making the appointment process transparent, fair, and accountable and at the same time ensuring the independence of Judiciary.

Finalizing Memorandum of Procedure for selection of Judges

260. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state whether Government has finalized the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for appointment of Judges in various High Courts and Supreme Court of India, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): The Supreme Court *vide* its Order dated 16.12.2015 on improvement in the ‘Collegium System’ have directed that the Government of India may finalize the existing Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) by supplementing it in consultation with the Supreme Court Collegium.

Accordingly, the Government of India has drafted modified MoP. The draft MoP was sent to the Supreme Court Collegium *vide* letter dated 22.3.2016. The response of the Collegium was received on 25.5.2016 and 1.7.2016. After examining the response, views of Government have been conveyed to Supreme Court on 3.8.2016.

The efforts of the Government is to supplement the existing MoP by making the appointment process transparent, fair, and accountable and at the same time ensuring the independence of Judiciary.

Vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts

261. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts as on 1 January, 2017;
- (b) whether steps have been taken to fill up all these vacancies;
- (c) the average delay in filling up a vacancy now;
- (d) whether this period has increased/ decreased during the last two years; and
- (e) if increased, the reasons and remedial measures taken therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) The details indicating the number of vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts as on 1st January, 2017 is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) to (e) Initiation of proposal for appointment of Judges in the Supreme Court vests with the Chief Justice of India, while initiation of proposal for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court. As per the existing Memorandum of Procedure for appointment of Judges of High Courts, the Chief Justice of the High Court is required to initiate the proposal for filling up of vacancies of a Judge in a High Court six months prior to the occurrence of vacancies. However, this timeline is rarely adhered to by the High Courts.

In 2015, the Constitutional validity of the Constitution(Ninety-Ninth Amendment) Act, 2014 and the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014 were challenged in the Supreme Court. While the case was being heard and till the pronouncement of Judgement, only those Additional Judges whose terms were expiring were given extension of service. No fresh appointments were made during that period.

As the process of finalization of the revised Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for appointment of Judges to Supreme Court and High courts was likely to take some time, on the initiative of the Government of India the matter was taken up with the Supreme Court and the process of appointment of Judges was resumed, pending finalization of the revised MoP. Due to the combined efforts of the Government and Judiciary, 4 Judges in the Supreme Court, 126 fresh appointment of Judges and 131 Additional Judges were made permanent in the High Courts in 2016. During 2017, 4 fresh appointment of Judges and 16 Additional Judges have been made permanent in the High Courts.

The Government of India has not received any proposal for filling up of the 8 vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court as on 31.01.2017.

Filling up of vacancies is a continuous process, as it requires consultation and approval from various Constitutional Authorities. Hence, the time frame for filling up of the vacancies cannot be indicated. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and increase in the Judge strength of High Courts.

Statement

Details showing number of vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court of India and High Courts as on 1st January, 2017

Sl. No.	Name of the Court	Approved Strength			Working Strength			Vacancies as per Approved Strength		
A. Supreme Court of India		31			24			07		
B. High Court		Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total
1.	Allahabad	76	84	160	57	28	85	19	56	75
2.	High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad	46	15	61	23	0	23	23	15	38
3.	Bombay	71	23	94	56	06	62	15	17	32
4.	Calcutta	54	18	72	37	01	38	17	17	34
5.	Chhattisgarh	17	05	22	08	03	11	09	02	11
6.	Delhi	45	15	60	38	0	38	07	15	22
7.	Gauhati	18	06	24	07	10	17	11	-04	07
8.	Gujarat	39	13	52	25	06	31	14	07	21

Sl. No.	Name of the Court	Approved Strength			Working Strength			Vacancies as per Approved Strength		
		Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total
9.	Himachal Pradesh	10	03	13	08	02	10	02	01	03
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	13	04	17	10	0	10	03	04	07
11.	Jharkhand	19	06	25	08	05	13	11	01	12
12.	Karnataka	47	15	62	24	06	30	23	09	32
13.	Kerala	35	12	47	25	12	37	10	0	10
14.	Madhya Pradesh	40	13	53	20	19	39	20	-06	14
15.	Madras	56	19	75	54	03	57	02	16	18
16.	Manipur	04	01	05	03	0	03	01	01	02
17.	Meghalaya	03	01	04	03	0	03	0	01	01
18.	Odisha	20	07	27	15	03	18	05	04	09
19.	Patna	40	13	53	25	06	31	15	07	22
20.	Punjab and Haryana	64	21	85	45	02	47	19	19	38
21.	Rajasthan	38	12	50	23	11	34	15	01	16
22.	Sikkim	03	0	03	02	0	02	01	0	01
23.	Tripura	04	0	04	03	0	03	01	0	01
24.	Uttarakhand	09	02	11	07	0	07	02	02	04
TOTAL		771	308	1079	526	123	649	245	185	*430

*173 new posts of Judges has been sanctioned in the High Courts from 1.7.2014 to 10.05.2016

Pending cases and vacancies of Judges

262. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending for disposal in the Supreme Court and each of the High Courts across the country as on 31 December, 2016;

(b) the present strength of Judges in the Supreme Court and the various High Courts in the country as on date, along with the number of vacancies of Judges in these Courts; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to fill up the vacancies of Judges and to expedite disposal of pending cases before the Courts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) The data on pendency of cases is maintained by Supreme Court and High Courts. As per information available, 62,537 cases were pending in the Supreme Court as on 31.12.2016. The details of pendency of cases in each of the High Courts as on 31.03.2016 are given in Statement-I (*See* below).

(b) The sanctioned strength of judges in the Supreme Court is 31 and 8 posts of judges are vacant as on 31.01.2017. The sanctioned strength of judges in the High Courts is 1079 in January, 2017. 433 posts of judges in the High Courts are vacant as on 31.01.2017 which includes 173 newly created posts. The details of present strength and vacancy position of Judges in various High Courts are given in Statement-II (*See* below).

(c) Filling up of the vacancies in the High Courts is a continuous process, as it requires consultation and approval from various Constitutional Authorities. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and increase in Judge strength. In view of the large number of vacancies and the fact that the process of supplementing the existing Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for improvement in the “Collegium System” as per Supreme Court Order dated 16.12.2015 was likely to take some time, on the initiative of Government, the matter was taken up with the Supreme Court and the process of appointment of judges has been resumed. During the year 2016, 126 fresh appointment of Judges in High Courts and 131 Additional Judges have been made permanent, which is the highest number of appointments made in the last 26 years. In addition, the tenure of 22 Additional Judges of High Courts was also extended. 4 Judges have also been appointed in Supreme Court in 2016. In 2017 (up to 31.01.2017), 4 fresh appointments of Judges have also been made in High Court.

Disposal of cases in courts is within the domain of judiciary. The Government has adopted a co-ordinated approach to assist judiciary for phased liquidation of arrears and pendency in judicial systems, which, *inter alia*, involves better infrastructure for courts including computerisation, increase in strength of judicial officers/judges, policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation and emphasis on human resource development.

Statement-I*Number of cases pending in various High Courts as on 31.03.2016*

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	Cases pending in High Courts as on 31.03.2016
1.	Allahabad	9,13,038
2.	Andhra Pradesh and Telangana	2,72,971
3.	Bombay	2,50,888
4.	Calcutta	2,21,211
5.	Chhattisgarh	51,100
6.	Delhi	63,089
7.	Gujarat	85,031
8.	Gauhati	27,013
9.	Himachal Pradesh	31,917
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	57,701
11.	Jharkhand	81,494
12.	Karnataka	2,42,518
13.	Kerala	1,58,010
14.	Madhya Pradesh	2,78,502
15.	Madras	2,90,823
16.	Manipur	3,249
17.	Meghalaya	607
18.	Odisha	1,69,220
19.	Patna	1,28,351
20.	Punjab and Haryana	2,85,156
21.	Rajasthan	2,48,491
22.	Sikkim	128
23.	Tripura	2,847
24.	Uttarakhand	27,721
TOTAL		38,91,076

Source: Court News, January – March, 2016, published by Supreme Court of India.

Statement-II

Details showing the Approved Strength, Working Strength and Vacancies of Judges in the Supreme Court of India and High Courts as on 31st January, 2017

Sl. No.	Name of the Court	Approved Strength			Working Strength			Vacancies as per Approved Strength		
A. Supreme Court of India		31			23			08		
B. High Court		Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total
1.	Allahabad	76	84	160	71	12	83	05	72	77
2.	High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad	46	15	61	27	0	27	19	15	34
3.	Bombay	71	23	94	56	06	62	15	17	32
4.	Calcutta	54	18	72	37	01	38	17	17	34
5.	Chhattisgarh	17	05	22	08	03	11	09	02	11
6.	Delhi	45	15	60	38	0	38	07	15	22
7.	Gauhati	18	06	24	07	10	17	11	-04	07
8.	Gujarat	39	13	52	25	06	31	14	07	21
9.	Himachal Pradesh	10	03	13	07	02	09	03	01	04
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	13	04	17	09	0	09	04	04	08
11.	Jharkhand	19	06	25	08	05	13	11	01	12
12.	Karnataka	47	15	62	24	06	30	23	09	32
13.	Kerala	35	12	47	25	12	37	10	0	10
14.	Madhya Pradesh	40	13	53	18	19	37	22	-06	16
15.	Madras	56	19	75	54	03	57	02	16	18
16.	Manipur	04	01	05	03	0	03	01	01	02
17.	Meghalaya	03	01	04	03	0	03	0	01	01
18.	Odisha	20	07	27	15	03	18	05	04	09
19.	Patna	40	13	53	24	06	30	16	07	23
20.	Punjab and Haryana	64	21	85	45	02	47	19	19	38
21.	Rajasthan	38	12	50	23	11	34	15	01	16
22.	Sikkim	03	0	03	02	0	02	01	0	01

Sl. No.	Name of the Court	Approved Strength			Working Strength			Vacancies as per Approved Strength		
		Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total	Pmt.	Addl	Total
24.	Uttarakhand	09	02	11	07	0	07	02	02	04
	TOTAL	771	308	1079	539	107	646	232	201	433*

*Vacancies include 173 newly created posts of Judges from 01.07.2014 to 10.05.2016.

Filling up of posts of Judges

†263. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has failed to fill up large number of vacant posts of Judges in Courts, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) if not, the number of posts of Judges laying vacant and those which were filled, the details thereof for the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Filling up of the vacancies in the High Courts is a continuous process, as it requires consultation and approval from various Constitutional Authorities. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges and increase in Judge Strength from 906 in 30.06.2014 to 1079 as on today. Further, on account of court case regarding the National Judicial Appointments Commission from April, 2015 till the date of pronouncement of judgement *i.e.* 16.12.2015, no fresh appointment of Judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts were made during the period.

After striking down the constitutional validity of the Constitution (Ninety-Ninth Amendment) Act, 2014 and the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014, the Supreme Court passed an order regarding improving the Collegium System in December, 2015 by supplementing the existing Memorandum of Procedure (MoP). As the process was likely to take some time, at the initiative of the Government of India, the matter was taken up with the Supreme Court and the process of appointment of Judges has been resumed. During 2016, 126 fresh appointments of Judges in High Courts and 131 Additional Judges have been made Permanent, which is the highest number of appointments made in the last 26 years. 4 Judges in the Supreme Court have also been appointed.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The subject matter relating to filling up vacancies in the District and Subordinate Courts falls with the domain of the High Courts and the State Governments concerned. The Central Government has no role in appointment of Subordinate Judiciary.

Number of vacant posts of Judges in Supreme Court and High Courts as on 1st January of 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and number of appointments made during the above said years is given below:

Court	No. of appointments made during the year 2014	Vacancies as on 31.12.2014	No. of appointments made during the year 2015	Vacancies as on 31.12.2015	No. of appointments made during the year 2016	Vacancies as on 31.12.2016
Supreme Court	09	03	01	05	04	07
High Courts	82	346	35	443	126	430*

*173 new posts of Judges has been sanctioned in the High Courts from 1.7.2014 to 10.05.2016.

Fast Track Courts

264. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to establish Fast Track Courts to take up trial of cases involving senior citizens, women and children, physically challenged and persons affected with terminal ailments if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government is giving separate funds for this purpose, if so, State-wise details of funds earmarked/ released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Establishment of Fast Track Courts (FTCs) falls within the purview of State Governments which in consultation with the High Courts set up such courts using their own resources. The 14th Finance Commission has endorsed the proposal of the Union Government to strengthen the justice delivery system in the States at a cost of ₹ 4144 crore that includes, *inter alia*, establishing 1800 FTCs for a period of five years to take up trial of cases of heinous crimes, involving senior citizens, women, children, physically challenged and persons affected with terminal ailments etc. The 14th Finance Commission has also made suggestions to the State Governments to use the additional fiscal space made available due to the tax devolution for meeting additional requirements. The details of funds earmarked/ released; State-wise given in the Statement.

Statement

Funds earmarked for establishment of 1800 Fast Track Courts for a period of five years (2015-2020) under Grants-in-Aid as endorsed by the 14th Finance Commission

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No	Name of the State	Funds earmarked/released
1.	Andhra Pradesh	108.21
2.	Telangana	85.18
3.	Assam	82.88
4.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00
5.	Mizoram	16.12
6.	Nagaland	6.91
7.	Bihar	338.43
8.	Chhattisgarh	64.46
9.	Gujarat	400.59
10.	Himachal Pradesh	29.93
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	48.35
12.	Jharkhand	115.11
13.	Karnataka	218.72
14.	Kerala, Lakshadweep	94.39
15.	Madhya Pradesh	306.20
16.	Maharashtra, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu	469.67
17.	Goa	11.51
18.	Manipur	6.91
19.	Meghalaya	9.21
20.	Odisha	145.04
21.	Punjab	115.11
22.	Chandigarh	4.61
	Haryana	110.51
23.	Rajasthan	214.11
24.	Sikkim	2.3

Sl. No	Name of the State	Funds earmarked/released
25.	Tamil Nadu, Puducherry	204.91
26.	Tripura	20.72
27.	Uttar Pradesh	488.08
28.	Uttarakhand	64.46
29.	West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands	216.42
30.	Delhi	145.05
TOTAL		4144.11

Youth Parliament Competitions in Chhattisgarh

†265. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Youth Parliament Competitions organised in Chhattisgarh in the last three years and the current year; and

(b) whether Government has reimbursed any expenditure incurred on organising Youth Parliament Competitions in Chhattisgarh during last three years, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): (a) The Youth Parliament Competitions held in States/UTs are organized under the aegis of the respective State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry is not involved in organising the Youth Parliament Competitions in States. The Ministry only provides Financial Assistance to States/Union Territories for holding/organising Youth Parliament Competitions in their respective States, through reimbursement of claims preferred by the State/Union Territory Governments, in the following order:

1.	Legislatures having members up to 100	₹ 3 Lacs per annum
2.	Legislatures having members between 100-200	₹ 4 Lacs per annum
3.	Legislatures having members above 200	₹ 5 Lacs per annum

Note: The ceiling in respect of Union Territories having no legislatures is ₹ 2,00,000/- per annum.

The State of Chhattisgarh has not requested for financial assistance to the Ministry in the last three years including the current year.

(b) No.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Equipping railway stations with Wi-Fi facility

†266. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to equip all railway stations in the country with Wi-Fi facility;

(b) if so, whether Government has taken any steps, so far, in this regard;

(c) if so, whether Government is also contemplating equipping the railway stations located in Gujarat with Wi-Fi facility; and

(d) if so, the number of such stations and by when they will be equipped with this facility and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Ministry of Railways has decided to provide Wi-Fi facility only at A1, A and B Category Railway Stations on Indian Railways.

(c) Yes, Sir. A1, A and B Category Railway Stations located in Gujarat are also planned to be provided with Wi-Fi facility.

(d) Details of A1, A and B Category Railway Stations located in the State of Gujarat which are planned to be equipped with Wi-Fi facility and its status is given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of A1, A and B Category Railway Stations located in the State of Gujarat which are planned to be equipped with Wi-Fi facility and its status

Sl. No.	Name of Station	Division	Railway	Category
1.	Ahmedabad*	Ahmedabad	WR	A1
2.	Surat*	Mumbai Central	WR	A1
3.	Vadodara*	Vadodara	WR	A1
4.	Rajkot*	Rajkot	WR	A1
5.	Anand	Vadodara	WR	A
6.	Ankleshwar	Vadodara	WR	A
7.	Bharuch	Vadodara	WR	A
8.	Bhavnagar Terminus	Bhavnagar	WR	A

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Sl. No.	Name of Station	Division	Railway	Category
9.	Gandhidham	Ahmedabad	WR	A
10.	Jamnagar	Rajkot	WR	A
11.	Mehsana	Ahmedabad	WR	A
12.	Nadiad	Vadodara	WR	A
13.	Navsari	Mumbai Central	WR	A
14.	New Bhuj	Ahmedabad	WR	A
15.	Palanpur	Ahmedabad	WR	A
16.	Surendranagar	Rajkot	WR	A
17.	Udhana	Mumbai Central	WR	A
18.	Valsad	Mumbai Central	WR	A
19.	Vapi	Mumbai Central	WR	A
20.	Veraval	Bhavnagar	WR	A
21.	Viramgam	Ahmedabad	WR	A
22.	Bhauchau	Ahmedabad	WR	B
23.	Bilmora	Mumbai Central	WR	B
24.	Botad	Bhavnagar	WR	B
25.	Dahod	Ratlam	WR	B
26.	Dwarka	Rajkot	WR	B
27.	Godhara	Vadodara	WR	B
28.	Gondal	Bhavnagar	WR	B
29.	Hapa	Rajkot	WR	B
30.	Junagarh	Bhavnagar	WR	B
31.	Okha	Rajkot	WR	B
32.	Porbandar	Bhavnagar	WR	B
33.	Udvada	Mumbai Central	WR	B
34.	Wankaner	Rajkot	WR	B

Note: *Wi-Fi facility has already been provided at 4 nos. of A1 Category Railway Stations in Gujarat. Work at balance 17 nos. Category A and 13 nos. Category B Railway Stations is being planned.

Details of cancelled and delayed trains

267. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the number of trains cancelled and delayed, since 15 December, 2016 till date, date-wise;

(b) the details of the number of trains which reached on or before time since 15 December, 2016 till date, Zone-wise and date-wise;

(c) the reasons for unprecedented delay of trains in the year 2016 and 2017, so far;

(d) whether through unofficial message from Railway Board, the speed of trains has been restricted to 60-70 kilometres per hour; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Number of Mail/Express Trains cancelled (originating basis) and delayed (terminating basis) during the period from 15th December, 2016 to 30th January, 2017 (date-wise) is given in the Statement-I (*See below*). While Zone-wise number of trains which reached right time or before time during 15 December, 2016 to 30 January, 2017 (date-wise) is given in the Statement-II (*See below*).

(c) to (e) Due to the onset of foggy weather in the Northern parts of the country, which normally starts in the mid of December every year and continues upto mid-February, mobility of freight and coaching trains gets affected due to reduced visibility. To avoid delay of trains due to foggy weather and enhance level of safety in automatic block signaling in sections affected by fog, modified automatic signaling system has been introduced which restricts the number of trains to 2 between two stations. In addition, trains lose punctuality on Indian Railways due to factors related to its internal working as well as external factors of which Railways are not in control of. Other than asset failures, various constraints/difficulties which adversely affect punctuality are numerous such as capacity constraints on account of increasing passenger and freight traffic, adverse weather conditions (fog, rains, breaches), intermittent natural calamities such as floods, cyclones, heavy rains, heavy road traffic at level crossing gates across the Indian Railways network, multifaceted law and order problems, including public agitations and bandh calls in left wing extremism affected areas, miscreant activities such as theft of Railway assets, mid section run over cases involving cattle and human, etc.

Comprehensive instructions already exist regarding speed restriction/safety protocols that have to be put in place in the fog affected areas. Accordingly, the speed of trains in the fog affected areas is restricted to 60 KMPH in absolute block system and 30 KMPH in automatic signaling territory.

Statement-I

*Details of day-wise Mail/Express Trains cancelled (Originating basis)
and delayed (Terminating basis)*

Date	No. of Mail/ Express Trains cancelled	No. of Mail/ Express Trains delayed	Date	No. of Mail/ Express Trains cancelled	No. of Mail/ Express Trains delayed
15 Dec., 16	30	632	06 Jan., 17	79	638
16 Dec., 16	23	600	07 Jan., 17	71	645
17 Dec., 16	40	585	08 Jan., 17	59	556
18 Dec., 16	53	470	09 Jan., 17	74	635
19 Dec., 16	63	472	10 Jan., 17	75	490
20 Dec., 16	58	448	11 Jan., 17	69	529
21 Dec., 16	57	473	12 Jan., 17	63	485
22 Dec., 16	60	478	13 Jan., 17	66	477
23 Dec., 16	66	544	14 Jan., 17	53	460
24 Dec., 16	47	596	15 Jan., 17	48	425
25 Dec., 16	46	511	16 Jan., 17	52	393
26 Dec., 16	57	512	17 Jan., 17	58	424
27 Dec., 16	59	463	18 Jan., 17	54	539
28 Dec., 16	88	505	19 Jan., 17	57	514
29 Dec., 16	100	524	20 Jan., 17	86	495
30 Dec., 16	71	610	21 Jan., 17	71	462
31 Dec., 16	53	663	22 Jan., 17	79	434
TOTAL	971	9086	23 Jan., 17	60	487
01 Jan., 17	50	621	24 Jan., 17	59	424
02 Jan., 17	55	656	25 Jan., 17	56	474
03 Jan., 17	63	636	26 Jan., 17	54	472
04 Jan., 17	71	675	TOTAL	1653	13680
05 Jan., 17	71	634			

Statement-II*A. Details of Zone-wise number of Mail/Express trains reached right time or before time during 15 to 31 December, 2016*

Date→ Rly↓	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Central Railway	107	103	100	118	115	109	118	116	97	107	108	113	114	110	93	102	111
East Coast Railway	45	40	44	45	40	35	38	37	40	44	38	37	48	39	38	35	30
East Central Railway	35	34	38	38	50	42	58	57	49	53	40	49	49	53	35	35	35
Eastern Railway	53	63	52	62	61	68	70	59	67	56	64	59	63	62	58	62	56
Konkan Railway	6	9	7	6	7	8	7	6	9	5	7	5	8	6	6	8	5
North Central Railway	5	13	14	15	17	22	26	16	16	14	12	14	23	20	10	7	6
North Eastern Railway	15	13	11	25	27	28	24	18	23	19	26	23	26	17	14	14	6
Northeast Frontier Railway	45	42	38	47	42	42	44	41	35	37	38	37	38	36	35	35	38
Northern Railway	91	96	112	140	154	136	149	127	96	62	115	113	127	126	83	60	70
North Western Railway	47	54	60	53	58	62	56	57	54	52	46	56	54	58	53	40	48
South Central Railway	103	107	97	107	107	102	98	104	106	99	106	112	104	105	107	96	94
South East Central Railway	17	11	11	15	14	16	16	16	11	9	11	14	16	13	17	11	11
South East Railway	62	67	63	63	68	64	66	72	66	63	57	63	67	62	57	66	61
Southern Railway	129	140	158	154	155	157	151	152	128	162	159	163	135	138	136	132	135
South Western Railway	66	66	72	74	68	69	61	69	62	62	63	71	72	67	70	69	72
West Central Railway	25	29	25	27	29	27	24	25	25	22	27	29	26	25	23	25	20
Western Railway	95	93	96	80	107	104	98	104	107	97	96	108	105	85	96	91	90
TOTAL	946	980	998	1069	1119	1091	1104	1076	991	963	1013	1066	1075	1022	931	888	888

B. Zone-wise number of Mail/Express trains reached right time or before time during 1 to 26 January, 2017

Date→ Rly↓	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Central Railway	106	93	93	108	102	96	87	96	104	109	108	110	97
East Coast Railway	37	32	40	29	33	40	37	38	34	47	38	41	41
East Central Railway	35	42	35	36	27	21	19	39	38	40	55	55	48
Eastern Railway	50	58	62	62	51	60	48	49	61	61	54	60	66
Konkan Railway	7	7	7	6	5	8	4	7	4	5	5	6	7
North Central Railway	7	8	10	6	4	11	13	10	4	15	18	14	18
North Eastern Railway	10	16	11	16	12	12	15	20	26	27	28	31	23
Northeast Frontier Railway	35	40	41	36	39	37	34	40	41	40	39	44	45
Northern Railway	89	98	79	73	90	56	89	96	70	122	116	121	129
North Western Railway	32	26	32	39	43	46	53	46	51	51	55	53	50
South Central Railway	101	107	104	88	104	97	86	100	101	103	101	106	107
South East Central Railway	13	13	16	12	16	11	9	14	13	16	16	14	11
South East Railway	57	55	63	66	58	63	58	56	61	61	52	61	64
Southern Railway	161	158	128	132	137	132	150	148	139	144	149	148	147
South Western Railway	63	63	69	62	69	62	64	63	63	65	65	71	60
West Central Railway	23	21	20	19	23	25	23	25	29	25	26	27	26
Western Railway	78	90	86	91	95	98	93	100	99	96	102	101	103
TOTAL	904	927	896	881	908	875	882	947	938	1027	1027	1063	1042

B. Zone-wise number of Mail/Express trains reached right time or before time during 1 to 26 January, 2017

Date→ Rly↓	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Central Railway	106	111	113	109	117	110	106	109	106	104	108	122	104
East Coast Railway	47	38	46	47	46	47	43	45	35	44	38	42	45
East Central Railway	60	53	66	57	60	55	47	53	46	58	58	52	53
Eastern Railway	57	63	65	66	68	61	67	68	67	66	69	68	59
Konkan Railway	7	8	5	8	7	6	8	7	9	7	8	6	6
North Central Railway	11	15	16	19	9	11	15	16	18	18	23	17	16
North Eastern Railway	23	27	35	29	20	25	28	24	25	35	30	26	31
Northeast Frontier Railway	44	50	52	52	52	54	52	53	47	53	49	51	47
Northern Railway	125	1437	159	117	65	97	118	137	146	135	150	140	128
North Western Railway	57	53	62	51	48	45	53	52	47	56	58	58	51
South Central Railway	102	104	110	105	102	102	103	102	105	103	98	102	108
South East Central Railway	13	14	18	17	15	17	13	14	12	11	15	16	17
South East Railway	64	61	71	73	74	68	70	66	69	63	66	65	67
Southern Railway	172	163	162	157	159	157	84	110	111	97	131	136	146
South Western Railway	68	71	73	69	66	74	64	63	68	68	69	68	73
West Central Railway	24	27	33	27	27	24	22	21	23	24	27	23	24
Western Railway	98	101	107	106	106	102	100	100	102	101	100	107	107
TOTAL	1078	1102	1193	1109	1041	1055	993	1040	1036	1043	1097	1099	1082

Dearth of coaches in trains originating from Kerala

268. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Passenger/Express trains originating from Kerala to distant destinations have often delayed or cancelled in recent months due to dearth of rakes or coaches;

(b) whether non-availability of sufficient number of coaches and absence of a centre in Kerala for repair of coaches is one of the main reasons for this; and

(c) whether Railways will make more coaches available and establish a coach repair yard for the railway divisions in Kerala to avoid repetition of such lapses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Allotment of coaches to all Zonal Railways including Southern Railway (Kerala is served under Southern Railway) is an on-going process and is being done as per requirement and availability of coaches. Moreover, adequate coaches are available with Southern Railway to run scheduled train services at present.

Separate coach for the disabled

269. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a separate coach for the disabled in all the long route trains running across the country, if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) the percentage of long route trains having separate coaches for the disabled at present; and

(c) by when Government is planning to increase their numbers and by what percentage, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Almost all the Mail Express trains (except special type of trains like Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Jan Shatabdi, AC Special, Durgam and Mail Express trains running with LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch coaches), including Garib Rath trains, have been provided with a specially designed disabled friendly cabin in at least one coach (SLRD-Second class cum luggage cum Guard van with disabled friendly facilities) for differently abled passengers.

Derailment of Ajmer-Sealdah train

270. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Ajmer-Sealdah Express train derailed near Kanpur recently where more than 40 people got injured and two had died;
- (b) if so, whether Railways have identified the reasons for the said tragedy; and
- (c) the compensation paid to the victims, including the kins of persons who have died, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Train No. 12987 Sealdah-Ajmer Express derailed at Rura station on Kanpur-Tundla section on Allahabad Division of North Central Railway on 28.12.2016 at 05:20 hours wherein 68 passengers sustained injury. No passenger however, lost his/her life in the said accident.

Statutory inquiry into the derailment has been ordered to determine the reasons of the accident by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Northern Circle, New Delhi under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Compensation is paid by the Railways on receipt of a decree by Railway Claims Tribunal. However, on humanitarian grounds, an ex-gratia amount of ₹ 6,10,000/- has been paid by the Railways to the passengers who sustained injuries in the accident.

Train accidents

271. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of train accidents occurred in the last three years, including the major and minor ones;
- (b) the total number of fatalities reported in these accidents; and
- (c) the total amount of compensation awarded to the victims of these train accidents in the last three years by the Central Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Details of number of consequential train accidents and fatalities (including incidents at Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) and persons killed therein caused due to negligence of road vehicle users) occurred therein during the last three years *i.e.* 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 are given as under:

Year	Number of consequential train accidents (including UMLC)	Number of fatalities in consequential train accidents (including road users at UMLC)
2013-14	118	152
2014-15	135	292
2015-16	107	122

(c) Amount of compensation paid by Railways in train accidents during the last three years is as under:

Year	Compensation paid
2013-14	₹ 149.49 lakhs
2014-15	₹ 127.48 lakhs
2015-16	₹ 262.96 lakhs
TOTAL	₹ 539.93 lakhs

Note: The compensation paid in a year need not necessarily relate to the accidents/casualties in that year alone. This amount depends upon the number of cases which are finalized in a particular year irrespective of the year(s) in which the accident they pertain to, have occurred.

Purchase of power from discoms for train operations

272. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is purchasing power from various discoms across the country for its train operations, if so, the details thereof, discom-wise;

(b) the details of expenses incurred on purchasing power from discoms, year-wise; and

(c) whether any proposal is pending with Government to change this system of purchasing power from discoms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Railways is purchasing power from various Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) across the country for its train operations, details are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) Indian Railways as deemed licensee has started to procure power from Generating Companies (GENCOs) through tariff based bidding/bilateral arrangements and has made applications to various State Transmission Utilities (STUs) for obtaining

No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the States of Bihar, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu etc.

Statement

*Details of State Electricity Boards/Distribution Company (DISCOMs)-wise
Traction Energy Bill for last two years*

Sl. No.	Name of State Electricity Boards/Distribution Company (DISCOMs)	Energy Bill/Million ₹	
		2014-15	2015-16
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited (APEPDCL)	4437	4439
2.	Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM)	339	367
3.	Chamundi Electricity Supply Company (CESCOM)	444	462
4.	Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company (GESCOM)	44	20
5.	Gujarat Electricity Board (GEB)	4272	3662
6.	Grid Corporation of Odisha (GRIDCO)	3672	3805
7.	Haryana Vidyut Prasaran Nigam Limited (HVPNL)	471	453
8.	Jharkhand State Electricity Board (JSEB)	4147	3960
9.	Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB)	1126	1207
10.	Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board (MPSEB)	2969	3692
11.	Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB)	393	282
12.	National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)	4762	1839
13.	Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL)	984	1136
14.	Tamilnadu Electricity Board (TNEB)	6013	6916
15.	Paschimanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (PVVNL)	384	475
16.	Uttarakhand Power Corporation Limited (UPCL)	63	66
17.	West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL)	8263	8709
18.	TATA Group (TATA)	7307	7097
19.	BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL)	216	290
20.	Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL)	364	373
21.	Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (UHBVN)	1094	1262

1	2	3	4
22.	Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN)	858	943
23.	Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL)	5947	5626
24.	Reliance Energy	462	124
25.	Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. (MSEDCL)	13495	9058
26.	Bihar State Electricity Board (BSEB)	3432	3721
27.	Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC)	3190	5118
28.	Andhra Pradesh Central Power Distribution Company Limited (APCPDCL)	1293	574
29.	Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company Limited (CSPDCL)	4811	5565
30.	Andhra Pradesh Northern Power Distribution Company Limited (APNPDCL)	3061	1259
31.	Andhra Pradesh Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (APSPDCL)	4933	4431
32.	Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (JVNL)	2220	2550
33.	Madhya Pradesh Paschim Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company Limited (MPPKVVCL)	4441	4115
34.	Madhya Pradesh Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company Limited (MPMKVVCL)	3238	2755
35.	Madhya Gujarat Vidyut Vij. Company Ltd. (MGVCL)	583	528
36.	Southern Electricity Supply Company of Odisha Ltd. (SOUTHCO)	0	272
37.	Western Electricity Supply Company of Odisha Limited (WESCO)	1582	1712
38.	North Eastern Electricity Supply Company of Odisha Ltd. (NESCO)	602	732
39.	Telangana State Northern Power Distribution Co. Ltd. (TSNPDCL)	0	1695
40.	Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Co. Ltd. (TSSPDCL)	0	577
41.	Ratnagiri Gas and Power Private Limited (RGPPL)	0	2604
TOTAL		105913	104469

**Additional air conditioned coaches in Train No. 18241/42
Durg-Ambikapur Express**

†273. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to add Ist and additional IInd and IIIRD class air conditioned coaches in Train No. 18241/42 Durg-Ambikapur Express, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has received any proposal from the people's representatives in this regard; and

(c) if so, from where such proposals have been received and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Representations including from an Hon'ble Member of Parliament have been received for attachment of coaches in Train No. 18241/18242 Durg-Ambikapur Express.

At present, Train No. 18241/18242 Durg-Ambikapur Express is running with composition of 21 coaches including three AC three tier and one AC two tier coaches for upper class passengers, which is considered adequate for the present level of traffic. However, attachment of coach in a train is an on-going process subject to operational feasibility, commercial viability and availability of resources.

Track machine civil engineers in RDSO

274. DR. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether track machine Civil Engineers working in Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO), Lucknow with over fifteen years experience need to be utilised in other institutions of Railways;

(b) if so, the details of such Engineers;

(c) whether services of such Engineers are required for capacity building of new recruits in training institutes, including Indian Railway Institute of Civil Engineering (IRICEN), Pune;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, whether there is need for special posting of such experienced Engineers for three years in IRICEN to improve the safety in Railways; and

(e) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (e) Engineers are posted to various organizations/units including Track Machine Organization and Indian Railway Institute of Civil Engineering (IRICEN) depending upon job requirements and their suitability. At present in RDSO, there is no Track Machine Civil Engineer with over 15 years experience of working in RDSO.

Surge pricing on premium high-speed train services

275. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have introduced surge pricing on some of its premium high-speed train services;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the experience gained since introduction of this pricing mechanism; and

(c) whether this price mechanism will divert traffic from Railways to airways, if not, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) No such fare structure has been introduced by the name of surge pricing. However, w.e.f. 09.09.2016 Flexi Fare System has been introduced in Rajdhani, Duronto and Shatabdi trains. Under this system, the base fare increases by 10% with every 10% of berths sold subject to maximum ceiling limit of 1.5 times in classes Second AC, Sleeper, Second Sitting (Reserved), AC Chair Car and 1.4 times in 3rd AC class. No change has been made in the fares for Ist AC and Executive class of travel.

There is mixed response from different quarters on the introduction of Flexi Fare System. Based on the feedback received, review have been made on Flexi Fare system and the provision of Tatkal Quota has been reduced from maximum 30% to 10% of the total berths availability. Further 10% discount has been offered in all trains including Rajdhani, Duronto and Shatabdi trains on the vacant berths after preparation of first chart.

(c) In view of variable fare structure, the fare may or may not be higher than Air fares. The Flexi Fare System has been introduced only in Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains. Other Mail/Express and Superfast services are available on the normal fare structures. It cannot therefore be said that this mechanism will divert traffic from Railways to Airways.

Delay and cancellation of trains due to fog

†276. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has completely failed in addressing the problem of hundreds of trains getting cancelled and running late due to fog every year, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) if not, the efforts made by Government in this regard, so far, so as to deal with the above problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir. As of now, there is no permanent solution for avoiding delays of trains due to fog in winters. However, some temporary measures are taken to minimize the traffic congestion caused by reduced visibility during fog which includes cancellation, partial cancellation, diversion and frequency reduction of less patronized trains, inducting scratch rakes to avoid rescheduling etc.

(b) The following efforts are being made to check delay and accidents in operation of train in foggy weather during poor visibility condition:—

- (i) Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) has been developed to enhance safety and to minimize delay to the trains in fog affected areas. TPWS is based on proven European Train Control System (ETCS-LI) Technology for mitigating safety risk arising due to driver's error of Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD) or over speeding.

TPWS works have been sanctioned on 3300 Route Kms (RKM). In the first phase, work on suburban sections covering 1240 RKM on Eastern, South Eastern, Northern, Southern and South Central Railways have been taken up for implementation.

- (ii) A Global Positioning System (GPS) based 'Fog Safe Device' (FSD) has been developed based on RDSO (Signal Directorate) specification which displays the name and distance of approaching signals and other critical landmarks like Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) etc. in advance during poor visibility condition. The device is a portable device carried by the Loco Pilot. These are being used only in those zones of Indian Railways where the trains pass through fog affected region. It is expected to help reduce stress on Loco Pilots while running in foggy weather as well as ensuring safe train operations.

Fog Safe Devices are in use over Northern Railway, North Eastern Railway and North Western Railway which are the most fog affected Railways.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Passenger amenities at Tirunelveli railway station

277. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received recommendations/suggestions to provide some passenger-related amenities at the Tirunelveli railway station in Tamil Nadu, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. Suggestions have been received from an Hon'ble Member of Parliament for provision of Escalator and Battery Operated Car at Tirunelveli Railway station. At Tirunelveli Junction, Platform Numbers 1, 2 and 3 have been provided with Escalator for convenience of needy passengers and action has been initiated to provide Battery Operated Car at Tirunelveli by calling for Expression of interest in accordance with the policy guidelines.

(b) No survey has been conducted in this regard so far.

Installation of bio-toilets and CCTV cameras

278. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government provided about thousands of crores of rupees to Railways for installation of bio-toilets in trains and CCTV cameras at railway stations, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the names of trains which have been fitted with bio-toilets and the railway stations which have been provided with CCTV cameras, as of now, Zone-wise; and

(c) the target set for completion of installation of bio-toilets in all the trains and CCTV cameras at all the railway stations in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has provided ₹ 1155 crores in current fiscal towards fitment of bio-toilets in coaches as part of Swachh Bharat Mission and funds to the tune of ₹ 500 crores have been sanctioned for provision of CCTV surveillance cameras at 983 stations.

(b) As of now, there are about 800 trains, which are having either some coaches or all the coaches fitted with bio-toilets and 344 railway stations, where

CCTV cameras have been provided. The Zone-wise details of some of the trains having coaches equipped with bio-toilets are given in Statement-I (*See below*). Railway Stations where CCTV cameras have been provided are given in Statement-II (*See below*).

(c) It had earlier been targeted to fit bio-toilets in the entire fleet of coaches by the year 2021-22. Target has now been advanced to the year 2019. As regards the target for provision of CCTV cameras at all 983 identified stations, the same is March, 2019.

Statement-I

Zone-wise details of some of the trains having coaches equipped with bio-toilets

Zonal Railway	Some of the trains having coaches fitted with bio-toilets
Central	12137/38 Mumbai-Firozpur Punjab Mail, 12131/32 Dadar-Sai Nagar Shirdi Express, 12163/64 Dadar-Chennai Egmore Express
East Central	15227/28 Muzaffarpur-Yesvantpur Express, 12567/68 Rajya Rani Express, 13301/02 Subarn Rekha Express
East Coast	18401/02 Puri-Okha Express, 18496/95 Bhubaneswar-Rameswaram Express, 12898/97 Bhubaneswar-Pondicherry Express
Eastern	12343/44 Darjeeling Mail, 12345/46 Saraighat Express, 12307/08 Howrah-Jodhpur Express
North Central	11107/06 Bundelkhand Express, 11105/06 Jhansi-Kolkata Express, 12451/52 Shram Shakti Express
North Eastern	15045/46 Gorakhpur-Okha Express, 15119/20 Manduadih-Rameswaram Express, 12533/34 Pushpak Express
Northeast Frontier	15635/36 Okha-Guwahati Express, 15647/48 Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Guwahati Express
Northern	14033/34 Jammu Mail 12472/74/76/78 Swaraj Group Trains 14609/10 Hemkunt Express
North Western	09722/21 Udaipur-Jaipur Superfast Special Express

Zonal Railway	Some of the trains having coaches fitted with bio-toilets
South Central	17016/15 Visakha Express, 12796/95 Secunderabad-Vijayawada Intercity Express, 17211/12 Machilipatnam Yesvantpur Express
South East Central	18239/12856 Gevra Road-Nagpur-Bilaspur Shivrath/Intercity Exp., 12851/12849 Bilaspur-Chennai Central/Bilaspur-Pune Express, 12853/12854 Amarkantak Express
South Eastern	12863/64 Howrah-Yesvantpur Express, 12837/38 Howrah-Puri Express, 12810/09 Howrah-Mumbai Mail
Southern	22661/62 Sethu Express, 16780/79 Rameswaram-Tirupathi Express, 22621/22 Rameswaram-Kanyakumari Express
South Western	16229/30 Mysuru-Varanasi Bi-weekly Express 16209/10 Ajmer-Mysuru Bi-weekly Express 16589/90 Rani Channamma Express
West Central	12121/22 Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express 11449/50 Jabalpur-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express 19803/04 Kota-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express
Western	19263/64 Porbandar-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express, 12905/06 Porbandar-Howrah Superfast Express, 19269/70 Porbandar-Muzaffarpur Express

Statement-II

Names of the Stations provided with CCTV cameras

Zonal Railway	Stations where CCTV cameras have been installed
Central	CSTM, Masjid, Sandhurst Road, Byculla, Chichpokli, Currey Road, Parel, Dadar, Matunga, Sion, Kurla, LTT, Vidyavihar, Ghatkopar, Vikroli, Kanjur Marg, Bhandup, Nahur, Mulund, Thane, Kalwa, Mumbra, Diva, Kopar, Dombivali, Thakurli, Kalyan, Vitthalwadi, Ulhasnagar, Ambarnath, Badlapur, Shelu, Neral, Karjat, Khandala, Lonavala, Shahad, Ambivali, Titwala, Khadavali, Vashind, Asangaon, Atgaon, Kasara, Igatpuri, Dockyard, Ray Road, Cotton Green, Sewri, Vadala Road, Kings Circle, GTBN, Chunabhatti, Tilaknagar, Chembur, Govandi, Mankhurd, Vashi, Sanpada, Juinagar, Seawood, Nerul, Belapur,

Zonal Railway	Some of the trains having coaches fitted with bio-toilets
	Kharghar, Mansarovar, Khandeshwar, Panvel, Airoli, Rabale, Ghansoli, Koparkhairne, Turbhe, Nasik Road, Manmad, Jalgaon, Bhusawal, Khandwa, Nagpur, Betul, Solapur, Shirdi, Pune, Miraj, Shivajinagar
East Central	Patna, Dhanbad, Gomo, Koderma, Daltonganj, Sonpur, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Darbhanga, Madubani, Jainagar, Sitamadhi, Raxaul, Narkatiyaganj, Betia, Sugauli, Motihari, Saharsa
East Coast	Bhubhaneshwar, Puri, Vishakhapatnam, Cuttack
Eastern	Howrah, Sealdah, Kolkata Terminus, Asansol, Malda, Bhagalpur, 24 Stations of Metro Railway Kolkata
North Central	Allahabad, Kanpur, Aligarh, Jhansi, Gwalior, Chitrakoot Dham, Agra Cantt., Agra Fort, Mathura, Raja ki Mandi, Morena
North Eastern	Lucknow Jn., Gorakhpur, Manduadih, Varanasi City
Northeast Frontier	Katihar Jn., Kishanganj, New Jalpaigudi Jn., Siliguri Jn., New Alipurduar, New Coochbehar, Alipurduar Jn., Guwahati, Lumding, Dimapur, Dibrugarh, New Tinsukia
Northern	New Delhi, Delhi Main, H. Nizamuddin, Delhi Sarai Rohilla, Delhi Cantt., Anand Vihar Terminal, Ghaziabad, Delhi Shahadra, Tilak Bridge, Shivaji Brigade, Kurukshetra, Delhi Safdarjung, Ambala, Chandigarh, Saharanpur, Jammu Tawi, Attari, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Jawalapur, Lucknow, Varanasi
North Western	Ajmer, Udaipur City, Bikaner, Bhiwani, Hisar, Jaipur, Rewari, Jodhpur, Bhagat ki Kothi, Munabao, Jaisalmer
South Central	Hyderabad, Bidar, Vikarabad, Kazipet, Warangal, Khammam, Secunderabad, Nizamabad, Mahbubnagar, Kacheguda, Rajahmundry, Ongole, Vijayawada, Guntakal, Chittoor, Raichur, Kadapa, Anantapur, Yadgir, Adoni, Dhone, Gooty, Dharmavaram, Renigunta, Srikalahasti, Tirupati, Guntur, Nandyal, Nalgonda, Aurangabad, Nanded
South East Central	Bilaspur, Raigarh, Champa, Korba, Shahdol, Raipur, Durg, Itwari, Kamptee, Tumsar Road, Bhandraroad, Gondia, Balaghat, Dongargarh, Rajnandgaon, Howbagh, Chhindwada
South Eastern	Midnapur, Kharagpur, Santragachi, Tatanagar, Chradharpur, Rourkela, Jharsuguda, Adra, Purulia, Bokaro Steel City, Ranchi, Muri

Zonal Railway	Some of the trains having coaches fitted with bio-toilets
Southern	Chennai Central, Chennai Egmore, Chennai Beach, Tiruvallur, Ambalam, Tambaram, Basin Bridge, Trichy, Madurai, Coimbatore, Angalore, Calicut, Ernakulum, Trivendrum Central, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Arakkonam Junction, Quilon, Trissur, Moore Market Complex (Chennai Central)
South Western	Bengaluru, Yeshwanthpur, Mysore, Hubballi, Vasco-da-Gama, Belagavi, Londa, Hospet, Bellary, Castle-Rock, Koppal
West Central	Itarsi, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Kota, Sawaimadhopur
Western	Churchgate, Marine Lines, Charni Road, Grant Road, Mumbai Central (L), Mumbai Central (M), Mahalakshmi, Lower Parel, Elphinstone, Dadar, Matunga Road, Mahim, Bandra(L), Bandra Terminus, Khar Road, Santacruz, Vile Parle, Andheri, Jogeshwari, Goregaon, Malad, Kandivali, Borivali, Dahisar, Mira Road, Bhayandar, Naigaon, Vasai Road, Nalasopara, Virar, Surat, Vadodra, Godhra, Anand, Nadiad, Bharuch, Ankleshwar, Ahmedabad, Ratlam, Ujjain, Indore, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Okha, Bhaktinagar, Dwarka, Surendernagar
Konkan Railway Corporation Limited	Madgaon, Thivim, Kankawali, Ratnagiri

Details of accidents and fatalities

279. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of train accidents and fatalities occurred in last three years, year-wise, route-wise;

(b) the report-wise details of Inquiry Commission reports submitted in last three years and action taken thereon;

(c) how many committees have been formed in last three years to look into issues of safety, details of action taken on their reports;

(d) the proposed plans for increasing safety and budgetary allocations for the same in Railway Budgets 2015-16 and 2016-17; and

(e) allocation made to the Depreciation Reserve Fund in last three years, year-wise and whether the allocation is sufficient to meet the requirement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Zone-wise and year-wise number of consequential train accidents (including incidents at Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) caused due to negligence of road vehicle users) over Indian Railways are given as under:

Zonal Railway	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (Upto 25.01.2017)
Central	8	10	7	6
Eastern	5	4	4	7
East Central	12	19	12	16
East Coast	7	8	2	7
Northern	16	20	20	13
North Eastern	6	14	9	3
Northeast Frontier	6	4	4	6
North Western	14	11	11	4
North Central	4	7	4	5
Southern	4	2	6	8
South Central	5	4	2	1
South Eastern	10	6	4	2
South Western	5	11	8	2
Southeast Central	7	1	3	5
Western	6	7	8	7
West Central	2	3	2	2
Kokan	1	4	1	1
Metro Kolkata	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	118	135	107	95

Fatalities in the consequential train accidents (including fatalities at unmanned level crossings) during the last three years *i.e.* 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and in the current year 2016-17 (upto 25.01.2017) are 152, 292, 122 and 231 respectively.

(b) All consequential train accidents on Indian Railways are inquired into either by Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation or Departmental Inquiry Committee of the Railway. During the last three years *i.e.* 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and the current year up to 31st December, 2016, altogether 450 accidents (including incidents at unmanned level crossings caused due

to negligence of road vehicle users) occurred on Indian Railways. Out of the 450 accidents, 43 accidents have been inquired by the Commissioner of Railway Safety and balance have been inquired into by the Departmental Inquiry Committees of the Zonal Railways. Based on the recommendations/findings of the Commissioners of Railway Safety/Departmental Inquiry Committees, the concerned departments of the Indian Railways take suitable action. During 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and current year (up to 31st December, 2016), Major penalties were imposed on 279 and Minor penalties were imposed on 220 erring officials. Out of these, 118 Railway officials have been removed/dismissed from Railway service during the mentioned period.

(c) The following two Committees have been constituted by the Ministry of Railways in the last three years:

- (i) A Task Force under the Chairmanship of the General Manager/North Central Railway was constituted on 06.12.2016 to suggest system and process to improve the safety performance of Indian Railways. The task force has submitted its report on 10.01.2017. The recommendations contained therein are under examination in the Ministry of Railways.
- (ii) An independent Task Force under the Chairmanship of Shri Vinod Rai, retired Comptroller and Auditor General was constituted on 02.01.2017 to carry out a thorough safety audit of the Railways, taking into account the accidents of Train No. 19321 in Jhansi Division on 20.11.2016 and Train No. 12987 in Allahabad Division on 26.12.2016. The Task force shall submit its report within a month's time from the date of its constitution.

(d) Figures showing of Expenditure/outlay for Safety related activities under both Revenues and Capital segment of Budget for 2015-16 (Revised Estimate) and 2016-17 (Revised Estimate) is given below:

(₹ in crore)

Revenue Expenditure (Gross) on Safety	Revised Estimate	
	2015-16	2016-17
1	2	3
Demand No.4-Repairs and Maintenance of Permanent Ways and Works	10945	13539
Demand No.5-Repairs and Maintenance of Motive Powers	5338	6108
Demand No.6-Repairs and Maintenance of Carriages and Wagons	12263	14351

1	2	3
Demand No.7-Repairs and Maintenance of Plant and Equipment	6584	7832
Demand No. 9-Operating Expenses-Traffic-600-Safety	30	35
TOTAL Revenue (Safety):	35160	41866
Capital Expenditure (Gross) on Safety:		
Demand No.16-Assets-Acquisition, Construction and Replacement:		
Road Safety Works – Level Crossings	518	679
Road Safety Works – Road Over/Under Bridges	2144	9658
Track Renewals	5426	6740
Bridge Works	491	592
Signalling and Telecom Works	853	954
Workshops (POH/IOH of Rolling Stock)	1456	2573
TOTAL Capital (Safety):	10888	21196
TOTAL (Revenue + Capital) on Safety	46048	63063

(e) The description showing allocation of Revised Estimates Gross Outlay under Depreciation Reserved Fund (DRF) during the last three years *i.e.* 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 is given below:

Gross Outlay under Depreciation Reserved Fund (DRF)

(₹ in crore)

Revised Estimate 2014-15	9486.29 (Gross)
Revised Estimate 2015-16	9155.78 (Gross)
Revised Estimate 2016-17	7200.00 (Gross)

Complaints received by Government Railway Police

280. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many complaints have been registered by Government Railway Police during 2011-15 regarding thefts of passengers' belongings, unauthorised entry and occupation of floor space for overnight travel in sleeper coaches all over the country;

(b) the entity primarily responsible for preventing thefts as well as unauthorised entry and occupation of spaces in sleeper coaches; and

(c) whether the Ministry will consider appointing TTEs or Coachs Masters in every coach to prevent this, if so, by when, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) During the years 2011 to 2015, total 84388 complaints of theft of passengers' belongings were registered by the Government Railway Police. Total 7159 complaints of unauthorized entry and occupation of floor space for overnight travel in sleeper coaches have been received in the zonal railways.

(b) Policing on Railways being a State subject, prevention of crime, registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of law and order in Railway premises as well as on running trains are the statutory responsibility of the State Governments, which they discharge through Government Railway Police (GRP).

However, to check unauthorized entry in reserved coaches, periodical drives are conducted by Commercial Department, assisted by Railway Protection Force and action is taken as per the provisions of Indian Railways Act, 1989.

(c) It is practically not feasible to appoint ticket checking staff for every coach as it will put huge financial burden and will result in underutilisation of manpower.

Bogibeel bridge

281. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the year plan for completion of construction of Rail-cum-Road bridge over Brahmaputra at Bogibeel;

(b) the reasons for delay in completing construction of the bridge; and

(c) the action taken against the officials and contractor responsible for delay in completing construction of the bridge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Construction of Rail-cum-Road bridge over the Brahmaputra at Bogibeel with linking lines (73 km) has been taken up at an anticipated cost of ₹ 4996 crore. An expenditure of ₹ 4129 crore has been incurred upto March, 2016 and an outlay of ₹ 598 crore has been provided in 2016-17.

The project has mainly suffered in the past on account of inadequate availability of funds, apart from delays in land acquisition and forestry clearances which were beyond the control of Railways.

To expedite the completion of work, the annual outlays have been enhanced,

and against an allotment of ₹ 340 crore in the year 2013-14, budget allotments of ₹ 600 crore and ₹ 701 crore have been made in the years 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. Allotment of ₹ 598 crore has been made in the year 2016-17.

All the 42 well foundations and piers have been completed. 28 out of 41 girders have been launched. Works of both North and South guide bunds, 44 km long rail link from Chaulkhowa to Moranhat, 14 km long North bank rail link and 8 km long South bank rail link have also been completed.

Train accidents at unmanned railway level crossings

282. SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the safety measures the Ministry is taking/proposes to take for preventing accidents at unmanned railway crossings in view of the number of train accidents, including at unmanned railway level crossings;

(b) the type of upgraded technology Government is bringing in the country in all spheres of railway operations and infrastructure to prevent accidents and to enhance safety; and

(c) by when this upgraded technology will be in operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) It is the endeavour of Railways to eliminate all Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLCs) in a phased manner by either of the following:

- **Closure** – Closing unmanned level crossings having NIL/Negligible Train Vehicle Unit (TVU).
- **Merger** – Merger of unmanned level crossing gate to nearby manned or unmanned gates or subway or Road Under Bridge (RUB) or Road Over Bridge (ROB) by construction of diversion road.
- **Provision of Subways/RUBs**
- **Manning** – Phased manning of unmanned level crossings which cannot be eliminated by above means.

Ministry of Railways has announced a specific sub-mission to eliminate all unmanned level crossings on Broad Gauge in next 3-4 years.

Research Designs and Standards Organization (RDSO) is developing vandal proof rugged Train approach based warning system for unmanned L.C. Gates in association with IIT/Kanpur and Space Application Centre/Ahmedabad. Besides,

various measures taken by Indian Railways to prevent accidents at unmanned level crossings are as under:

- Social awareness campaigns to educate road users with the use of various print and electronic media for observance of safe practices prescribed in Motor Vehicle Act and Indian Railways Act and joint ambush checks along with civil police to counter misadventure in front of approaching trains.
- SMS Campaigns to create awareness amongst road users.
- Zonal Railways have also been advised to deploy Gate Mitras/Gate Counselors at identified vulnerable unmanned level crossings to counsel the road vehicles users for observance of safe practice while negotiating unmanned level crossings.

(b) and (c) Safety is accorded the highest priority by Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continual basis including upgradation of technology to prevent accidents and to enhance safety. These include complete track circuiting of stations, Axle Counter for Automatic clearance of Block Section Counters (BPAC), Electrical/Electronic Interlocking System, Interlocking of Level Crossing Gates, Auxiliary Warning System (AWS), Vigilance Control Device (VCD) in locomotives, Colour Light LED Signals, Train Protection Warning System (TPWS), Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), Fog Safe Device (FSD), use of 60 kg rails and Pre-stressed Concrete Sleepers, Long rail panels, Better welding technology in the tracks, Digital types of machines for Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD), Electronic monitoring of tracks using Track Recording Cars (TRC) and portable Oscillation Monitoring System (OMS), Progressive use of Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches, Centre Buffer Couplers in Integral Coach Factory (ICF) design coaches, Remote Monitoring and Management of Locomotives and Trains (REMMLOT), Air Conditioning (AC) of locomotive cabs, Installation of video/voice recording system on locomotives.

Enhancement in technology in Indian Railways is a continuous process. The above mentioned technologies are being proliferated in Indian Railways progressively depending upon codal life of equipments and availability of resources, traffic density of routes etc.

Cashless passenger and freight business

283. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have made significant progress in the Government's digitisation push with 97 per cent of its freight business and almost half of its passenger business going cashless;

(b) whether Railways have tied up with the State Bank of India to acquire and operate a large number of PoS machines to cater to the requirement at railway stations, unreserved and suburban ticket counters and parcel offices; and

(c) whether Railways enjoy the advantage of a well-laid out communication system to provide connectivity for the PoS operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) During the period from April, 2016 to December, 2016, approximately 59% of total reserved tickets were booked through cashless mode *i.e.* through internet or through credit/debit cards across counters. Also, cashless transactions in case of freight business is more than 99%.

With a view to further promoting cashless transaction, it has been decided to install 10,000 Point of Sale (POS) machines in association with State Bank of India at various locations of Indian Railways in the following order of priority:—

- (i) PRS locations
- (ii) UTS locations at suburban stations
- (iii) Parcel/Goods locations where cash is accepted
- (iv) Other UTS locations

As the POS machines are GPRS-based, the communication system of Railways is not required for operation of these machines.

Formulation of a suburban rail system policy

284. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of our mega cities and million-plus population cities will benefit if the existing rail tracks could also be used for city and peri-urban area transportation;

(b) whether the Ministry has formulated a Suburban Rail System policy which when finalised and implemented can add much-needed additional transportation capacities in our urban areas; and

(c) whether Railways propose to look for sourcing of funds for such projects from the beneficiary States/urban bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) To address the demand of State Governments for suburban system, Indian Railways intends to build integrated suburban systems by launching

new investment framework in participation with the State Governments and to ensure cost neutrality on operations. Draft policy guidelines for taking up new Suburban Rail System on Indian Railways has been circulated to State Governments for comments. The basic objective of the policy is to eliminate conflict between the long distance/intercity transport and suburban transport and to build exclusive tracks for suburban services.

Increase in train accidents

285. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of serious train accidents have increased in the country in 2016-17 as compared to the previous years, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) the kilometres coverage of track renewal in the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the progress made in introducing retrofitted coaches improved with anti-climbing and anti-telescopic features in the current year, and by when it would be covered in the entire railway network; and

(d) on which routes train collision avoidance system has been introduced and what is its future plan, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir. In 2015-16 there were two serious consequential train accidents (with death of 10 or more persons) and serious consequential train accidents remained at the same level *i.e.* to 2 in the current year *i.e.* 2016-17 (from 1st April, 2016 to 25th January, 2017). Details of these two serious train accidents which took place in 2016-17 are as under:

(i) On 20.11.2016 at 03.04 hours, 14 coaches of Train No. 19321 (Indore – Rajendra Nagar Terminal (Patna Express) derailed between Pokhrayan and Malasa stations on Jhansi-Kanpur section of North Central Railway. In this accident, 152 passengers lost their lives and 183 passengers suffered injuries.

Statutory Inquiry into this accident has been ordered to be conducted by Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Eastern Circle, Kolkata under the Ministry of Civil Aviation to determine the correct cause and facts of the accident.

(ii) On 21.01.2017 at 23.20 hours, Train engine and 09 coaches (Next to train engine) of Train No. 18448 (Jagdalpur – Bhubaneswar) Hirakhand Express

derailed between Singapuram Road – Vizianagaram Section on Waltair Division of East Coast Railway. In this accident, 39 passengers lost their lives and 38 passengers suffered injuries.

Statutory Inquiry into this accident has been ordered to be conducted by Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), South Central Circle, Secunderabad under the Ministry of Civil Aviation to determine the correct cause and facts of the accident.

(b) The achievement of track renewals during the last three years and in the current year are as under:

Year	Target (in Kilometers)	Achievement (in Kilometers)
2013-14	2100	2885
2014-15	2200	2424
2015-16	2500	2794
2016-17 (Upto December, 2016)	2668	1708

(c) It has been decided that ICF design coaches with screw couplings will be retrofitted with CBC couplings as an anti-climbing feature. The work will be undertaken progressively depending upon the capacity and funds availability starting from the year 2017-18.

(d) Two types of Automatic Train Protection System are envisaged over the Indian Railways to provide train collision avoidance. These are as under:-

(a) Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS)

TPWS is based on proven European Train Control System (ETCS-L1) Technology for mitigating safety risk arising due to driver's error of Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD) or over speeding, which may lead to collision.

- (i) TPWS is functional on Chennai to Gummidipundi (50 RKM) and Chennai (Basin Bridge) to Arakonam (67 Rkm) on Suburban section of Southern Railway.
- (ii) Non Suburban section of Delhi to Agra (200 RKM) and
- (iii) On Kolkata metro from Kavi Subhash to Dumdum (25RKM) section, TPWS works have been sanctioned on 3300 RKM. In first phase, work on suburban sections covering 1240 RKM on Eastern, South Eastern, Northern, Southern and South Central Railways have been taken up for implementation.

(b) Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS)

RDSO in association with Indian Vendors has taken up a pilot project for indigenous development of a cost effective safety system called Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). TCAS deploys radio communication for transmission of movement authority from track side to the Locomotive. This system is aimed at providing capability of preventing train accidents caused due to Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD) or over speeding by train drivers.

After successful proof of Concept trials of TCAS, RDSO has taken up extended field trials of TCAS on a pilot section Lingamapalli-Vikarabad-Wadi-Bidar (250 Route km) section of South Central Railway. After completion of all field works equipment deployments trials on seven pair of passenger trains have already commenced. Safety validation of the system has also been taken up by Independent Safety Assessor (ISA).

Further implementation of TCAS is planned after successful conclusion of the extended field trials and safety validation of system.

Renting out railway stations for wedding functions

286. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways are weighing a proposal to rent out less busy stations for holding wedding functions and other events;

(b) whether any final decision to this effect has been taken; and

(c) if so, how the selection of railway stations, for holding such functions, will be done, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Railways have issued a new Non Fare Revenue Policy for encouraging viable proposals for generating revenue from non-conventional sources.

Zonal Railways and Divisions have been empowered under the policy to take decisions regarding revenue generating proposals, subject to feasibility and desirability which, *inter alia*, includes selection of specific events and locations.

Talgo coaches for commercial services

287. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sanction, as per extant provisions, is being obtained for introducing Talgo coaches for commercial services, if so, the status thereof; and

- (b) the response of the Zonal Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No decision has been taken by Indian Railways for introducing Talgo coaches for commercial services.

- (b) Does not arise.

Leasing out properties of Railways

288. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken a decision to lease out Railways' properties and buildings to private businesses;

(b) if so, the details in this regard along with the details of rules and regulations to identify and allot the properties to private entities; and

(c) the other income generating measures taken or proposed to be taken by Government to lease out railway properties/buildings to the public and private sector companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Railway land is leased/licensed to private business for purposes connected with Railway working only, or providing required services for development of the Railways. Vacant Railway land/air-space not required by Railways for its immediate future operational needs is also leased to private business for commercial/property development in interim period wherever feasible through Rail Land Development Authority, in order to mobilize additional financial resources.

Complaints against IRCON

289. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received many complaints against IRCON for their mismanagement in project implementation in various parts of the country and abroad during the last two years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto, so far?

THE MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Angamaly-Erumeli-Sabari railway line

290. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the responsibility for funding Angamaly-Erumeli-Sabari railway line is being shifted to the newly-formed Kerala Rail Development Corporation;
- (b) if so, whether the precautions to ensure smooth continuance of the project are being taken by Railways; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Government of Kerala had consented to share 50% of the project cost of Angamali-Sabarimala new line project in 2015. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Ministry of Railways and Government of Kerala in January, 2016 for formation of Joint Venture (JV) company. JV company “Kerala Rail Development Corporation Ltd.” has been incorporated on 03.01.2017 to take up mutually identified viable projects and/or projects with viability gap funding. So far, no communication for taking up of Angamali-Sabarimala new line project through the JV company has been received from Government of Kerala.

- (b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Availability of updated information regarding late arrival
and departure of trains**

†291. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether passengers had to wait for hours at stations between December, 2016 and January, 2017 as updated information about delayed arrival and departure of trains from Delhi was not being made available;
- (b) the details of such trains that were running late by more than six hours;
- (c) whether any case, regarding negligence by employees for not updating information about late arrival or departure of trains, has come to the notice of the Ministry; and
- (d) whether Railways will make arrangements for sending details of late running trains to mobiles of the passengers, the details thereof?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) This year dense fog enveloped Northern Railway as early as 23rd November 2016, and this adversely affected running of trains. Due to late running of trains, their pairing trains were being rescheduled. In order to reduce passenger inconvenience due to late running of trains, their rescheduling was done after closely monitoring movement of their pairing trains. Information of late running of trains is made available through National Train Enquiry System (NTES) and on Phone No. 139. The non furnishing of accurate information has been primarily on account of various factors affecting train movement such as terminal congestion, signal failure, accident, alarm chain pulling etc., which cannot be anticipated in advance.

Information disseminated through 139 is extracted from the data based on National Train Enquiry System (NTES). National Train Enquiry System has been completely integrated with Control Office Application (COA) distributed over all the divisions of Indian Railways to capture trains actual arrival/departure information at each station which is then updated in NTES. It computes Expected Time of Arrival (ETA) at next and subsequent stopping station by adding delay and subtracting recoveries. The System also propagates delay till next operator marked ETA station or destination. With this integration it has become feasible to give information regarding train running, on near real-time basis.

(b) The Mail/Express trains running more than 6 hrs late during last three months are as under:

November, 2016	December, 2016	January, 2017
66	386	214

(c) No, Sir.

(d) At present there is no provision to send details of late running of trains to mobile of the passengers. However, provision of facilities to the passengers and their upgradation is a continuous and ongoing exercise.

Safety-related vacancies in Railways

292. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total strength of staff in safety category in Railways, Zone-wise;

(b) whether it is fact that nearly 1.3 lakh vacancies relating to safety are lying vacant in various Zones of Railways, if so, the details thereof, Zone-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the existing staff is working as much as 15 hours a day; and

(d) the efforts Railways are making to have a special drive to fill up all the safety-related vacancies in all the Zones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) The sanctioned strength and vacancy position of safety category in non-gazetted cadre in Zonal Railways as on 01.11.2016 (Provisional) is as under:

Zonal Railway	Sanctioned Strength	Vacancy
Central	66006	10350
East Coast	32951	6415
East Central	58651	10251
Eastern	66962	10875
Metro	1644	309
North Central	35771	8917
North Eastern	26341	5277
Northeast Frontier	32963	4787
Northern	77943	15348
North Western	31171	7139
South Central	62009	10102
South East Central	32184	4460
South Eastern	58478	8927
Southern	51692	2989
South Western	21026	3462
West Central	41117	7280
Western	57434	8866
TOTAL	754343	125754

(c) The working hours of Railway Servants including safety categories are regulated in accordance with the provisions contained in the chapter XIV of the Railway Act, 1989 and Rules framed there under *i.e.* the Railway Servants (Hours of Work and period of Rest) Rules, 2005. In accordance with these provisions, the Railway Servants are classified as Intensive, Continuous and Essentially Intermittent. The maximum hours of work are 45, 54 and 75 hours per week for Intensive, Continuous and Essentially Intermittent categories respectively. With these limits,

Railway Administrations are competent to prepare the roster keeping in view administrative and operational requirements. None of the rosters provide for 15 hours duty in a single day. However, operational exigencies may sometimes lead to exceptions of working beyond the rostered hours.

(d) Filling up of vacancies is a continuous process. The policy of the Railway Administration is to fill up the vacancies as per requirement, as per laid down procedure. The total number of persons empanelled for various Group 'C' and erstwhile Group 'D' posts including safety category during the last three years is 1,92,026.

Difference between LHB and ICF coaches

293. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) how LHB coaches are different from ICF-designed coaches;
- (b) whether it is a fact that at the current pace of production, it will take 30 years to replace the ICF coaches with LHB coaches;
- (c) the details of LHB coaches constructed in the last five years and the current year, year-wise; and
- (d) whether the Ministry is planning any special drive to achieve the target in a reasonable period, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) LHB type coaches have higher speed potential, increased codal life, better maintainability and safety features, as compared to ICF type coaches.

(b) It has been planned that the manufacture of ICF type passenger coaches shall be stopped from 2018-19 onwards and LHB coaches shall be proliferated instead, to meet the requirements towards replacement of progressively condemned ICF coaches, besides additional requirements.

Based on their present codal life of 25 years, the residual fleet of ICF type coaches manufactured till 2017-18, are expected to remain in service till 2042-43.

(c) The details of LHB coaches constructed in the last five years and the current year, year-wise, are as under:

Year	Total numbers
2011-12	278
2012-13	560

Year	Total numbers
2013-14	543
2014-15	555
2015-16	1044
2016-17	964
(Upto December, 2016)	

(d) It has been planned to increase the production of LHB coaches in the forthcoming years as under:

Year	Total numbers
2016-17	1697
2017-18	2384
2018-19	3025
2019-20	3349

Redevelopment of congested railway stations

294. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is mulling to redevelop railway stations which are at the core of city development and have become congested over time;

(b) whether some foreign countries have shown interest in the redevelopment of railway stations; and

(c) if so, the names of those countries and the cost of redeveloping those railway stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Indian Railways intends to redevelop 'A-1' and 'A' category stations on 'as is where is' basis, by inviting proposals from developers with their designs and business ideas. The facilities envisaged in redeveloped stations, *inter alia*, include improvement to approach infrastructure and segregation of arrival and departure of passengers which shall help in reducing congestion at stations and their approaches.

Countries like Belgium, China, France, Germany, Malaysia and South Korea have shown interest in participating in the redevelopment of railway stations in India.

Station redevelopment projects are intrinsically complex in nature and require detailed techno-economic feasibility studies to work out the cost. Therefore, cost of station redevelopment cannot be indicated at this stage.

Permanent posts in Railways

295. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of permanent posts in Railways in each category;
- (b) how many employees have been recruited by Railway Recruitment Board during the last three years;
- (c) the number of contract employees in each category, and the number of existing vacancies;
- (d) whether reservation policy is strictly observed by the Recruitment Board; and
- (e) the number of vacancies existing at present which are reserved for SCs/STs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) As on 01.04.2016, the total sanctioned strength on Indian Railways is 1559955 (Provisional).

(b) The position of total number of candidates empanelled by Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) during the last three years is as under:—

Year	Candidates Empanelled
2013-14	31805
2014-15	15191
2015-16	27995
2016-17 (Upto November 2016)	15188
TOTAL	90179

- (c) Indian Railways' employees are not engaged under the contract system.
- (d) As per Constitutional provision, there is 15%, 7.5% and 27% reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs respectively in recruitment, which is being followed in the Railways.
- (e) The total backlog of reserved vacancies of SCs/STs as on 01.04.2016 is 7374.

Doubling of railway line from Bachhwara to Barauni

†296. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has approved doubling of railway lines from Bachhwara to Barauni junction *via* Hajipur to Patoree under Hajipur Zone, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether a time-frame has been fixed for doubling the railway line from Hajipur *via* Patoree, Bachhwara upto Barauni, the complete details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) There is already a Broad Gauge double line between Bachhwara and Barauni (17 km.) and work of doubling on Hajipur-Bachhwara *via* Shahpur Patoree (72 km.) has been included in Railway Budget 2015-16 at a cost of ₹ 679 crore.

As a railway project requires a number of clearances like shifting of utilities, construction of Road Over Bridge/Road Under Bridge by road owning agencies, land acquisition, forestry and wild life clearances etc. which are beyond the control of Railways, it is not possible to fix timelines for completion of this project.

New railway line *via* Amaravati

297. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has received any proposal from South Central Railway to lay new railway line from Nambur Junction *via* Amaravati connecting Vijayawada-Kazipet section at Errupalem;

(b) whether survey for new railway line from Amaravati *via* Pedakurapadu and Sattenapalli connecting Narsaraopet in Guntur district has commenced;

(c) if so, the railway stations proposed to come up on the line between Nambur and Errupalem and online connecting Amaravati to Narsaraopet;

(d) the proposed estimates for completion of these two new lines; and

(e) the timelines to complete the new railway lines and commencement of operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. A proposal for a new railway line from Nambur Junction *via* Amaravati connecting Vijayawada – Kazipet section at Errupalem has been received.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Yes, Sir. A Reconnaissance Engineering cum Traffic Survey has been completed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited and proposed connectivity consists of 3 segments *viz.* (i) Namburu – Amaravathi – Errupalem double line with electrification (56.80 km.) (ii) Peddakurapadu – Amaravathi single line non-electrified section (24.50 km.) and (iii) Sattenpalli – Narsaraopet single line non-electrified section (25.0 km.). Total = 106.30 km.

(c) 17 Nos. of new Junction/Crossing/Halt Stations have been proposed *viz.* Errupalem, Amaravathi, Namburu, Pedakurapadu, Sattenpalli, Narasaraopet, Peddapuram, Paritala, Koppuravuru, Revela, Chennaraopalem, Gottumukkala, Kothapalli, Veddamanu, Tadikonda, Nidumukkola and Chagantivaripalem.

(d) The estimated cost for above lines is ₹ 2679.59 crore.

(e) Since completion of project depends upon several factors including complete handing over of encumbrance-free land by the State Government, shifting of utilities, etc. and most of these factors are beyond the control of Ministry of Railways, target date for completion of the above project has not been fixed.

Separate railway zone for Andhra Pradesh at Visakhapatnam

298. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a final decision was taken in principle to create separate Railway zone for Andhra Pradesh with Visakhapatnam as headquarters, as per the provisions of Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014;

(b) if so, the reasons for delaying announcement of separate Railway zone for Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether any obstacles are coming in the way for creation of a separate Railway zone for Andhra Pradesh, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Ministry is mandated to implement the provision provided under the aforesaid Act to create a separate Railway zone for Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (d) As per Item 8 of Schedule 13 (Infrastructure) of Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014, Ministry of Railways was required to examine feasibility of establishing a new Railway Zone in the successor State of Andhra Pradesh. To, *inter alia*, examine the feasibility of establishing a new Railway Zone, a Committee of senior Railway officers had been constituted. The Committee has been asked to consult various stake holders, including the Members of Parliament, State Governments etc. before a final decision is taken.

**Meetings of North Eastern Railway with MPs of
Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand**

†299. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether North Eastern Railway organizes meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs) of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand for improvement in Railways;

(b) if so, the details of the suggestions given by MPs so far on which positive action has been taken by Railways; and

(c) if no action has been taken on the suggestions given, the rationale of organising such meetings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. North Eastern Railway regularly organizes meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs) for improvement in Railways. Particulars of last three such meetings organised by North Eastern Railway are as under:

Sl. No	Date of Meeting	Place of Meeting	Concerned Division
1.	19.01.2016	Gorakhpur	Izatnagar, Varanasi, Lucknow
2.	26.06.2015	Gorakhpur	Lucknow and Varanasi
3.	11.02.2015	Izatnagar	Izatnagar

For improvement in Railways, Divisional Committee Meetings with Hon'ble MPs of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were planned in Varanasi, Lucknow and Izatnagar Divisions of North Eastern Railway for 18.01.2017, 24.01.2017 and 30.01.2017 respectively. However, these meetings have been deferred due to imposition of Model Code of Conduct on account of announcement of General Assembly Elections in States of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand on 04.01.2017. After completion of on-going election process, North Eastern Railway will organize meetings with Members of Parliament of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand for improvement in Railways as per prescribed schedule.

(b) and (c) Suggestions given by Hon'ble Members of Parliament (MPs) during meetings are dealt with expeditiously based on the feasibility of the work. The suggestions, which are implementable immediately, are taken up on urgent basis. The other suggestions are considered depending upon need and inter-se-priority of work and operational feasibility, subject to availability of funds.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Smart railway stations

300. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is planning to have more than 500 smart railway stations in the country to compete with the smart cities concept; and
- (b) if so, the details of those smart railway stations to be developed in different States, including Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been entered into between Ministry of Railways (MOR) and Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD) for integrated planning of railway stations in the cities included in the 'SMART Cities' and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) Scheme. This would lead to an integrated public transit hub around the railway stations and encourage Transit Oriented Development. The details of the smart stations proposed to be developed under this scheme are not yet finalized.

Railway has also advertised its plan to offer 'A-1' and 'A' category stations for redevelopment on 'as is where is basis' by inviting open bids from interested parties with their designs and business ideas.

Tickets purchased after 8 November, 2016 using old currency

301. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of tickets purchased post 8 November, 2016 using old currency;
- (b) the details of cancellation of such tickets;
- (c) whether it is a fact that booking of railway tickets was being done to exchange old currency with new one, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether it is also a fact that there are only 1000 Automatic Ticket Vending Machines, if so, State/UT-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Acceptance of old currency notes for ticketing and on-board catering was discontinued with effect from 10th December, 2016. During the period from 9th November, 2016 to 9th December, 2016, approximately 117.32 lakh reserved tickets were booked on Indian Railways out of which approximately 10.13 lakh tickets were cancelled. However, information is not being maintained regarding the type of currency (old or new currency) tendered for booking of the tickets.

(d) State-wise statistics of Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) and Currency operated Ticket Vending Machines (CoTVMs) over Indian Railways are not maintained. 2120 ATVMs and 449 CoTVMs are functional over Indian Railways.

Reducing delays and accidents due to fog

302. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of trains that were reported late or cancelled due to fog during this Winter, as compared to previous year and the quantum of loss occurred to Railways as a result thereof;

(b) whether any new technological innovations have been put in operation to reduce delays and accident risks due to fog, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether adequate number of Fog-Safe Devices have been distributed to loco pilots in the fog affected regions, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) any other initiative undertaken for enhancing vision of loco pilots under foggy conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The following number of Mail Express train trips were delayed and cancelled on account of fog during this year winter compared to the previous year:

November, 2015 and 2016				December, 2015 and 2016				January, 2016 and 2017 (up to 30th January)			
No. of M/ Exp Trains trip delayed		No. of M/Exp Trains trip cancelled		No. of M/Exp Trains trip delayed		No. of M/Exp Trains trip cancelled		No. of M/Exp Trains trip delayed		No. of M/Exp Trains trip cancelled	
2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2016	2017	2016	2017
324	616	0	0	2530	7891	29	1146	3858	4231	2739	1314

(b) to (d) To avoid delay due to fog in winter and enhance level of safety in automatic block signaling in fog affected sections, modified automatic signaling has been introduced which restricts the number of trains to 2 between two stations.

A Global Positioning System (GPS) based 'Fog Safe Device' (FSD) has been developed which displays the name and distance of approaching signals and other critical landmarks like Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) etc. in advance during

poor visibility condition. The device is a portable device carried by the Loco Pilot. These are being used only in those zones of Indian Railways where the trains pass through fog affected region. It is expected to help reduce stress on Loco Pilots while running in foggy weather as well as ensuring safe train operations.

Fog Safe Devices are in use over Northern Railway, North Eastern Railway and North Western Railway which are the most fog affected Railways. Further, a number of Fog Safe Devices have been distributed to East Central Railway, North Central Railway and Northeast Frontier Railway. So far, 6739 Fog Safe Devices have been provided to the following zonal railways and further 4278 FSDs are being procured for distribution amongst the zonal railways.

Zonal Railway	Number of devices provided
Northern Railway	2194
North Eastern Railway	1338
North Western Railway	692
East Central Railway	877
North Central Railway	537
Northeast Frontier Railway	1101
TOTAL	6739

In addition, Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) has also been developed to enhance safety and to minimize delay to the trains in fog affected areas. TPWS is based on proven European Train Control System (ETCS-LI) Technology for mitigating safety risk arising due to driver's error of Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD) or over speeding.

Bharat Darshan tours by IRCTC

303. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IRCTC, which organises Bharat Darshan tours by train, has not been able to achieve desired popularity among the tourists; and

(b) if so, the details of Government's plan to make improvements in the facilities/ services and publicity to increase popularity of Bharat Darshan tours?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir. Bharat Darshan is a very popular budget tourist train covering important religious and tourist places across the country. IRCTC operated 68, 73 and

49 trips of Bharat Darshan trains during the year 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 (till Dec., 2016) respectively carrying around 35000 people each year.

(b) Does not arise.

Establishment of Visakhapatnam Railway Zone

304. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have taken a decision to speed up the work of establishment of new Railway zone at Visakhapatnam, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has also requested the Ministry for expediting the work, the details thereof; and

(c) the stand of the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) As per Item 8 of Schedule 13 (Infrastructure) of Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014, Ministry of Railways constituted a Committee of senior officers to, *inter alia*, examine the feasibility of establishing a new Railway Zone in the successor State of Andhra Pradesh. The Committee has been asked to consult various stake holders, including the Members of Parliament, State Governments etc. before a final decision is taken.

Requests for setting up of a new Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam have been received from time to time from various fora, including the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Production of Cotton

305. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cotton Association of India has placed its estimate for the 2016-17 season beginning October, 1 at 336 lakh bales of 170 kg. each; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Central Institute of Cotton Research, has however, placed its estimate for the said season at 300 lakh bales, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Yes, Sir, Cotton Association of India, an industry body had estimated the cotton production at 336 lakh bales.

(b) As per the internal assessment made by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) – Central Institute of Cotton Research (CICR) in August, 2016,

based on the rainfall patterns in Gujarat and other cotton growing states and also the predicted pest infestation, the cotton area was predicted to reach 105 lakh hectares and production was estimated at 300-310 lakh bales. However, late rains received in Central India in the month of October along with effective control of whitefly in North India and pink bollworms control in Gujarat during October-December through sustained campaigns conducted by ICAR-CICR, CICR has conveyed that their estimates are likely to be 4-5% higher.

However, the Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) which has representatives from Central Government, State Government, Textile Industry, Cotton Trade, Ginning and Pressing Sector, State Co-op Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation and Cotton Research and Development, in its meeting held on 24.10.2016, have estimated production of cotton at 351 lakh bales for the cotton season 2016-17. The estimates are periodically updated at the successive meetings of the Board, taking into account various factors, such as the Agro-climatic conditions, pest and disease infestations, cotton arrivals in the Mandi, cotton pressing etc.

Opening of Regional Office of Development Commissioner (Handlooms)

306. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be please to state whether the Ministry proposes to open a Regional Office of Development Commissioner (Handlooms) at Bhubaneswar and an office of Assistant Director at Koraput considering the handicraft potential of Odisha?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): No Sir. Weavers Service Centre at Bhubaneswar and Handicraft Marketing and Service Extension Centres at Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur are already functioning in Odisha.

Beneficiaries from NE States under Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana

307. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) how many handloom weavers from North Eastern States have availed benefits under the Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana in the last five years;

(b) how many handloom weavers have actually been covered till now out of the 26.19 lakh weavers which the Bima Yojana intended to cover during the period of 2012-13 to 2016-17; and

(c) if the intended target is not achieved, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Under the Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana (MGBBY) 4.33 lakh hand loom weavers availed benefits from North Eastern States in the last five years.

(b) During the period of 2012-13 to 2016-17, 25.93 lakh number of weavers have actually been covered till now. Besides this, implementing Agency, *i.e.* LIC of India will submit final enrolment figures for 2016-17 after 31st March, 2017.

(c) Does not arise.

Training in handicrafts

†308. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to establish institutions in every State in order to provide training to people in various areas of handicrafts, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government proposes to promote brand image of Indian handicrafts in global markets, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) No, Sir. Training programmes in various areas of handicrafts are conducted through eligible institutions including agencies of State Governments.

(b) The Government is taking the following important steps to promote brand image of Indian handicrafts including Handmade Carpets and other floor coverings in global markets:—

- (i) Market Development Assistance (MDA) Grant and Market Access Initiative (MAI) Assistance for participation in Fairs and Exhibitions/ Reverse/Buyer-Seller Meet in India and abroad.
- (ii) Assistance for marketing study, branding/International publicity, participation in Fairs and Exhibitions, Buyer-Seller Meet in India and abroad etc. through Marketing and other Scheme.
- (iii) Thematic display and live demonstration of crafts by Master Craftspersons in exhibitions abroad.
- (iv) Organizing Indian Handicrafts and Gifts Fair twice a year besides product specific shows.

Development of textile sector in Tamil Nadu

309. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has provided funds for the development of Textile Parks/Textile Export Processing Zones in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the funds provided for the purpose in the last three years;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government has plans to introduce any special innovative technologies in development of powerlooms and textile sector in the country, particularly in Tamil Nadu;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the list of projects underway and to be undertaken in the next two years; and

(e) the details of funds earmarked and allocated for such projects in the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, a sum of ₹ 151.93 crore has been provided for development of eight (8) textile parks under Scheme for Integrated Textile Park (SITP) of the Ministry of Textiles. Details of fund released to the Textile Parks in last three years is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) to (e) Government has approved a new scheme with the objective to provide financial assistance/capital subsidy to small powerloom units for installation of Solar Photo Voltaic (SPV) Plant in order to alleviate the problem of power cut/shortage faced by the decentralized powerloom units in the country. The funds requirement for three years (2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20) would be ₹ 1994.80 lakh covering 480 powerloom units.

Statement

Details of Funds provided to the Textiles Parks under SITP in last three years in Tamil Nadu

Sl. No.	Name of the Park	FY	Fund Released
1.	Peraignar Anna Handloom Silk Park	2013-14	₹ 3.30 crore
2.	Pallavada Textile Park	2013-14	₹ 4.00 crores
3.	Palladam Hi-Tech Textile Park	2014-15	₹ 1.00 crore
4.	Palladam Hi-Tech Textile Park	2016-17	₹ 1.50 crores

Employment generation in textile industry

†310. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the employment opportunities generated in Textile industry is far less than the Government target of employment generation in five years, if so, the details thereof;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the extent to which employment generation remained less in Textile industry during the last two years alongwith the details of action plan of Government to achieve the stipulated target; and

(c) the decrease in production after demonetisation and number of jobs directly impacted because of it, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) to (c) Employment in textile sector is mainly in the informal sector. Consequently data availability in respect of employment generation is confined to the formal sector only. As per a quick quarterly assessment on employment carried out by the Labour Bureau for the formal sector, the details of employment generated in the last 5 year period shows a marginal increase in employment as may be seen below:—

Sector	June, 2011 to June, 2012	June, 2012 to June, 2013	June, 2013 to June, 2014	June 2014 to June, 2015	June, 2015 to Dec., 2015 (2 Quarters only)
Textiles including Handloom and Powerloom	1.66	1.79	1.75	1.18	0.62

To strengthen and enhance employment opportunities in the textile sector, Government has recently launched a special package for apparel and made-ups. The package includes a slew of measures which are labour friendly and would promote employment generation, economies of scale and boost exports. Over and above this, Government is providing additional production linked incentive of 10% under the Amended Technology Upgradation Scheme (ATUFS) for promoting employment in garmenting segment. Besides the above, Government also implements other schemes for Skill Development, setting up of Textile Parks, Powerloom Development, Promotion of Silk, Wool and Jute, all of which aid employment generation. Recently on 5th January, 2017, Government has imposed antidumping duty on imports of jute from Bangladesh and Nepal which would safeguard employment generation in the jute sector within the country.

No specific study has been done to study the impact of demonetization on production and employment in Textiles. However, the Ministry has initiated a special drive to open bank accounts and promote digital payments in various textile clusters in the country.

Support to textile industry of Ichalkaranji, Maharashtra

311. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ichalkaranji was used to be known as Manchester of India for having a large number of handlooms for manufacture of quality cotton;

(b) whether Government is aware that majority of handlooms have either been closed down or are on verge of closure because of high production cost and lack of marketing facilities making thousands of craftsmen jobless;

(c) the steps Government plans to take to support the local Textile industry of Ichalkaranji; and

(d) the further action Government proposes to take to establish more handloom clusters in Maharashtra to promote the handloom industry?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Ichalkaranji in Maharashtra is known as Manchester of Maharashtra for its powerlooms and Textile industries.

(b) According to the information received from the State Government, the number of handlooms in Ichalkaranji are very less compared to powerlooms because most of the handloom weavers have diversified to powerloom industry. As per the record, only one handloom co-operatlive society is registered in Ichalkaranji, and in 2014-15 there were 9 handlooms out of which only 3 handlooms were found working Ichalkaranji.

(c) There are more than 2 lakh powerlooms in Ichalkaranji. Similarly there are about 170 processing and dyeing units in Ichalkaranji. There are 15 co-operatives and 7 private spinning mills in Kolhapur Distt. Under the Scheme for Integrated Textile Park, 4 Textiles Parks are being set up in Ichalkaranji. Under this scheme, the Central Government has financed ₹ 72.95 crore and State Government has financed ₹ 14.61 crore. Apart from this, Government of India has sanctioned a Mega Cluster Project in Ichalkaranji.

(d) Government of India is provided financial assistance under National Handloom Development Programme Scheme (NHDP) for technology upgradation, product development through design innovation, skill upgradation etc. During the year 2016-17, the State Government of Maharashtra has submitted a proposal for skill upgradation envisaging financial assistance of ₹ 8,56,000/-. The same has duly been considered and a sum of ₹ 8,56,000/- has been released for skill upgradation of 40 weavers.

North Eastern Handicrafts and Handloom Development Corporation

312. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) the primary objectives of the North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation Ltd.;
- (b) the annual turnover of the Corporation during 2014-15 and 2015-16;
- (c) the total number of artisans benefited directly and indirectly by the Corporation during 2014-15 and 2015-16, State-wise; and
- (d) the names of the products being manufactured and traded by the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) The primary objectives of the North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation Ltd. (under the administrative control of Ministry of Development of North East Region) are as follows:—

- Providing financial, technical and other assistance to craftsmen, weavers, co-operatives and other establishments.
- Establish, operate and promote Sales Centres, like emporia, show-rooms, publicity offices and exhibition cells for improving accessibility of the goods.
- Organise production through co-operatives, artisans or its own production centres.
- Promote and operate schemes for development of handicrafts, handlooms and allied products.
- Establish production centres for those craft industries where the demand is growing.
- Provide training for multiplying and upgrading traditional skills.

(b) The annual turnover of the Corporation during 2014-15 and 2015-16 is as under:—

Year	Turnover (₹ in lakh)
2014-15	890.86
2015-16	1313.11
TOTAL	2203.97

(c) The total number of artisans benefitted directly and indirectly during 2014-15 and 2015-16 are as under:—

Year	Assam	Aurnachal Pradesh	Meghalaya	Mizoram	Nagaland	Manipur	Tripura	Sikkim
2014-15	895	15	121	12	213	198	117	17
2015-16	947	12	80	12	247	203	93	30

(d) The Corporation sources and procures Handicrafts and Handlooms products from artisans, weavers and entrepreneurs of the North Eastern Region for trading the same through its emporia and Regional Sales Promotion Offices located at Shillong, Guwahati, Kolkata, New Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai. Besides, the Corporation also undertakes production of cane based chairs, sofa sets, divan etc. in its Craft Promotion Centre.

The details of products manufactured and traded by the Corporation are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of products manufactured and traded by the North-Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
List of Handicraft Items		
1.	Bamboo Sofa Set	
2.	Bamboo Divan	
3.	Bamboo Murah	
4.	Bamboo Chair	
5.	Bamboo Flower Vase	
6.	Bamboo Pipe Tray	
7.	Bamboo Tea Tray	
8.	Bamboo Beer Mug	
9.	Bamboo Cup	
10.	Bamboo Fruits Basket	
11.	Bamboo Hanging Lamp	
12.	Bamboo Plywood Scenery	
13.	Bamboo Pen Stand	

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
14.	Bamboo Candle Stand	
15.	Bamboo Bangles	
16.	Bamboo Hair Clip	
17.	Bamboo Letter Rack	
18.	Bamboo Bread Tray	
19.	Bamboo Magazine Rack	
20.	Bamboo Dhup Stand	
21.	Bamboo Tooth Brush Holder	
22.	Bamboo Buffalo Head	
23.	Bamboo Ganesh Head	
24.	Bamboo Deer Head	
25.	Bamboo Folding Chair	
26.	Bamboo Easy Chair	
27.	Bamboo Flute	
28.	Bamboo Full Round/Half Round Fan	
29.	Bamboo Wall Scenery	
30.	Bamboo Dining Table Mat	
31.	Cane Woven VIP Sofa Set	
32.	Cane Woven Apple Sofa Set	
33.	Cane Woven Dull Sofa Set	
34.	Cane Japanese Box Sofa Set	
35.	Cane Full Knitting Sofa Set	
36.	Cane Woven Maharaja Sofa Set	
37.	Cane Laundry Basket	
38.	Cane Woven Bar Murah	
39.	Cane Full Woven Picnic Basket	
40.	Cane Full Woven Japanese Long Flower Vase	

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
41.	Cane Woven Coffee Tray	
42.	Cane Woven Full Knitting Rocking Chair	
43.	Cane Woven Split Mizo Sofa Set	
44.	Cane Woven Gents Murah	
45.	Cane Woven Hexagonal Murah	
46.	Cane Woven Deluxe Murah	
47.	Cane High Back Chair	
48.	Cane Back Rest Murah	
49.	Cane Benny Sofa Set	
50.	Cane Knitting Sofa Set	
51.	Cane Antique Sofa Set	
52.	Cane High Back Chair	
53.	Cane Woven Planter	
54.	Cane Food Trolley	
55.	Cane Oriental Murah	
56.	Sital Patti	
57.	Kauna Cushion	
58.	Kauna Basket	
59.	Kauna Bag	
60.	Kauna Puja Mat	
61.	Khashi Khaw	
62.	Khashi Shanquai	
63.	Khashi Tiffin Basket	
64.	Khashi Square Shang	
65.	Wood Craft (Yak, Hornbill and Elephant) from Arunachal Pradesh	
66.	Carpet (Arunachal Pradesh)	

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
List of Handloom Items		
Assam		
1.	Guna Silk Saree	
2.	Suta Work Silk Saree	
3.	Guna Silk Pair	
4.	Suta Work Silk Pair	
5.	Muga Silk	
6.	Muga Silk Pair	
7.	Toss Silk	
8.	Toss Silk Pair	
9.	Cotton Saree	
10.	Cotton Jora	
11.	Guna Suta Jora	
12.	Garee Saree	
13.	Garee Mekhela Chadar	
14.	Silk Salenge Chadar	
15.	Tassar Mekhela	
16.	Muga Mekhela	
17.	Assam Silk Mekhela	
18.	Tassar Reha	
19.	Tassar Reha Pair	
20.	Muga Mixed Jacquard Saree	
21.	Tassar Shirt	
22.	Pat Silk Punjabi Shirt	
23.	Silk Gamocha	
24.	Cotton Phulam Gamocha	
25.	Gents Eri Silk Shawl	

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
26.	Ladies Eri Silk Shawl	
27.	Eri Stole	
28.	Muga Plain Than	
29.	Silk Palin Than	
30.	Tassar Plain Than	
31.	Eri Shirt	
32.	Muga Shirt	
33.	Eri Coat	
34.	Muga Coat	
35.	Karbi Shawl	
36.	Karbi Poho (Muffler)	
37.	Boro Dakhana	
38.	Boro Muffler	
39.	Miri Mekhela Chader	

Meghalaya

1. Jain Sem Khashi and Jayantia Dress
2. Dakmanda Garo Dress
3. Wrap Around
4. Garo Muffler

Manipur

1. Manipur Silk Saree
2. Manipur Cotton Saree
3. Manipur Dupata
4. Manipur Salwar Set
5. Manipur Bed Cover
6. Manipur Phanak
7. Manipur Matak

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
Nagaland		
1.	Naga Wrap Around	
2.	Naga Woolen Kuki Shawl	
3.	Lotha Waist Coat	
4.	AO Shawl	
5.	Angami Shawl	
6.	Kanayakk Shawl	
7.	Kuki Shawl	
8.	Naga Dressing Gown	
9.	Naga Skirt and Top	
10.	Naga Neck Tie	
11.	Naga Muffler	
12.	Naga Modern Shawl	
13.	Naga Jacket	
14.	Naga Shoulder Bag	
Mizoram		
1.	Mizo Shawl	
2.	Mizo Pawn	
3.	Wrap Around	
Arunachal Pradesh		
1.	Galuk (Dress)	
2.	Adi Gale	
3.	Adi Mopin	
4.	Adi Galuk	
Tripura		
1.	Richa	
2.	Palenpachre	

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Remarks
3.	Achal	
4.	Doby Pat Set	
5.	Chanati Pat Set	
6.	Pachara	
7.	Jacket	
8.	Riang Pachara	
9.	Gamcha	

New Textile Policy

313. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether creation of jobs and boosting of export is targeted in the New Textile Policy of the Government, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the main initiatives of the New Textile Policy?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) and (b) The New National Textile Policy is under formulation and the Ministry is currently engaged in stakeholder consultations with respect to all segments of the industry.

Development of sericulture

314. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by Government to support development of sericulture activities, particularly in the State of Tamil Nadu; and

(b) the details of funds allocated and utilised for development of sericulture activities in the last two years and the current year?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Government through Central Silk Board (CSB) had implemented a Centrally Sponsored Scheme viz. 'Catalytic Development Programme' (CDP) in various States including Tamil Nadu during Twelfth Plan Period (upto 2014-15) to synergize and disseminate technologies and innovations developed by R&D units of CSB. The objective under the scheme was to incentivise investment among stakeholders to enhance production, productivity and quality of silk. The components under the CDP envisaged strengthening and creation of silkworm seed infrastructure, development of farm and post-cocoon

infrastructure and creation of better marketing facilities to ensure remunerative price to primary producers etc.

Consequent upon closure of CDP with effect from 2015-16, Government through Central Silk Board has been implementing a restructured Central Sector Scheme viz 'Integrated Scheme for the Development of Silk Industry' for development of Sericulture industry in various States including Tamil Nadu, focusing on intervention in critical areas such as Feed, Seed, Breed, Post Cocoon Technology and Capacity Building. The Scheme has the following components:—

- (i) Research and Development, Training, Transfer of Technology and IT Initiatives
- (ii) Seed Organization
- (iii) Coordination and Market Development
- (iv) Quality Certification Systems and Brand Promotion and Technology up-gradation

(b) The details of funds allocated/released and utilized for development of sericulture activities in Tamil Nadu during the last two years (2014-15 and 2015-16) and in the current year (2016-17) are as follows:—

Funds released by government and utilized by Tamil Nadu during the last two years and current year

(₹ in lakhs)

2014-15		2015-16		2016-17
Funds Released	Utilized	Funds Released	Utilized	Funds Released
1408.51	1408.51	490.84	203.07	576.98

Welfare schemes for weavers of Varanasi

315. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes announced for the benefit of weavers of Varanasi since 2014;

(b) whether demonetisation has affected the weavers of Varanasi, the details of any estimation of the loss to this industry post 8 November, 2016, if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has come out with any scheme to help these weavers, if so, the details of beneficiaries of the schemes; and

(d) if not, the reasons for this attitude of Government towards these dying industries?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a), (c) and (d) In the Budget 2014-15, the Government announced setting up of Trade Facilitation Centre and Crafts Museum (TFC&CM) at Varanasi to develop and promote handloom products and carry forward the rich tradition of handlooms of Varanasi. The estimated cost of project is ₹ 300 crore. The first phase of the Project consisting of Crafts Museum, Entrance Plaza and Shopping arcade has been inaugurated on 22nd December, 2016.

Ten block level clusters have been sanctioned in different blocks/urban areas of Varanasi at a total project cost of ₹ 7.89 crore with Central Share of ₹ 7.70 crore and first installment of ₹ 5.12 crore released, covering 4129 weavers.

Nine Common Facility Centres (CFCs) alongwith Common Service Centres (CSCs) have been set up in different blocks/urban areas to provide facilities like training, yarn, dyeing, warping, IT enabled services etc. CSC provides services like banking, Aadhar Card, e-commerce, e-ticketing, Mobile charging etc. So far, more than 21000 persons have benefitted.

(b) The Government has taken several steps to help weavers in opening bank accounts and taking benefits of digital payment modes. The Common Facility Centres have taken banking services to the door step of handloom weavers. Several camps have been held in Varanasi to train the handloom weavers in accessing digital payment modes. 307 such camps were organised in Varanasi in which 12502 persons participated. Micro ATM/Banking Correspondent(BC) facility was extended in association with various Banks for easy withdrawal of money. National Handloom Development Corporation has also implemented e-Dhaga Mobile App which has facility of making online payment for purchase of yarn. E-commerce players have been facilitated to work with handloom weavers of Varanasi with the arrangements that the sale proceeds are transferred into their bank accounts.

Welfare of jute workers

316. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA:

SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the miserable condition of producers, labourers and artisans engaged in the Jute industry, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of schemes/programmes drawn for the development of Jute industry, including welfare of jute workers;

(c) the funds allocated, utilised and progress made in improving the quality of life of jute workers during the last three years; and

(d) the various steps taken/being taken by Government to provide them with sufficient marketing facilities for improving their living standards?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) In order to assess the living conditions of jute workers, a study on the Socio-Economic Conditions of Jute Mill Workers was conducted in 2015-16 by National Jute Board (NJB). The findings of the study, *inter alia*, indicate that 96.4% workers have electricity in their houses; that 91% of the families have piped water supply; that 99% of the workers have access to toilets; and that the mill workers have health coverage under ESI.

(b) to (d) Government of India provides an assured market to the jute sector under the Jute Packaging Materials Act (JPM), 1987. Under this Act, Government has mandated that 90% of foodgrains and 20% of sugar be packed in jute bags. The annual subsidy for this amounts to ₹ 5500 crore approximately. Apart from this, the National Jute Board (NJB) has been implementing several measures for the benefit of workers, artisans and small producers and for promotion of the jute industry. These include:—

- (i) Workers' Welfare Scheme (Sulabh Sauchalaya) for improvement of sanitation, health facilities and working conditions of jute mill workers.
- (ii) Incentives to Children of Jute Mill Workers for extending support to the Workers' families towards education of their children through a scholarship scheme.
- (iii) Export Market Development Assistance Scheme to facilitate registered manufacturer exporters of jute products to participate in international fairs and take business delegations abroad for export promotion of lifestyle and other diversified jute products.
- (iv) Retail Outlet of Jute Diversified Products Scheme for providing assistance to jute entrepreneurs for opening of outlets of jute lifestyle jute products in Metro Cities, State Capitals, District Head Offices and Tourist Spots; and
- (v) Focused Market Initiatives for organising and participation in Jute Fairs, National Fairs/Regional Fairs, Export oriented fairs in India and abroad to extend marketing support to the artisans, small and micro entrepreneurs:

The details of the above initiatives and the funds utilised under the above Schemes are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of Interventions by the National Jute Board during the last 3 years for Development of the Jute Industry and Welfare of Jute Workers

(i) Workers' Welfare Scheme (Sulabh Sauchalaya):

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
₹ lakhs	305.84	194.33	249.46
No. of Toilet Blocks	17	13	12
No. of Mills	14	9	9

(ii) Incentives to successful children of jute mill workers

Support provided to 7546 children of Jute Mill workers for being successful in secondary and higher secondary examinations and also to successful graduate and post graduate children:—

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
₹ lakhs	122.30	187.20	246.40
No. of Students	1674	2721	3151

(iii) Export Market Development Assistance Scheme:

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
₹ lakhs	230.09	272.78	306.48
No. of Beneficiaries	61	51	63

(iv) Retail Outlet of Jute Diversified Products Scheme:

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
₹ lakhs	84.78	71.11	94.75
No. of Outlets	10	11	20

(v) Focused Market Initiatives:

Sl. No.	Activity	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1.	No. of fairs	73	61	49
2.	No. of units which participated in the fairs	1211	898	682
3.	Expenditure	₹ 709 lakhs	₹ 551 lakhs	₹ 273 lakhs

The House then adjourned for lunch at one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty minutes past two of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair.*

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Karnataka): Sir, I have a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me first do the introduction. I will allow you. Don't start with point of order as soon as I come.

Now, Private Members' Legislative Business — Bills for introduction. Shri Rajkumar Dhoot. He is not present. Shri Bhupender Yadav. He is not present.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (Amendment of Articles 109, 117, 198 and 207)

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO (Telangana): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

The Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2016

SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Karnataka): Sir, my point of order is on this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is correct. After introduction, I will allow you. Shri Shantaram Naik. He is not present. Shri Pradeep Tamta. He is not present. Shrimati Vandana Chavan. She is not present. Dr. Kanwar Deep Singh. He is not present. Shri Husain Dalwai. He is not present. Shri Sanjay Seth. He is not present. Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy. He is not present.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (Amendment of Article 366)

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY (West Bengal): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2016

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

The Population (Stabilization) Bill, 2017

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to increase the minimum age of marriage for women from eighteen years to twenty-one years and to establish a National Population Stabilization Authority to look into the schemes to encourage two child norm and having an appropriate gap between children, incentivizing adoption, creating recreational centres in villages, formulating policies wherein certain minimum criteria is present before a family can start having children and for all matters connected herewith and incidental thereto.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

**The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2017
(Insertion of New Articles 275A and 371K)**

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has Shri Sanjay Seth come?

SHRI SANJAY SETH (Uttar Pradesh): Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can move the Bill.

The Right to Adequate Housing Bill, 2016

श्री संजय सेठ (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं प्रस्ताव करता हूँ कि देश में गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने वाले अथवा निम्न आय वर्गों के अंतर्गत आने वाले परिवारों हेतु एक निःशुल्क अथवा ऐसी उचित लागत पर आवास प्रदान करके तथा आवास खरीदने हेतु निम्न आय वर्गों के परिवारों को ब्याज मुक्त ऋण प्रदान कर उनके लिए यथोचित निवास-गृह का उपबंध करने तथा तत्संसक्त और उसके आनुषंगिक विषयों का उपबंध करने के लिए एक विधेयक को पुरःस्थापित करने की अनुमति दी जाए।

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

श्री संजय सेठ: महोदय, मैं विधेयक को पुरःस्थापित करता हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now we will take up further consideration of the Bill. Today, being Friday, the House will sit up to 5.00 P.M. Do you all agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

RE. CLARIFICATION ON A MONEY BILL AND A FINANCIAL BILL

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is your point, Shri Jairam Ramesh?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, please listen to me carefully because it is a very important point of order. It has a bearing on all the 30 Bills that have been listed today in today's List of Business and it will have a bearing on all Private Members' Bills in future. So, please bear with me for a couple of minutes, Sir. Sir, I am very careful. I am not going to say anything which will force you to expunge what I said.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why do you think like that?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Last time, on a Private Members' Bill, you ended up expunging it. I will be very careful.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no; I will be very careful to expunge if there is anything unparliamentary.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: I am very careful, Sir. Sir, we all know under which Rule of the Rajya Sabha's Rule of Procedure and Conduct of Business a particular Private Members' Bill is classified as a 'Money Bill' or 'not a Money Bill'. We all know that. It is there in the Constitution. It is there in the Rules of Procedure. The decision of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha is final. You refer to it if there is a doubt and the Speaker gives a decision. So, that chapter is over. My clarification which

I am seeking from you relates not to Money Bills, but relates to Financial Bills of Category A. And, I have three clarifications to seek from you. First, I would like to know under which rule of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States a particular Private Member's Bill is classified as a Financial Bill of Category 'A'. This is number one.

The second one is: I would like to know under which rule of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States a reference is made to the Ministry of Law and Justice for determining whether a Private Member's Bill is a Financial Bill of Category 'A'.

My third clarification from you is: Under which rule of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States is the decision of the Lok Sabha Secretary-General — not the hon. Speaker — taken as the final decision whether a Private Member's Bill is a Financial Bill of Category 'A'.

So, in short, Sir, my clarification is on Financial Bill of Category 'A'. I have three questions: First, which rule is used to determine whether a Bill is Financial Bill of Category 'A'. Second, under which rule does the Rajya Sabha make a reference to the Ministry of Law and Justice to determine whether it is a Financial Bill of Category 'A'. And, third, under which rule does the Rajya Sabha accept decision of the Lok Sabha Secretary-General on that particular Bill being a Financial Bill of Category 'A'?

Sir, these clarifications affect all Private Members' Bills. It affects the independent functioning, autonomy and dignity of this House and it is because of this I have raised the point of order. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now, I understood, you are very clever and intelligent too, because you are indirectly coming back to a particular Bill on which there is a ruling.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, it is only out of academic interest I have asked.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is why I have said you are very clever. I can appreciate the academic aspect. Since you did not refer to any particular ruling, I come to what you said. First you want to know as to who will decide that it is a Financial Bill.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Under which rule?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will tell you. The Constitution is very clear about the Money Bill and the Constitution also mentioned clearly what constitutes

a Financial Bill. With regard to Money Bill, if any question is raised or if there is any doubt, certainly, it is the hon. Speaker who will decide. But, with regard to Financial Bill, we need not refer it to the Speaker; it is for us to decide and the decision will be taken here. That is number one. But, it is again according to the provisions of the Constitution and rules, if there are any. That is relating to Financial Bill. So, we will take the decision.

What you want to ask, as per my understanding, is who decided that it is a Financial Bill? We decided it as a Financial Bill. For that, we are not asking the Speaker.

What is your second question?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Under which rule is a reference made to the Ministry of Law and Justice?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have asked that question. You did not say, but I can say this. You asked that question out of a ruling given here because there is a reference. I know that. That is why you have asked it. But, you are intelligent enough not to divulge it; I understand that. I appreciate your keenness. But, the point is this. That is a procedural matter, done in the Secretariat. Therefore, it cannot be discussed here. However, you are free to approach the Chairman in his Chamber and raise this issue. This being a Secretariat matter, I cannot allow a discussion on this here. *...(Interruptions)...*

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO (Telangana): But, Sir, other Members also have a right to know as to what is happening behind the curtains. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: This is not an issue of one Bill. It affects all the Members. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes; yes. I do not dispute your point. Even though there is no point of order in what you have said, yet I concede that prima facie there is some point in it. I concede that. That is why *...(Interruptions)...* Please sit down, Dr. Ramachandra Rao. I know you are interested in this. I also know that you are behind it. So, please sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* Please sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* You are not only standing behind, you are behind it. Please sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* Please sit down. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, that remark of yours that he is behind it *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is standing behind you. That is why I have said this. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: He is only physically behind me, not behind it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. You put it like that. I have no problem.

श्री मोहम्मद अली खान (आंध्र प्रदेश): डिप्टी चेयरमैन सर, यह मुद्दा खाली श्री जयराम रमेश से जुड़ा नहीं है, यह इस हाउस से जुड़ा है। इसलिए इसका disposal भी हाउस के अंदर होना चाहिए।

† جناب محمد علی خان: ڈپٹی چیئرمین سر، یہ مدعا خالی شری جے رام رمیش سے جڑا نہیں ہے، یہ اس ہاؤس سے جڑا ہے۔ اس لئے اس کا disposal بھی ہاؤس کے اندر ہونا چاہئے۔

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no. Whatever reply is to be given, I am giving. I replied to the first point, 'Who decides'? We decide. Second, what is the rule? It is decided according to the provisions of the Constitution. But, since referring a Bill to the Law Ministry is a procedural matter, which is dealt with by the Secretariat, of course, the ultimate responsibility lies with the hon. Chairman. But, we cannot discuss a Secretariat's matter here. My advice is that you can approach the hon. Chairman in his Chamber. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. K. KESHAVA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): Then, I request you also to be present there. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no. You have not raised it. Only he has raised it. ...*(Interruptions)*... Then, what was your third point?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: My third point is, under which rule the Rajya Sabha decides on the decision of the Secretary-General, Lok Sabha, whether a Bill is a financial Bill or not? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is no rule by which we decide. We go by the advice, if at all there is any, of our Secretary-General, not the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha. We do not seek advice from the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha. We do not do that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, what you have said forces me to refer to a case in the recent past. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I had already told you. ...*(Interruptions)*... I have understood. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Two months ago, the observation of the Secretary-General of Lok Sabha was quoted to determine whether a Bill ...*(Interruptions)*...

† Transliteration in Urdu script.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no. I have got your point. It is a public document. It is in the ruling. In the ruling, it is stated that the Lok Sabha Secretary-General 'opined'. So, that was an opinion. It was only an opinion. Anybody can give an opinion. I can listen to you and your opinion can also be accepted. We have our own Secretariat. We have our own Secretary-General. But, we simply cannot reject that simply because the Secretary-General, Lok Sabha, has opined like that. That's all. Nothing more than that. That was only an opinion. We go by the decision of the Speaker, Lok Sabha, with regard to the Money Bill. But, the point you are referring here was only an opinion. Whatever ruling was given, it was our ruling. And, that is valid also. I think, I have replied to all the three questions.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: No, Sir. I am not satisfied. Whether a financial Bill is of Category 'A' or not, you are saying, is determined by this House. But, two months ago ...(Interruptions)... We were given to understand that that was not the basis for deciding whether it was a financial Bill or not. The basis was: Number one, the Lok Sabha Secretary-General; number two, the Ministry of Law and Justice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is only a reference.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Nowhere was it mentioned, Rajya Sabha Secretariat.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That was only a reference made, might have been made or might not have been made. But it is there. I accept, in the ruling it is there. Reference was made.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Under which rule did you make that reference?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. I have told you that point. That is a procedural matter. I am not ready to reply to that or discuss it. That is a procedural matter. You may approach the hon. Chairman. That's all. That is over. Okay. Nothing more.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Sir, I should also be allowed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. That is enough.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: I beg the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, okay. Nothing more. That is enough. Now, further consideration of the Bill by Shri Tiruchi Siva. Mr. Siva, you spoke for five minutes that day. So, you will continue.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS — Contd.**The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2015 (Amendment of Article 324)[†]**

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, my Bill is to further amend the Constitution of India. Why it is needed, I have to elucidate first. Article 324 of the Constitution says, "The superintendence, direction and control of elections... shall be vested in the Election Commission." In Article 324 (6), it says, "The President, or the Governor of a State, shall, when so requested by the Election Commission, make available to the Election Commission or to a Regional Commissioner such staff as may be necessary for the discharge of the functions conferred on the Election Commission by clause (1)." Sir, my Amendment is that, here, alongwith 'such staff as may be necessary', 'excluding the teachers' may be inserted. Because of the appointment of teachers as electoral officers, there is a lot of absenteeism of teachers in schools and a lot of repercussion has been felt. Many people belonging to the teacher community approached me and expressed their concerns. Because of being employed for election duty, they undergo a lot of strain, and because of that their concentration on studies is affected. Sir, the American Commission on Teachers' Education very rightly observes that the quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of citizens depend, though not exclusively but in critical measure, upon the quality of their education. The education, undoubtedly, depends upon a single factor, that is, the quality of teachers. Sir, the importance of teachers is no secret. Schools and societies seek out for the best teachers they could get because of the belief that the success of the students depends only on teachers. A teacher not only imparts education but also inspires and motivates the students to grow and develop as good citizens. The quality and accent of learner achievement is certainly determined, primarily, by teachers' competence, sensitivity and teachers' motivation. A true democracy is one where education is universal. But in our country, after many decades of Independence, that is, in the dawn of the 21st Century only, the children aged 6 to 14 of our nation gained the Fundamental Right to Education under Article 21 (A). It says that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years in such a manner as the State may by law determine. Sir, India's educational report card leaves ample room for improvement. In 2016, the World Economic Forum's Human Capital Index, which takes into account educational quality in addition to access, ranked India at 105 out of 130 countries. It is a very sorry State of affairs. A developing country, rather a developed country, which is expected to be number one at the global level on many grounds, whereas in education, it is placed at the 105th place among 130 countries. Further, as per the Annual Status of Education Report Survey 2016, which is administered by the

[†] Further Consideration of the notion moved on 5th August, 2016.

Indian NGO, PRATHAM, it was found that learning of mathematics is a serious and major source of concern. As per all-India figures, rural figures especially, for basic arithmetic in 2016, only 27 per cent of Class 3 students could do a basic two-digit subtraction. For Class 5 students, the proportion of students who could do a basic two-digit subtraction is, in fact, lower at 26.1 per cent. The reading levels of students is not much better either. As per the ASER Report, 46 per cent of Class 1 students could not even recognize the letters of their preferred language. For Class 3 students, only 25 per cent of the students were able to read a Standard 2 level text. In another independent survey commissioned in 2014 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, 60.64 lakh students were estimated to be out of school in the age group of 6-13 years. Again, the Ministry of HRD also commissioned two studies for the attendance assessment rate of students and teachers in 2006-07 and 2012-13. As per the study, 15.2 per cent of the teachers at primary schools were absent during 2012-13. The figure was worse for the upper primary schools, with teacher absenteeism at 16.9 per cent during 2012-13.

Sir, the importance of the role played by the Election Commission which is a constitutional body cannot be undermined. While the Parliament is empowered to frame law as regards conduct of elections, the 'superintendence, direction and control of holding the elections' is the sole responsibility of the Election Commission. Sir, recently, we got an information or a statistic that in Madhya Pradesh 4,000 schools don't have even one teacher. In this situation, when there are so many vacancies employment or appointment of teachers as Election Officers...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why is there no teacher in 4,000 schools?

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Yes. That has to be gone ...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are there no teachers, no qualified teachers?

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, schools don't have teachers at all.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We can get any number of teachers.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: It is very alarming, Sir, to receive that. And which are the States? I should say that, given that a total of 9,07,585 posts of teachers are vacant in the country. Already when so many vacancies are there, they are leaving the students without proper coaching. Even the teachers who are employed are sent to an election duty and they are being trained. Teachers, especially lady teachers, who go there, undergo a lot of sufferings. Any person who is employed or deputed for election duty is taken care of by other people whereas these teachers are not taken care of. They don't have any place to go and settle; they don't have any

[Shri Tiruchi Siva]

3.00 P.M.

place of convenience for lady teachers for two or three days and they undergo a lot of mental strain during that period, and they are also stamped with some political affinity whatever may happen there. And when they come back, their concentration on teaching the students come down. It is alarming, Sir. You yourself said this; 9,07,585 posts are vacant.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How is that possible? That is what I am thinking. Is it? How can it be?

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Day-before-yesterday also, a question came that even in the Central Universities, posts of some 6,000 professors are vacant. ...(*Interruptions*)... Yesterday only, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: For university professors, there may be shortage of qualified ranks.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: No, Sir. They are in abundance. Qualified candidates are available much in the country. It is only because of the recruitment process. It is the administrative mistake only, Sir. It is not because of lack of candidates. Why? They are, of course, qualified. But the recruitment process is not proper in this country. The Delhi University itself has got 3,000 and odd vacancies. It is very, very sad. We say that we are bothered about the standard of education whereas the universities are lying vacant without professors and the schools are having an alarming vacancy of 9,00,000 and all. See, I don't go into evasive collection of reports. Even the Ministry of HRD in 2014 titled 'Education for all towards Quality with Equity' says which are the vacancies lying in the States. I will say it very, very, shortly. In Uttar Pradesh, vacancies against sanctioned SSA, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Posts, are 1,24,196.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: My God! How can it be?

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Vacancies against total posts sanctioned under State Programme, 1,45,334. On the whole, Sir, in U.P. only, 2,69,539 vacancies are there. In Bihar, it is 2,19,066; in West Bengal, it is 1,05,200.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY (West Bengal): Sir, I would like to support him on this. That was so earlier, but recently, in this week, more than 50,000 Primary Teachers are being recruited.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: It has to be appreciated that the State Government is taking the initiative.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But this is a serious matter.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: In Jharkhand, it is 69,163.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is there anybody from the HRD Ministry? Nobody is here from the HRD Ministry. Then who would help me? ...(*Interruptions*)... The Parliamentary Affairs Minister is also not there. So, I would request Mr. M. J. Akbar to convey to the HRD Minister this very important point that in some States – if the numbers given here are correct – there are vacancies of more than a lakh teachers in Uttar Pradesh and a similar large number in Madhya Pradesh. If it is about the shortage of qualified teachers, there is no problem; we can have them from Kerala and Tamil Nadu that have enough number of qualified teachers. Fill up the vacancies. Otherwise, what is the point of education? Please convey the concern.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): Sir, we shall do that.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I have doubts about that. Many students pass out with the necessary qualifications and they are well-trained to become teachers, but they are not being employed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. You may proceed further.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: So many people come to us who have completed M.Phil. and B.Ed. degrees. They say, “Give us a job paying ₹ 5,000; we are ready to do any work.” So, it is not as if there is a lack of qualified teachers.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, on behalf of the teachers’ community, I express my thanks to the Chair, as you have instructed the Minister to take note of the issue.

Sir, given the large number of vacant posts of teachers, the absence of teachers from their regular teaching duties is adding to the distress of students. It has a major impact on students as it leads to non-completion of syllabi on time as well as low levels of learning.

Sir, the hon. Supreme Court, in its 2001 judgement on the *Election Commission of India versus St. Mary School and Others*, stated that ‘holding of an election is, no doubt, of paramount importance, but the education of children cannot be neglected for this purpose’. The Supreme Court has observed, “With the advent of technology, the requisitioning of a large number of people may not be necessary. We notice that the Election Commission has different roles to play. The Election Commission, in our opinion, can formulate an effective scheme to see that the service of a large number of teachers is not required.”

[Shri Tiruchi Siva]

Sir, this is an observation made by the Supreme Court, not me. Some of my colleagues here, when we had a discussion aside, said, "If teachers are not appointed, where else can we go?" There are alternate arrangements. There are retired teachers who are already trained. There are so many unemployed youth whom you could recruit, give training to and use for election duty, which is a short-term duty. As it is, these teachers are working for hours lesser than that prescribed under the RTE Act. In this situation, if they are taken away from their regular duty in schools and their strain distracts them from teaching the students in a proper manner, it is much worrisome.

Sir, the hon. Supreme Court further noted in its judgement, "The State of primary education in India is deplorable. There is a heavy dropout from the schools, particularly from amongst the girls." Sir, it would be important to note here that there is a huge pool of nonteaching staff and retired teachers who have experience in discharging election duties. It has been learnt recently that the Democratic Teachers Front had made a complaint to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and asked them to take stringent action against officials who had deputed teachers for non-educational duties. According to the DTF, the State of Punjab has 3,65,473 employees other than teachers who can carry out non-educational duties. Further, under the current structure, teachers are already putting in less than 45 hours of work and teachers in the State of Punjab taught only for 167 days as against the minimum of 220 days required for Class VIII.

Sir, in another judgement given by the Rajasthan High Court in May, 2015, in the *Syed Shahid Ali versus Director, Secondary Education and others*, the Court ordered that assigning additional non-teaching responsibilities to teachers needs to be seriously considered as it affects the primary responsibility of teaching, and the students are the worst sufferers because of such diversion of responsibilities. The Board results of the school in question showed a sharp decline in its performance, with the results of the students in Class X Mathematics Examination – Sir, this is, again, an alarming statistics – showing a decline from 77.41 per cent in 2010-11 to 41.17 per cent in 2011-12 and further, to a shocking low of 20.73 per cent in 2012-13. This is the result of the mathematics examination. When already much concentration has been diverted, it brings much worse situation when the teachers are diverted. This shows that teaching has been a casual duty when this additional responsibility is bestowed upon teachers. Sir, in the light of the Supreme Court's judgment, again I say, Sir, the Ministry of HRD issued guidelines on 13th of September, 2010. This clarified that Section 27 was placed to free teachers from deployment for non-educational duties other than those which are considered to be essential. Sadly, the guidelines

given by the Ministry have failed to ensure that the Election Commission does not appoint teachers for election duty during teaching hours. This has not only resulted in students losing several days of classroom study, but also in their lower grades and inadequate learning. This lack of attention not only hampers their learning, but, in the long run, might also result in their 'unemployability', not unemployment but 'unemployability'. Recently, the ISRO has given a statement that out of the passed-out engineering graduates in this country, Sir, only 26 per cent are employable. It is the ISRO's statement. Out of the total number of passed-out engineering graduates, only 26 per cent are 'employable'. In this case when the students are deprived of this sort of lack of teaching by the teachers, for they are deputed for some other non-teaching duties, unemployability will increase. It is not 'unemployment', again I say 'unemployability'. In addition to affecting the performance of students, deployment of teachers on non-teaching duties such as elections further reflects in the schools. Schools are institutes where democratic ideals such as equality, freedom and justice are instilled in individuals. For democracy to continue to thrive, students must be taught to value it as a way of life. Qualities such as tolerance, acceptance, global awareness, etc., in addition to the academic skills of mathematics, science and social science, rest within the teachers, in all possible ways, to shape the child to face this competitive world that exists today. Teachers' beliefs, thoughts, decisions and determination and all these things should be communicated to students. Educational matters occupy a major part of the psychological context of the teaching process. Sir, children, up to the age of 14, mostly at the time of working, are at school than at home. So, the responsibility of bringing up the children rests mostly with the teachers than the parents. In this case, when already there are a larger number of vacancies, the teachers who are already employed are diverted. This causes very serious and worrisome problem for the future. More educated and better educated citizens will also result in better governance and improved health outcome. Sir, the report I am quoting is a very, very good answer to the question when some people raise a question who else will be deputed. In the United States of America, local citizens above the age of 18 may volunteer to serve as election officers at a local polling station. These volunteers are given special training which would enable them to discharge their duties efficiently. According to a report 'Innovations in Election Administration', released by the Federal Election Commission of USA, 'One of the most surprising aspects of the volunteer programme is that requesting volunteer support actually appeals to people who otherwise may not consider working at a polling place. This opens up a whole new population of potential election workers, far beyond the limited resource base of retired senior citizens.' In Australia, the Australian Election Commission employs around 80,000 Australians on a short term temporary basis for electoral events and duties, and they are remunerated accordingly. Citizens of

[Shri Tiruchi Siva]

Australia, above the age of 18, can register with the Election Commission, and are thus deployed on election duties. Why can't our country follow the same? I think this is not wrong. It is a very good precedent. Those who are willing to serve as election officers can enroll themselves in the nearby ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the control over them if they misbehave? What will you do? What is the control over them if they do something hanky-panky? What will you do?

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, no one can be assured of that. No one can be assured how they will behave there. I don't want to degrade anyone. Whoever you may depute, we have only a trust on them that they will not act prejudicially. The same confidence or trust we have to have in the youth in this country. In fact, we should have more trust on them when they are offering their services themselves. Moreover, Sir, apart from the unemployed youth, the retired teachers also can be employed. Those who are already experienced in the election duties could be employed. This is the position, Sir.

Recently, in a press note, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Shri Katheria, said, "The Government is planning to relieve the teachers from the poll duties."

So, Sir, in my introductory speech, I would urge that keeping in view the interest of the nation, the future of the children who are in schools, and, the pain and suffering, which the teachers are undergoing while they are engaged in other non-teaching duties, this Bill should be passed. Due to these duties, teachers are not able to concentrate on teaching the students, thereby diminishing the already-declining standard of education in our nation. Apart from the vacancy position, which is very alarming, if this thing also continues, it will not help the education sector to grow. So, I urge the House to adopt this Bill.

Sir, since Mr. Katheria has already given a statement that the Government is planning to relieve the teachers from the poll duties, I sincerely hope that the Ministry will take necessary steps not to appoint teachers for election duties and it would suggest the Election Commission accordingly. For this, I have brought this Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2015 (Amendment of Article 324). Sir, addition of "such step excluding the teachers may be..." is my Amendment, Sir.

With these words, I move the Bill for consideration. Thank you very much.

The question was proposed.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभापति जी, मैं आपका धन्यवाद करती हूँ कि आपने इस बिल पर मुझे बोलने का अवसर दिया है, जो प्राइवेट मेम्बर्स बिल तिरुची शिवा जी लेकर आए हैं।

महोदय, यह एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण बिल है, जोकि अमेंडमेंट बिल है, क्योंकि जो शिक्षा है, वह हमारे बच्चों के फ्यूचर बनाने का, आने वाली पीढ़ियों का एक आधार है। अगर उसी में ही कमी है, अगर उसी में कमज़ोरी रह जाती है, तो हमारी जो आने वाली पीढ़ी है, आने वाली जो जेनरेशन है, वह आगे नहीं बढ़ सकती। यही नहीं, टीचर्स को केवल चुनाव के समय ही नहीं लगाया जाता, अध्यापकों की जमात ऐसी जमात है, जिसको आलू की तरह सब जगह फिट कर दिया जाता है। जैसे कहते हैं कि आलू को कहीं भी डाल दीजिए, किसी भी सब्जी में डाल दीजिए, वैसे ही यह अध्यापकों की जमात है। अगर आपको सेंसस का काम करवाना है, तब अध्यापकों को भेज दो, अगर आपको बिलो पॉवर्टी लाइन का सर्वे करवाना है, तब अध्यापकों को भेज दो, मतलब अध्यापक हो गये कि क्या हो गया! यह नहीं सोचा जाता कि जिन अध्यापकों के नीचे बच्चे पढ़ रहे हैं, उनका भविष्य क्या होगा? अभी जैसे इन्होंने बताया कि अध्यापकों की कितनी कमी है और विशेष करके जो प्राइमरी स्कूल्स हैं, जो पहली से पांचवीं तक की क्लासेज होती हैं, जहां बच्चों को 'ए', 'बी', 'सी' सिखानी है, '1', '2', '3' सिखाना है और 'क', 'ख', 'ग' सिखाना है, अगर वहां ही अध्यापक नहीं रहेंगे, तो हम नीचे कैसे डालेंगे? हम इतने-इतने बड़े टेक्निकल कॉलेजेज, मेडिकल कॉलेजेज, आईआईएम्स, एमबीए आदि सब कुछ खोल रहे हैं, लेकिन उन बच्चों की नींव नहीं बन रही है, क्योंकि वहां पर अध्यापक नहीं हैं। चुनाव के समय, जिस तरह से सुप्रीम कोर्ट की observation है, खास करके गांवों में ऐसा होता है कि जो टीचर है, वह पहले एक्सरसाइज के लिए जाएगा, उसको सिखाया जाएगा कि आपको किस तरह से वोटिंग मशीन हैंडल करनी है, वहां उसको तीन दिन लग जाते हैं। फिर चार दिन पहले वह पोलिंग बूथ पर पहुँच जाता है। अब बताइए कि बच्चों का कितना नुकसान होता है, उसकी भरपाई कौन करेगा और इसके लिए कौन जिम्मेदार है? इसलिए मैं कहना चाहूँगी कि इसमें अमेंडमेंट होना चाहिए। टीचर्स की ड्यूटी न केवल चुनाव के लिए बल्कि और किसी भी काम के लिए नहीं लगानी चाहिए, क्योंकि टीचर्स या अध्यापक हमारे बच्चों के कर्णधार हैं। अगर वे स्कूल में नहीं रहेंगे, तो बच्चे क्या पढ़ेंगे? विशेष करके गांवों के स्कूलों में जहां पर टीचर्स का होना बहुत जरूरी है, जहां पर पांचवीं क्लास तक के स्कूल के लिए या दसवीं या बारहवीं तक के स्कूल के लिए वैसे ही बहुत मुश्किल से अध्यापक मिलते हैं। जिन स्कूलों में टीचर्स की कमी होती है, वहां से भी उन टीचर्स को ऐसे कामों में लगा दिया जाता है। आप यह बताइए कि अगर हम अपने बच्चों के लिए अध्यापकों की कमी को दूर नहीं करेंगे और जो अध्यापक हैं, उनको ऐसे कामों में लगाएंगे, तो ऐसे में किस तरह से शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में उन्नति हो सकती है या उसको आगे बढ़ाया जा सकता है या उसमें इंप्रूवमेंट हो सकती है? देश में ऐसे ही टीचर्स की कमी है और इस तरह के कामों में टीचर्स की ड्यूटी लगाने से इसमें और कमी आ जाती है। इस संबंध में चुनाव आयोग को भी चाहिए कि वह सरकार को ऐसी instructions दें कि माइनस टीचर किया जाए यानी टीचर्स को इस काम में नहीं लगाया जाए। इसके अलावा बहुत सारे स्टाफ हैं, गवर्नमेंट के सारे ऑफिसेज भरे पड़े हैं, वे employees से overburdened हैं, उनको क्यों नहीं ऐसे कामों के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जाता है? क्लर्क्स हैं, superintendents हैं, supervisors हैं, कई विभाग हैं, जहां पर employees हैं, उन्हें क्यों नहीं ऐसे कामों में लगाया जाता है? कहीं प्रिंसिपल जाएगा, कहीं हेडमास्टर जाएगा, कहीं कोई और

[श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर]

टीचर जाएगा, ऐसा क्यों होता है? हम टीचर्स को इस तरह से क्यों देखते हैं? हम उनकी रिस्पेक्ट को क्यों नहीं देखते हैं कि वही हमारे बच्चों का भविष्य बनाने वाले हैं? इस संबंध में मैं चाहूंगी और कहूंगी कि इस अमेंडमेंट को माना जाना चाहिए और यह बिल्कुल किया जाना चाहिए ताकि अध्यापकों की ड्यूटी चुनाव में नहीं लगे। मैं तो यह भी कहना चाहती हूँ कि अध्यापकों की ड्यूटी किसी भी काम के लिए नहीं लगनी चाहिए। अंत में मैं तिरुची शिवा जी द्वारा प्रस्तुत किए गए इस बिल का समर्थन करती हूँ, बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

SHRI LA. GANESAN (Madhya Pradesh): Respected Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am very happy to have the opportunity to speak on this occasion. I have come here as a Member of the Rajya Sabha for the first time; as a Member of Parliament for the first time; and this is the first time that I have got a chance to speak. If you permit me, it may be a maiden speech. इस विषय पर बोलने के लिए इतना समय भी नहीं चाहिए, फिर भी तिरुची शिवा जी द्वारा प्रस्तुत किए गए अमेंडमेंट पर मैं अपने मन में जो सोच रहा हूँ, उसको मैं संक्षेप में रखना चाहता हूँ। I just want to briefly make two or three points on this.

I support him and I agree with the concern expressed by my good friend, Shri Tiruchi Siva. Nobody can object to that. Everybody agrees that this kind of treatment or work cannot be given at the cost of education. But the alternative has not been mentioned specifically. The alternative suggested here is that you pick up some people from outside. It is more dangerous today because the political situation or politics is not that much clean in our country. I am very sorry to say this. The Government servants and teachers are afraid of the Ruling Party in the States. Something happens in the polling booth and they are not able to prevent it. In that case, what can we expect from the people who will be picked up from outside? That leaves a question mark on it. That is why I say that we have to think about the alternative. Otherwise, the remedy will be more dangerous than the disease. That is the only point that I want to make. My objection is only to that.

As far as the suggestion or the concern expressed by him for the teachers, who are given the election duty, is concerned, I agree with him. But elections are a serious affair. Even hon. President of India mentioned in his speech about conducting the Lok Sabha and the Assembly elections simultaneously. So, that is also being considered on the other side. Instead of piecemeal amendments, holistic approach must be there. Let the Government at the Centre appoint a group of people or experts. Let them discuss. Let them even take into consideration the suggestion given by Mr. Siva and whatever laws and election rules we want to change. Once and for all, we will do it. This is the right time to do it. I have got my own suggestions. Where are the teachers employed in election work? In the beginning, they are employed for preparing the

electoral list. Unfortunately, after Independence, even now, the Election Commission is not able to prepare a perfect voter list. It is not so even today. Many names are left; many dead people are somehow voting even today; photos are changed; male becomes female and female becomes male; addresses are changed. Even today, this is happening. Even then, I appreciate our Election Commission. In a country like India, where we have got a large population and the only country in the whole world where such a large number of people is voting, we are efficiently conducting the elections. I accept it. But, even then, it is not perfect. That is why teachers are involved. My suggestion is this. Nowadays, people are not writing letters. Gradually the post office is losing its relevance because the *tapals* are not coming. Nobody is normally writing it. Everything has come into cell phone or internet. Fortunately, I have to really appreciate that our Government is making use of post office and now passport will be issued by post offices. Post Office becomes a banking system. So, it is a good thing. They are engaged. But, my suggestion is, involve the post office and involve the postman. He is the only person who is visiting every house not only for one programme as a duty, but almost daily, he is visiting the houses. He knows each and everybody in the house. By name, he can recognise everybody. Involve the post office and involve the postmen. Then, you can prepare the voter list almost *pucca*. This is my suggestion. So, teachers need not be involved at that time. This is one aspect I want to put forward.

Sir, the second thing is that percentage of voting is not increasing in spite of our efforts. I was very happy about the Election Commission last time. Even from the Election Commission, they made a propaganda that 100 per cent or at least 80 to 90 per cent voting should be there. Even then, in a city like Chennai, moreover in a constituency like South Madras, where more educated people are there, the percentage of voting is hardly 60 per cent. What is the reason for that? We have to take this into consideration. Whether we can give some incentives for voting or otherwise, negatively, we can award some punishment. That should also be thought of. While we are thinking about the whole election reforms, we have to take up all the aspects of it. These are all the aspects that we have to discuss in detail. Then, who will manage the election? There is a question mark. One small suggestion I can give. If it is a State election, naturally, the employees under the State Government are helping the State Government. I am sharing my experience of Tamil Nadu. This is the experience of Tamil Nadu. So, only Central Government employees should be involved in Assembly election. To a certain extent, that can solve the problem. ...*(Interruptions)*... Allow me to complete. ...*(Interruptions)*... Madam, I am not yielding to you. ...*(Interruptions)*... Allow me to continue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH (Tamil Nadu): For both Parliamentary as well as Assembly elections, the same teachers are there. Why are they concerned about the State Government? Whether it is AIADMK or DMK, it has nothing to do with that. It is not of that sort. You only make teachers accountable. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I think his views are based on his experience. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He did not speak about any party. *...(Interruptions)...* Vijilaji, he did not mention any party. *...(Interruptions)...* He didn't blame your party or any party. He only said it generally. *...(Interruptions)...* All right. Now, you sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* Your name is next. At that time, you can speak. Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* Your name is next. *...(Interruptions)...* Then, you can speak. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI LA. GANESAN: Though I have not mentioned any political party. *...(Interruptions)...* but dear friend, Mr. Siva, is silent. *...(Interruptions)...* Madam has. *....(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: She felt it. *...(Interruptions)...* Even though you did not mention any party, she felt it. *...(Interruptions)...* Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: I align with the.....*...(Interruptions)...* I support him. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. Sit down. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI LA. GANESAN: Sir, you have well understood about what I have not told publically. *...(Interruptions)...* As far as conducting simultaneous elections is concerned, I am one with that. There may be so many problems, as I already told you, experts should sit and discuss about it.

I would give you an example. Our very famous and able Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, visited Tamil Nadu. I was State General Secretary, Organisation In-charge of Tamil Nadu, I accompanied him. That was the time when BJP failed in the elections. We lost the rule. Mr. Shekhawat was the Chief Minister. I asked him, as I was told that he was a very able and efficient Chief Minister of Rajasthan, as to how it is that he could not win the election. That was the time when the Central Government had dismissed some three or four State Governments over December 6th incident at Ayodhya. In the by-election, BJP got defeated in Rajasthan. So, Mr. Shekhawat told me his experience. This is a very interesting experience which is relevant about conducting the simultaneous elections of

both Lok Sabha and Assemblies. He said, "You know what we will do. Just before the election, the State Government will announce all freebies and all concessions and no taxes. We will get elected. In the first year Budget, we will not tax the people. It will be very soft Budget. Anyhow, to run the Government we want money. The second year of the Budget will be a little harsh. The third year, whatever money we want, we will be very harsh and we will tax more. Unfortunately, just when we presented the Budget in the third year, my Government got dismissed and the people were angry with me. Again, in the fourth year it would be less and in fifth year, practically, there will be no taxes. So, what happens you know, the problem is with the Central Government". Now, today, the Election Commission has said that in the Budget you should not say anything which is favourable to the election-facing States. During the next year Budget time what is the guarantee that there will be no elections in other States of India? Every year there are some elections somewhere in India. Then, what will the Central Government do? The same thing happens with the State Governments also. Every time, it is there somewhere or other. So, the Central Government, only to persuade the voters, thinking about getting more votes, will not prepare a realistic Budget. That is the problem. That is why once in five years only the election should be there. That will solve all the problems of the Government. Not only that, the people have given mandate for a party. Allow them to work for four or five years and let them face the election. So, these are all the things, especially, about the national parties like BJP and the Congress Party, they may fail. And, so, everywhere, every year there will be some election in some State.

Yesterday, one of my colleagues has told about criticizing the Prime Minister going around on election campaigns. The Prime Minister does not want it. Allow him to work as Prime Minister. Allow the Ministers to work as Ministers. So, if it is once in five years, the Ministers can also concentrate on their respective responsibility. All these things should be put together.

Another point is about counting system nowadays. Why this much time? Recently, two years ago, there was an election in Sri Lanka. I was really surprised, the counting was over by the night and the results were declared early morning. Next day morning at 10 o' clock the Prime Minister took office. I was really surprised. Why can't we do it? So, all those things put together, I have mentioned only three-four points about the election. The points raised by Mr. Siva are very much relevant, but do not make amendment in the rules piecemeal. Let us all sit together. The entire election issue will be discussed by experts and then permanently there will be some solution about elections whatever it is. This is my point. Thank you very much for giving me the time.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Shri Ganesan. Now, Shrimati Vijila Sathyananth.

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, can I participate in both the discussions?
...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes; you can participate in this and in the next also.

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, now I have taken up my career in politics but earlier as I had served as a teacher, I could get the views of the teachers. Now several teachers remain engaged in non-academic activities, which include works related to the school funds, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyam Shiksha Abhiyan, thereby impacting the studies at the schools and violating Section 27 of the Right to Education Act, 2009, which clearly prohibits such duties. That allows only three duties — census, disaster and election duties, only on polling and counting days. But despite orders, I know that the teachers are made to do such other duties as the school heads don't relegate the work to the clerks. Now, in most of the schools, the Juniors/Assistants and the people who are used to do these jobs are very, very limited. It is a policy matter.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY) *in the Chair.*]

Even if they do, the clerks mostly refuse to carry out all the duties, thereby forcing the teachers to multitask. So the teachers have to teach as well as do all these works in addition. According to the document assessed by HT, the then DPI in 2007 had sent a letter to the then DEO, addressing some of the concerns which I read out in an article. The works not being done by the ministerial staff at the schools has been seriously noted by the officials. I would like to raise here many concerns including somewhere some teachers had very unfortunate happenings when they go to very remote villages for their election duties, for doing census and otherwise. But I also have another view in this. How could the Election Commission then conduct the elections? Who will be accountable for that? Only the teachers! The post office staff can also be involved. But how far can they be involved? We need a great volume of people. Every constituency needs about lakhs of people to be engaged in this task. So in this operation, the Election Commission of India needs accountable people. All the officials like the officials from the local bodies are involved in this duty. But they are not sufficient for this work. So, our Election Commission engages teachers in these three duties, *i.e.*, census, disaster and election duties. The point which I just want to add here is, just concentrate on academic work for teachers and bestow these activities during the vacation time. Likewise, we can have the Assembly elections and the Parliamentary elections together so that both

will be conducted at the same time and at a stretch, these people can be engaged during their summer holidays where their normal work will not get interrupted. That is what I wanted to put forth here. As I have been an academician, I want to support my people, the teachers.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Now, Dr. K. V. P. Ramachandra Rao.

DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO (Telangana): Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to support hon. Tiruchi Siva's Bill. In regard to deployment of teachers on election duties, recently the Election Commission has modernized the system of elections itself. Nowadays, it is not like olden days where you need to do a lot of paper work and need to do a lot of explaining to the voters. Sir, generation after generation, the voters are becoming wise. The teachers need not be there to teach them how to cast their vote. Sir, in this regard the damage is being done to primary and secondary teachers by deploying them on election duties. Students who are supposed to have a good foundation are getting disturbed because of the absence of teachers, and because of the tensions that teachers go through and training that they go through during election time. If the teachers are not deployed, we have to look at what the alternatives are. After modernization of the election procedure, the Election Commission can find people from various other sectors to conduct elections peacefully. I am very sure that they can come out with the alternatives with the help of the experts.

Once again, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to support Mr. Siva's Bill. Though he belongs to a party which doesn't believe in God but his name is Siva, still, I wholeheartedly support his Bill. Thank you.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (Telangana): Respected Vice- Chairman, Sir, by moving the Bill to highlight the issue of teachers' involvement in the electoral process, my elder hon. colleague, Mr. Tiruchi Siva is seeking to focus on the quality of education and to yield psychologically to the teaching fraternity so that the foundations for the future generation would be safe in their hands.

In 2007, the Supreme Court had concretely observed that the primary and secondary school teachers should not be deployed on electoral assignments to save them from discharging their educational responsibilities.

My concern is two-fold. Though the Government has looked at the issue of electoral conduction, it has deployed the Union Minister of Law to take note of the debate and reply to the points raised by the hon. Members. Here the Minister of Human Resource Development is having a larger responsibility to hear the

[Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu]

observations on this Bill because in schools we need to look at the non-teaching responsibilities of the teachers. Their non-teaching assignments include not only elections duties, Census duties, canvassing duties on certain national events. Not only that, they are made to attend to certain clerical duties also. They also carry out sort of watch and ward duties in the mid-day meal programmes in their schools. And because of all this, their concentration on teaching becomes much less with the result that ultimately the quality of education, particularly in Government schools, is rendered very poor, which is also one of the reasons why most of the parents do not show much interest in sending their children to Government schools. Teachers in Government schools are assigned duties to serve mid-day meals to school children. Everybody knows that each teacher foregoes at least a minimum of two periods of 45 minutes each daily for attending to mid-day meal duties and to ensure that the meals are prepared on time and served properly. In this backdrop of teachers attending to Census duties, election duties, and not only Lok Sabha elections but even Assembly elections, cooperative societies' elections, panchayat elections and so on, and also in the backdrop of school teachers being utilised as campaigners for certain national events, and keeping in mind the huge human resource available, with so huge unemployment, why should we not think on the lines the United States thinks, or on the lines the Australians think? In the United States, Sir, teachers are never deployed for election duties; they are never sent to polling booths or counting centres. In Australia, they have a practice of engaging volunteers for short periods for organising and conducting elections as and when they are held. This has to be the basis for our electoral reforms. I appreciate the initiatives taken by the Election Commission. Now, they give voter slips on their own to each and every registered voter. They also give acknowledgement slips whenever certain doubts are expressed regarding the utility of EVMs and their functioning. Certain improvements are giving confidence to voters now that they can vote properly and the fairness of results is also ensured. When the Election Commission is taking extra interest, why should the Union Government not come forward and think of having a para-voluntary force comprising able, registered, unemployed, educated and even qualified retired persons? With this voluntary force, we can conduct free and fair elections; we can have them on Census duties, in rescue and rehabilitation work, etc. We can use these volunteers even to take care of the mid-day meal programmes in schools and similarly student-related and community-related programmes. These two aspects fall under two different Ministries. I hope the Union Minister of Law would communicate the concerns of this House over the deployment of teachers for electoral duties to the Election Commission. But also we expect that the Ministry of Human Resource Development will take note of the necessity of keeping the teachers psychologically

free to enhance the quality of education and to give them only teaching and learning practices and keeping them away from the non-teaching roles. With this, we can ensure the students to have the confidence in the educational system and the parents will definitely be happy to send their children to the Government schools in large numbers. This is the requirement of the day to improve the quality of education and to improve the electoral process, and for that, let us think of para voluntary force to utilize and achieve the targeted goal. Thank you very much.

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, hon. Vice-Chairman. This is a Constitutional Amendment based upon the decision of the hon. High Court, which has been moved by our hon. Member. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons also, it is very clearly mentioned that accordingly, teachers are supposed to be assigned election duties only on Sundays and other holidays. The Supreme Court has held that the election work should not be entrusted to the teachers for fourteen days, that is, their work shall not be affected because of the election work. I may be permitted to read the relevant portion. I quote: "We, however, notice that Election Commission before us also categorically stated that as far as possible, teachers should be put on electoral rolls revision works on holidays, non-teaching days, non-teaching hours, whereas, non-teaching staff be put on duty any time. We, therefore, direct that all teaching staff shall be put on the duties of roll revisions and election works on holidays and non-teaching days. Teachers should not ordinarily be put on duty on teaching days and within teaching hours. Non-teaching staff, however, may be put on such duties on any day, at any time, if permissible in law." Again, for the sake of repetition, I read it. "We, therefore, direct all the teaching staff shall be put on duties of roll revisions and election works on holidays and non-teaching days." So, the direction of the hon. Supreme Court is that the teaching staff shall be put on duties of roll revisions and election works on holidays and non-teaching days. So, the entire teaching community is not excluded. This is my humble submission. So, they shall be put duties of roll revisions and election works on holidays and non-teaching days. This is what the Supreme Court judgment says. So, on working days, if it is affecting their classes, then, they shall not carry on with the work. My humble view is, subject to correction and approval by the hon. Members of this House, this Amendment is not at all required in pursuance of the directions of the hon. Supreme Court judgment. Article 324 of the Constitution of India vests the power of superintendence, direction and control of elections on the Election Commission. But, two very vital enactments were passed by our Parliament, namely, Representation of the People Act, 1950 and Representation of the People Act, 1951. These two enactments deal with requisitioning of officers for the purpose of election duties. So, I think, Section 159 is most important—staff of certain authorities

[Shri A. Navaneethakrishnan]

to be made available for election work, which include every local authority; every university established or incorporated by or under a Central, Provincial or State Act; a Government company defined; any other institution, concern or undertaking which is established by or under a Central, Provincial or State Act or which is controlled, or financed wholly or substantially by funds provided, directly or indirectly, by the Central Government or a State Government. So, if at all, the Government wants to take a policy-decision, the stakeholders may be consulted because now the people have more awareness. The law can't be passed without consulting the stakeholders. The persons going to be affected must be given an opportunity. So, the teachers' community may be given an opportunity to express what their views are. My interpretation, subject to correction and approval, is that the teaching community can't be employed during the teaching hours.

The Supreme Court further says that the teachers should not ordinarily be put on duties when they are on teaching duties. They are not totally excluded. Also, I am of the humble opinion that the teaching community is still maintaining an impartial and clean image about itself. They are the group of officials available in our governance who are discharging their duties while maintaining their impartiality. They are the real role-models for the students. They are the future of India. Being role-models for students, they act independently, judiciously and impartially. There could be one or two complaints, which could be the subject-matter for inquiry.

My humble submission, first of all, would be that the Constitutional Amendment is not at all required. If at all required, it should be done only after consultation with all the stakeholders. Only the necessary amendments may be made in these two enactments.

I thank Mr. Vice-Chairman and conclude.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, thank you for the opportunity given to me though I had not given my name earlier. Sir, the Private Member's Bill introduced by Shri Tiruchi Siva has a rationale. In fact, the teachers, as of today, are all deployed not only during elections but also for census duties which are detrimental to the interests of students. It is a well-known fact. In fact, there is a Supreme Court judgment, though not directly on this. I can bring it to your notice the essence of the Supreme Court judgment. It has categorically stated that to engage teachers as personal assistants, for which they are entitled, by the Ministers or Members of Parliament or Members of Assemblies is prohibited under law. There is no way that the teachers can be deployed either for political purposes or for electoral purposes. For that matter, it is so even for calculation of

the census. Therefore, the Private Member's Bill has got a rationale. There is no way that the apex court judgment can be deviated or violated.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Do you have the citation?

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: I don't have the citation, but I can produce it to you tomorrow. If you permit me, I can take a copy of the Supreme Court judgment and I can produce it to you. There is a specific prohibition imposed by the Supreme Court; by its verdict the deployment of teachers is specifically prohibited in this case. Therefore, I request this august House to adopt this Private Member's Bill and pass it so that the interests of the students are protected. Thank you very much, Sir.

डा. भूषण लाल जांगडे (छत्तीसगढ़): उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, जो चुनाव की प्रक्रिया है, उसमें काफी तादाद में हमारे कर्मचारियों की जरूरत पड़ती है। हमारे शिक्षक बंधुओं की इसमें बहुत संख्या रहती है और उनके माध्यम से ही चुनाव हो पाता है। शुरू से ही यह स्थिति हमारी चुनाव प्रक्रिया में रही है। हमारी चुनाव प्रक्रिया जब शुरू हुई थी, तो उस समय अलग-अलग पेटियां रहती थीं, उन अलग-अलग पेटियों में वोट डालना पड़ता था। उस समय जब हमारी यह चुनाव प्रक्रिया चली थी, तो उसमें केवल शिक्षक बंधु ही सहयोग दे पाते थे। अन्य कर्मचारियों की कमी के कारण से उस काम के लिए केवल शिक्षकों को ही लगाया जाता था, परन्तु धीरे-धीरे परिवर्तन होता रहा है। चूंकि आज मीडिया के कारण, इसके संचालन को लेकर बहुत सारे नए-नए उपकरण आने लगे हैं, इससे कुछ दिनों के बाद, जो हमारे तिरुची शिवा जी ने यह विधेयक रखा है, वह लागू हो सकता है, लेकिन अभी नहीं हो सकता है। उसका कारण यह है कि हमारे शिक्षकों की जो तादाद है, उसका उपयोग करना हमारे लिए जरूरी रहता है। यदि हम उसको अलग कर दें, तो आम नागरिकों से यह चुनाव की प्रक्रिया पूरी नहीं हो सकती है। दूसरी सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि इन शिक्षकों के पास एक तरह से समय है, क्योंकि अन्य कर्मचारियों की ड्यूटी पूरे बारह के बारह महीने रहती है, शिक्षकों के शिक्षकीय कार्य में कम से कम कुछ महीनों का गैप रहता है। अगर उस गैप में चुनाव की प्रक्रिया चले, तो आपत्ति नहीं होनी चाहिए। हमारा चुनाव का जो तरीका है, उसमें धीरे-धीरे परिवर्तन होने लगा है। जब चुनाव की प्रक्रिया में इस तरह सुधार होने लगेगा, तो निश्चित रूप से हमें चुनाव के कार्य में शिक्षकों की जरूरत नहीं पड़ेगी, ऐसा मैं महसूस करता हूँ।

महोदय, हम दूसरे देशों का अनुकरण करते हैं। दूसरे देशों में आम नागरिकों से इस तरह चुनाव की प्रक्रिया पूरी करने का मौका मिलता है, लेकिन हमारे यहां हम केवल सरकारी कर्मचारियों से ही चुनाव करवा सकते हैं और इसलिए सरकारी कर्मचारियों के नाम से हमें शिक्षकों का उपयोग करने के लिए बाध्य होना पड़ता है। आज हमारे देश में बहुत सी चीजों में सुधार होने की नौबत आई है। उस सुधार से मैं सोचता हूँ कि हमारे देश में जिस तरह से टेक्नीकल उपयोग बढ़ रहा है, उससे भविष्य में हमें इसका लाभ मिलेगा, ऐसा मैं महसूस करता हूँ। इसलिए मेरा खुद का और मेरे हिसाब से हमारे देश का मत है कि केवल शिक्षकों के द्वारा ही हमारे देश के चुनाव की प्रक्रिया पूरी हो सकेगी। इतना कहते हुए मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

4.00 P.M.

श्री शंकरभाई एन. वेगड़ (गुजरात): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, हमारे यहां पहले बैलेट पेपर से चुनाव होता था और उस बैलेट पेपर से चुनाव होने के बाद जब उसकी गिनती होती थी, तब एक दिन, दो दिन, तीन-तीन दिन तक गिनती का काम चलता था, लेकिन जब से हमारे चुनाव आयोग ने वोटिंग मशीन से चुनाव कराना शुरू किया, तब से तो दोपहर से शाम तक रिजल्ट आ जाता है। इस काम में जितना समय पहले शिक्षकों का बरबाद होता था, अब वह कम बरबाद हो रहा है। यह बात सही है कि छुट्टियों के दौरान बच्चों की पढ़ाई नहीं होती है, लेकिन पूरे विश्व में हमारा देश सबसे बड़ा लोकतांत्रिक देश है, इसलिए मेरे हिसाब से शिक्षकों का उपयोग अभी इसमें जरूरी है। इसका एक ही इलाज है, अगर समय बचाना है, टाइम बचाना है, हिन्दुस्तान की धनराशि बचानी है, तो जैसा हमारे प्रधान मंत्री जी ने आश्वान किया है, एक ही साथ चुनाव हों, लोक सभा के और हर स्टेट की विधान सभा के चुनाव एक ही साथ हो जाएं। इससे हिन्दुस्तान के सभी कर्मचारियों का समय भी बचेगा, धनराशि भी बचेगी और अच्छी तरह से चुनाव भी हो सकता है। इसलिए मेरा यह कहना है कि अभी ऐसा संशोधन, सुधार लाने की कोई जरूरत नहीं है। मैं इसको सपोर्ट नहीं करता हूँ, धन्यवाद।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE, AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): Thank you, Sir, for permitting me. The Bill was moved by Shri Tiruchi Siva. This is in respect to the Amendment of Article 324 of the Constitution of India where he has suggested that the present provision may be substituted by the provision that the teacher should not be involved in the process of election and he has suggested that “the President, or the Governor of a State, shall, when so requested by the Election Commission, make available to the Election Commission or to a Regional Commissioner such staff, excluding school teachers, as may be necessary for the discharge of the functions.” So, what is suggested by the hon. Member is that the school teacher may be excluded from participating in the process of election and in the Statement of Objects and Reasons the Supreme Court judgment has also been cited. And apart from it, it is stated that as per Article 21A of the Constitution of India, education is a fundamental right of children and that education of children is being affected. Therefore, teachers should not be deployed in the process of election and a reference to the provision of Section 27 of the Act of 2009 was also made. Now, Sir, apart from the Statement of Objects and Reasons, a reference of the Supreme Court judgment has been made, but a reference to the other direction of the Supreme Court has not been made. The Supreme Court direction is that the teacher should not be employed in the process of election, but the reference has not been made in the Statement of Objects and Reasons to the other direction that the teacher can be employed in the process of election in non-teaching hours, when holidays are there. Sir, as per Article 139 of the Representation of People’s Act, it is provided specifically. So, this Bill has not been moved for amendment of Section 159 of

the Representation of the People Act, 1951. In that Section a provision has been made that the Election Commission can requisite any staff and it includes teachers, Government servants and various authorities from various Departments because it is clearly mentioned that under this provision — kindly see, the Representation of the People Act where the provision has been made — that not only the teachers but the Election Commission can also requisite staff from the local authorities, staff from the universities, staff from Government companies as defined under the Companies Act and any other institution, concern or undertaking of the Government. So, not only the teachers from various streams and from various authorities, the other staff are also being requisited for conducting elections. For this purpose, no such amendment has been moved and this is a requirement of the law. Under the statute, the Election Commission can requisite the teachers and other staff from various other institutions. Now, so far as Article 21A of the Constitution is concerned, it speaks about the Fundamental Right of Education, but in no way the Fundamental Right of Education of the students is being interfered. And as far as Section 27 of the Act of 2009 is concerned, it specifically provides that the services of the teachers can be taken. Although the Act of 2009 came into effect after the Supreme Court judgment, but under this provision a specific provision has been made that the services of the teachers can be taken. Section 27 of the Act of 2009 says “prohibits deployment of teachers for non-educational purposes, other than decennial population census, disaster relief duties or duties relating to elections to local authority, State Legislatures and Parliament, as the case may be.”

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Is this the RTE Act?

SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY: Yes, The Right to Education Act. So, even under the RTE Act where the Fundamental Right of Education is prescribed, a provision has been made by Parliament that services of teachers can be requisitioned for the purpose of election of State Legislature, Parliament and election of local authorities and local bodies. Therefore, there is a specific provision. So, apart from Article 324 of the Constitution, there is also a provision under Section 159 of the Representation of the People Act. There is also a provision under Section 27 of the Right to Education Act. But, no such suggestion has been made by the hon. Member that amendment should also be carried out to these provisions since these are still in force. So, Sir, this provision was made under Section 27 after the judgment of the Supreme Court and it specifically provides that services of teachers can be requisitioned and teachers can be deployed in the process of election.

Coming to the judgment of the Supreme Court, there is no blanket order as mentioned by the hon. Member. Hon. Member has mentioned as if Supreme Court has directed that deployment of teachers is prohibited.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): No, no. The hon. Member said that it is an observation of the Supreme Court.

SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY: Sir, now, kindly see the observation of the Supreme Court. It is at para 32. It says, 'We would, however, notice that the Election Commission before us also categorically stated that as far as possible teacher would be put in electoral role, revision works on holidays, non-teaching days and non-teaching hours. Whereas, non-teaching staff be put on duty any time. We, therefore, direct that all the teaching staff shall be put on duty of roll revisions and election works on holidays and non-teaching days. Teachers should not ordinarily be put on duty on teaching days and within teaching hours.' So, in pursuance of this, the Election Commission, from time to time, issued orders and one such order was issued way back in 2008, making it clear to all the concerned and respective authorities that teachers should not be deployed in view of the Supreme Court judgment. The order was issued by the Election Commission on 28th January, 2008. Sir, with your permission, I wish to read it. It says, "As of now, a holiday is declared on poll day. The Commission desired that if the day of dispatch of polling party happen to be the teaching day for schools then that day should also be declared a local holiday for school, wherever necessary. The Commission further directed whether teachers are appointed as Presiding Officer or other Polling Officer, the training session for them shall be conducted, as far as practical, on holidays." So, this is the orders. There is not a single order. But, there are so many orders.

In view of the order of the hon. Supreme Court, the Election Commission has directed the following:

"Whenever teaching staff is put on duty of poll revision, the DEOs, EROs shall prescribe holiday and non-teaching days and non-teaching hours as the duty period of this work. Such appointees may be asked to avoid teaching hours and for undertaking roll revision work during roll revision wherever teachers are appointed as designated officers to make."

In view of the above, it is clear that even the Election Commission has taken precaution. So, the Bill moved by the hon. Member is devoid of any force and it lacks merit. The question is, in pursuance of the order of the hon. Supreme Court, the Election Commission has issued necessary orders and those orders are being followed.

Besides, we have to look at Article 51A of the Constitution which specifically provides the Fundamental Duties. It says, 'It shall be the duty of every citizen of India; (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so.' Conducting election is basically a sovereign function. It cannot be conducted through the outsourced staff of various agencies of the private people because it is a

question of accountability. It is a national service. Participation in democratic process is a national duty. It is not just a fundamental duty, but the process of democracy is the basic foundation of the Constitution of India. Apart from the constitutional provisions and apart from statutory provisions, the conduct of elections is just like a celebration. As per the basic structure of our Constitution, it is above Fundamental Rights. In case of a conflict between Fundamental Rights and the basic structure of the Constitution, the basic structure will have an overriding effect. So, the democracy is the essence of the Preamble of our Constitution, which is the basic structure of Constitution. Not only this, not only our students, even the foreign students visit India to see how elections are conducted in the biggest democracy of the world. They stay here for months together and study the election process. So, it is basically an education. It is not wastage of time. In other words, it is wrong to say that it is waste of teachers' time and wastage of teaching time. To my mind, not only the teachers, there must also be a participation of the students in the process of elections. So, I suggest Mr. Tiruchi Siva to move another Bill for making a provision that not only teachers, but students should also participate in the process of democracy because it is the cardinal principle of the Constitution of India and the Preamble of the Constitution of India. ...(*Interruptions*)... We are, now, in a digital world. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: He is provoking me. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): No; no. Please be cool.

SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY: Time is not far away, when we can have a 3-D animation form of education in all the schools all over the country. There are almost four lakh senior secondary schools in the country. So, the need of the teachers will be less. So, the participation of the teachers should be there in the election process. Participation of the students should be there in the election process, so that they can learn. It is a part of the education. We cannot say that it is not a part of the education. It is a part of the democratic process and helps us to learn about the strength of the democracy of our country. ...(*Interruptions*)... It has also been raised that there is a paucity of teachers. ...(*Interruptions*)... I have come to understand that the matter of the paucity of teachers is pending before the Supreme Court of India. So, I would not like to comment on that count. Moreover, it is not under the domain of our Ministry.

As I have said, the elections are democratic process and conducting elections is a sovereign function. We cannot outsource the staff from private bodies for this purpose. This duty has to be performed by the people who can be held accountable

[Shri P. P. Chaudhary]

and responsible. As I have already said, under section 159 of the Representation of People Act, 1959, not only teachers, the Election Commission takes staff not only from various Government departments, but also from the local authorities and even from the Government companies also. It is our duty to conduct free and fair elections. And, for this purpose, we need a large number of personnel to conduct the elections. It is only the schools that are spread in every part of the country. Their employees are spread all over the country. They are better equipped to participate in conduct of free and fair elections. Therefore, participation of teachers and also the participation of students should be made mandatory for a healthy democratic process. It is an experience which is gained by the teachers. It is an experience which can also be gained by the students. If participation of students is not there, then, participation of teachers could be there. More experience about how our democracy is functioning will be gained by the teachers, which can, in turn, be taught by them to students in the schools.

Coming to the number of booths, now, approximately, 10,00,000 polling booths are there in our country. Approximately, 8,00,000 polling personnel are employed. Therefore, teachers alone are not enough. Requisitions are sent by the Election Commission for conducting of elections. That is why, Sir, our hon. Prime Minister has suggested that there must be a deliberation on the issue of conducting of simultaneous elections of Parliament, (Lok Sabha) and the State Legislature. Sir, I thank all the Members who participated in the discussion — Shrimati Viplove Thakur, Shri La. Ganesan who suggested use of technology in education, Shrimati Vijila Sathyananth, Dr. K. V. P. Ramachandra Rao, Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu, Shri A. Navaneethakrishnan and Shri Shankarbhay Vegad. Sir, now, I request Shri Tiruchi Siva to kindly withdraw his Bill. Thank you very much, Sir.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, actually, I was in a mood to withdraw the Bill after having heard the Minister's reply. But his reply was not convincing to me. He spoke as a Law Minister and not as a people's representative. He should represent all sections of the society. When the Minister of HRD has gone out to say deliberations are on to find out the solutions so that teachers are not occupied in such non-academic work which adversely affects the education of children', the Law Minister is speaking controversial. Two Ministers in the same Government are contradicting themselves. Sir, my intention to move this Bill was with a concern about two sections — one is the student community and the other is the teacher community. The students are deprived of having their education with

the absenteeism of their school teachers. Already, I have said in my introductory speech — I think the hon. Law Minister was not here then — that there are about 9,00,000 posts vacant in this country. Even in his own State, — he knows very well — the number is not less than a lakh. For UP and all, I have cited statistics also; I don't want to repeat that. So, already, there are vacancies and the teachers who are presently employed are being deployed for non-educational duties! I don't disagree with you that every one should have a responsibility in conducting elections, in holding elections, or, to be a part of that. But who are you deploying? In what type of job are they involved in? For example, I would say that in Tamil Nadu, when we were the ruling party, when our Leader, Dr. Kalaignar, was the Chief Minister, he engaged only lady teachers up to the level of fifth standard, because only they know how to deal with the students of that age. So, students, who are our future, need more attention of the teachers. As I rightly pointed out at the very outset itself, the quality of a nation depends upon its citizens, the citizens' quality is determined in a way, at least, by way of education and education is, undoubtedly, determined by the quality of the teachers. You were suggesting that they could be used during holidays. So, the teachers don't require rest at all! Whole day, they will be at school, teaching students of different ages and of different temperaments, taking too much of pain; they have got their own families also; and, at the same time, you will also deploy them for noneducational duties, which means that teachers are not at all considered with some concern. So, the Minister, I think, spoke with a closed mind. He was not even able to convince me or say that it will be considered. The other Minister, who is related with the teachers and the students, ...(Interruptions)... — let me complete — has said that. I am glad that some people got themselves committed. They are against the teachers' community. Sir, the agony and the pain through which the teachers are undergoing when they are deployed for election duty, only they know that. I think, if opportunity warrants, some of the people would have listened to this debate. See, I have nothing personal with this. But a section of the society who is responsible for the future generation's upcoming, to bring them up, when they are in distress, when they are undergoing mental strain, when they are not able to take care of their family because the whole day, they will be in the school ...(Interruptions)... Let me complete.

SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY: Just a minute.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Let me complete. ...(Interruptions)... No, no. Please. I am not yielding. ...(Interruptions)... I will just conclude.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Please continue.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: They spend the whole of the day at school with the students, teaching them, preparing themselves also. When they go to the school next day, they have to prepare themselves what to teach, how to teach. Other than the academic syllabus, they also have to teach them the value of life, the moral values of life, ethics of life. All these responsibilities are vested with the teachers and they have got their own family also, whereas, you will deploy them even during holidays for the election or non-academic duties. I think, it means there is no concern for the teachers' community. So, in that respect, you could at least consider it. What I suggested, in USA and in Australia, they have some voluntary programme. When I said that some people who can offer themselves to work for election duty could be deployed for this purpose, some apprehension were raised even by my esteemed colleague, Mr. La. Ganesan, that they are not accountable. Who is accountable, who is not accountable, no one can be assured of. Everyone will be inclined to some political party or the other. A Judge in the court who is expected to be impartial, he also goes to a polling booth to vote. It doesn't mean that the party to which he is voting, he is associated with that. In a democratic country, every person has got a right to vote and that doesn't mean that they are inclined to that. So, the youth community, whom I said the 'unemployed youth', could be deployed for election duty after giving some proper training. You can deploy retired teachers. When you are re-recruiting teachers for teaching in the universities, why don't you recruit them or appoint them as electoral officer? So, I suggested some other alternates. You can find some other alternates if that doesn't work or if you have some apprehensions or you are doubtful about the sincerity and credibility of the youth community who are unemployed. They are going to become police officers, they are going to become teachers, and they are going to occupy many other positions. They are going to come here as lawmakers. How can you doubt them that if they go to polling booth, they will have some inclination? No. We cannot distrust anyone and we cannot undermine the sincerity or credibility of anyone. So, my basic intention is one that teachers must be relieved of this. Think of the lady teachers who go to these election booths. These polling booths will be in a remote corner somewhere where there will be no commodity. They don't have travelling facility. They will engage someone to go there. Where to stay at night? Who will take care of them? Who will provide them food? And those lady teachers don't have any place in a remotest village. In Bihar — the hon. Minister, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, will agree — in some polling booths, even those polling boxes are taken by way of boats. They don't have roads even. In such places, if some teachers are deployed, do we realize the pains that they undergo? Why don't we realize that? First of all, a politician or a law-maker should have a human approach. Then only law, then only everything

else comes. When you are citing Supreme Court and some people are telling that this amendment is not necessary, I am happy that you confirm yourself that you are against the teaching community, you don't have any soft corner towards them. I quote it again. The Supreme Court has rightly observed, 'Holding of an election is no doubt of paramount importance but the education of children cannot be neglected for this purpose! With an advent of technology, the requisitioning of a large number of people may not be necessary. We notice that the Election Commission has different roles to play. The Election Commission in our opinion can formulate an effective scheme to see that the services of a large number of teachers is not required. The state of primary education in India is in a deplorable condition. There is a heavy dropout from the schools particularly from the municipal schools. Sir, the Judiciary looks at issues on the lines of law but we, who are here as representatives of the people, should have an outlook of the people in a different manner. That should be human. We should have a concern for the poor, for the needy who are suffering. In that respect, so many teachers have represented to us. Some who have been teachers and now who are not teachers may not realize the pain or would have forgotten the pain. But those who are employed now have come to us and literally cried before me. It is that which prompted me to bring this Bill. He says, 'Why has he not brought a Bill for amending the RP Act?' That would follow, Mr. Minister. Even the Constitution is undergoing so many changes. We are amending the Constitution, which had been discussed at length for more than three years extensively in the Constituent Assembly. A Constitution that is considered superior all over the world is still undergoing amendments and you expect a Private Member Bill to bring forth all the amendments! Does your law or the Bills that you bring forth fully cover everything? Your Acts are amended again and again. They are relooked. So many things are being done. You brought the 2009 RP Act. What was the previous Act about? Why did you bring the 2009 Act? What does the RTE Act say? In a single Bill, I cannot provide that the RTE Act must be amended, the RP Act must be amended, the Constitution must be amended, and so on. That is not my job. My intention is to convey, through this House, or to create an awakening in the Government, to kindly consider and realize the pain and the agony that teachers of this country face because of their being deployed for election duties or non-academic duties. When we talk about post offices, they are also engaged in various activities, but what is the job that the teachers are doing? They are dealing with children. They are teaching them. They are preparing them for the future of the country. They hold this big responsibility. Don't deprive them of this responsibility. Don't let them undergo mental strain. It is in this backdrop that I said that this amendment is necessary.

Sir, I am very thankful for this discussion. Many hon. Members have contributed

[Shri Tiruchi Siva]

and supported this Bill. The Minister's reply did not show any intent to consider this issue. Some people believe that whatever I bring forth must be opposed by them. In our State, if the State Government brings forth some legislation which is necessary for the people, we support it. There the Party does not come in.

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, we do not have any inclination to ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: But here, it is the convention. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Shrimati Vijila, please ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, in a way, I am happy that they have themselves agreed that they are against the concerns of the teaching community and the pains that they are undergoing. ...*(Interruptions)*....

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, we are not against ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I am not yielding. I am not yielding. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: We are with the teachers. We stand by... ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... He has not named anybody. Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I am not yielding. The floor is meant for me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Please don't do this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, he should not criticize what our Government... ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: It was deliberately done. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am very happy that they have been exposed today again. ...*(Interruptions)*... They are against a section of the society. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): No, no. This is not fair. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, the hon. Member should not criticize any of the views placed before this House. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: That is because they are against the fact that a Bill has been moved by a person from a Party that they oppose. They have exposed themselves. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: That is not our intent. ...(Interruptions)...

We are not against the teachers. We are with the teachers. ...(Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): You have made your point. ...(Interruptions)...

Both of you have made your points. Now, please sit down. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, everything is on record. ...(Interruptions)...

It was registered here that this amendment is not necessary. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: He must respect that somebody who..

...(Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I do not wish to be interrupted. ...(Interruptions)...

This is what I said. ...(Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Please sit down.

Let him complete. ...(Interruptions)...

Don't divert the issue. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: I did not interrupt anybody. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, we are not interrupting, but by...

...(Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): No, no. He has not named anybody. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: He should not blame us. ...(Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): He has not blamed you. He did not name any particular party. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: I didn't speak against anybody in particular.

...(Interruptions)...

I did say anything about anybody in particular. ...(Interruptions)...

The cat is out of the bag! The cat is out of the bag! ...(Interruptions)...

I didn't point at anyone, Sir. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: How will the Election Commission carry out this process? That is what we asked. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I may be allowed to speak. ...(*Interruptions*)... Everyone is concerned about... ..(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Please allow him to speak. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Siva, please address the Chair.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I said, we are concerned about this democratic country. Holding elections is a mandatory job. And I say it again to the hon. Minister that it is the people's responsibility to get involved themselves and contribute to democracy, not just by way of casting their votes. They may say that they are contributing to democracy, but they should also volunteer themselves by coming and working for the elections. They must help the Government and the Election Commission. Everyone has got that responsibility. When you cite article 51A of the Constitution, 'Fundamental Duties', what does it say? It says that the parents have the responsibility to impart education to their children aged between 6 and 14. Now, while you are concerned about a part of the Constitution, I am concerned about other things as well. That is also a fundamental duty. When students are deprived of education because of the absence of teachers in the school, what will the parent do? So, Sir, my Bill's intention is simply based on two things. I am concerned about the future of the posterity. The younger generation should be fruitful citizens and they should set examples. Our country is thickly populated with youth community. Teachers are also undergoing the pain. I am very sorry that some people are opposing it. I don't mind that they have different views because this is a forum which has got different views. The debate is always that. Not everybody could be for; they could be against. But, at least, they should realize how it is to be done. They should have an outlook for those who are undergoing trouble. It has to be done in a different manner. Technology is improving. There are so many people to offer themselves to take up the same duty. You consider some other sources. When I say, unemployed youth or retired teachers, you can say that you are not happy with this experiment. Then you find some other alternative. But you cannot outrightly reject that this amendment is not needed and only teachers should be committed and students should also come for election duties. Mr. Minister, I don't understand it. Students should not get involved in politics. It is the concern of even political parties. They should know politics but if they get into politics their future will be at stake. What is expected of teachers is basically to teach children and to shape the future of the country. In that situation, I brought this Bill. If I get a solid assurance from the Minister, I will withdraw it or else I move the Bill for passing.

SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY: Sir, the Supreme Court passed the direction in 2007 and in compliance with that direction that the teachers should not be engaged during

the working hours or teaching hours, the Election Commission passed the order on 28th January, 2008. Thereafter, the Parliament enacted the Act of 2009, that is, the Right to Education Act, whereas the specific provision has been made under Section 27 with regard to the participation of teachers. So, compliance has already been made to a large extent and in view of that the services of teachers are only being utilized on holidays and non-teaching hours. The other staff in the country is not enough to conduct such a massive election in such a big country. We are the biggest democratic country where elections are held and where lakhs of polling booths are set up. We use all the staff, not only the teachers. What we are saying is that we are not only using the teachers, we are also using the other Government servants; we are using servants from local authorities and we are using services even from the companies. So far as the teachers are concerned, they are spread all over the country in rural areas. Democracy is the basic structure of the Constitution. To strengthen and conduct the free and fair elections, the services of teachers are required. In view of the Supreme Court's judgment, the services of the teachers are being utilized only during holidays and strict compliance is being made. So, I again request hon. Tiruchi Siva to kindly withdraw it. Hon. Prime Minister's electoral reforms are in pipeline. Whatever suggestions the hon. Member has given, we will take them into consideration; everything is in pipeline. Thank you, very much.

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): Sir, I am very grateful that you have given me the floor, though the hon. Minister of State has done a very good job. Sir, I know hon. Member, Mr. Siva, for a long time and he is a distinguished friend and colleague. He has articulated a very serious concern and I do appreciate his concern that teachers must be put to the maximum use for teaching the students only. And that point is fairly well taken. I don't want to go into the judgment also. The judgment also says — hon. Vice-Chairman, you have a very wide knowledge — 'Ordinarily they should not be put on working days.' So, it is a wish of the Supreme Court. In view of the mandate of Article 324, hon. Vice-Chairman is very much aware, the entire domain is of the Election Commission. Since the hon. Member has articulated his concern, I wish to assure hon. Member, Mr. Siva, that these concerns shall be conveyed to the Election Commission. That is what we will do. A serious issue arose here and the Election Commission should do the best while upholding the majesty of free and fair election. Please ensure that students and teachers are not unnecessarily disturbed. Kindly appreciate, hon. Vice-Chairman, the fact that whenever examinations are there, elections are normally not held during that time to disturb it in all the States of

[Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad]

India, including your State. That care we do take. But a specific issue has been raised. We will convey this very serious concern to the Commission and I hope the Commission will take proactive measures. Our Government, the Prime Minister and the entire House are concerned that we need to further improve the electoral system. A lot of things are in the pipeline and there will be an all-Party discussion also. In fact, on behalf of the Government, I will tell my officers to convey it to the Election Commission that whenever there is any all-Party meeting with regard to electoral reforms, maybe hon. Siva's views should also be conveyed there to see the all-Party consensus on that.

With these kinds of assurances which I am giving to you, I would request you to kindly withdraw the Bill.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, this is what is expected of a Minister. As the MoS has suggested, nothing is static in the world. Even on the Constitution, there is a view that it needs to be relooked. When the Supreme Court gives a judgement, we enact a law to supersede that judgement. We have got powers to do that. You cannot cite a Supreme Court judgement and say that we should stop at it. You cannot cite an earlier Act and say that we should stop at it. We should always have an open mind to relook into the views and depending upon the existing situation, we need to amend the laws. That is how the evolution of law has taken place.

I thank my very good friend. I take the privilege of calling him as my very good friend for more than two decades. The hon. Minister is a legal luminary. He has rightly given me the assurance. I know very well that a Bill cannot bring so many revolutions and changes and that too a private Member's Bill. I just wanted to convey the sentiments of the teaching community and the pain which it is experiencing. As a representative of the people, I think I have conveyed it rightly. So many hon. Members have participated in that. Taking his assurance into confidence, I withdraw the Bill. Thank you very much.

The Bill was, by leave, withdrawn.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Now, I take up the Women (Equal Participation in Decision Making) Bill, 2015. Shri Anubhav Mohanty. He is absent.

Now, I turn to the Declaration of Countries as Sponsor of Terrorism Bill, 2016. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar.

The Declaration of Countries as Sponsor of Terrorism Bill, 2016

SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR (Karnataka): Sir, I beg to move:

That the Bill to declare any country as State sponsor of terrorism and withdraw economic and trade relations with such country and to create legal, economic and travel sanctions for citizens of that country and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.

Sir, I thank you for allowing this Bill to be debated. On 18th September 2016, there was a terror attack in Uri and 19 lives were lost. This was one more incident in a series of incidents that this country had seen and those were lives in a series of lives that India had lost over many decades confronting terrorism.

But for me, it marked a turning point, at least, in my mind and I publicly promised that I would take on the important responsibility of calling Pakistan for what they are and what they have always been – a State sponsor of terrorism.

That is why, Sir, in the Winter Session of Parliament, I submitted a Resolution declaring Pakistan a terror State and I also moved a Private Member's Bill which is the Bill that has come up today for discussion and consideration. It is to call out countries like Pakistan that continue to associate, promote, patronise and sponsor terrorism against our nation. I also wrote to the leaders of all political parties to support this Resolution. Regrettably, the Resolution was not taken up. But the Bill was introduced in the Winter Session. Today, I am very happy to have this discussion commenced.

Sir, why this Bill? Many people told me that this is like another Private Member's Bill and that it will not see light of the day, etc. As I have seen from my colleague Shri Tiruchi Siva's Bills, Bills like this do have a purpose. They start a discussion and a conversation in this House that will perhaps not ebb and give the people of India a conversation or start a conversation on what should be really our relationship with Pakistan given that there is incontrovertible evidence that they support terrorism. Sir, for decades, India and other countries in the region have been victims of numerous terror attacks from organisations and individuals based in and with the support of elements in Pakistan. Yet, for decades, we have remained engaged with Pakistan in an attempt to draw it into the mainstream.

Sir, there is a basic tenet in criminality which you as a lawyer will recognise. Basic tenet of criminality and criminal conduct is that if criminals are not declared criminals and are not made to bear the consequences of their criminal actions, they will continue to be criminals. Sir, I am not a lawyer, but I extend this hypothesis or

[Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar]

thesis that this is also true for countries that aid and abet terrorism and use terrorism as a misguided tool of their State policy. Sir, if they are not brought to account, they will continue to violate all established laws and conduct. Sir, therefore, this Bill is to finally put into motion the process of calling terror sponsors to account for years of terror sponsorship and for causing losses of innocent lives not just in India but in the region around us, in other parts of the region and the world.

Sir, there is another important reason. The world is getting tired and has lost patience with rogue nations, nations that don't conform to global standards of civilised conduct and compliance with law as State sponsors of terrorism. And as world opinion consolidates around the conduct of some countries like Pakistan, the focus will naturally come on what the approach of India and the Indian Parliament to this threat is. Sir, I humbly state that it cannot be our case, as Parliament and as a country, that the world declare and treat Pakistan as a terror-sponsor while all we have done is a 1994 Parliamentary Resolution. Sir, I state humbly that it is time that we stopped running to other countries to declare Pakistan a terror State and stood up and did this job ourselves.

Sir, what is Pakistan's record? There is not one man or woman in this country that does not recognise its direct role in fostering terrorism against India and not just for the last few years but for several decades. Not one man or woman of this country does not want Pakistan to be held to account. Pakistan's history and track record of fostering terrorism and terrorists is long and indeed distinguishable and incontrovertible. For example, Sir, the year 2016, the year that has just gone past, began with a terror attack in Pathankot on 2nd January in which seven people lost their lives. This was followed by a series of attacks in Gurdaspur, Machil, Pampore, Uri and Nagrota to name just a few. The year 2016 itself ended with an attack in Pampore. In all, we lost 87 lives and 165 militants were killed in 2016. How can we as Parliament forget 13th December, 2001 when this very Parliament, the temple of our democracy, was attacked by Pakistan-based terrorists killing as many as 15 people and injuring at least 20 people before our security forces gunned them down? How can we forget 26.11.2008, the Mumbai terror attacks? As the world watched in horror on television screens, Pakistan-based terrorists created a bloodbath in a series of 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks which lasted four days, killing 164 and wounding over 300 people. Sir, despite overwhelming evidence, including from captured terrorist Kasab and David Headley pointing to Pakistan, that country continues to do nothing about prosecuting those responsible, confirming and reconfirming its deep involvement as a State that supports these attacks.

Sir, the irony is, despite undeniable evidence, incontrovertible evidence and widespread desire of the people of India, we have continued to engage Pakistan diplomatically, culturally and economically in a meaningless engagement, which, in my opinion, serves only one purpose – for time to pass by and memories to fade about the last terror attack. These meaningless dialogues have exposed one fundamental reality that Pakistani State will not do anything unless they are coerced or pressured to do so. It is a fact, Sir, and we all can recognise it and we all must recognise it, that it is only after the Kargil bloody nose on Pakistan, the 97th bloody nose on Pakistan, that Pakistan turned responsive.

According to data from 1988 to 29th January, 2017, 14,741 civilians have been killed in terror attacks in this country, 6,274 security force personnel lost their lives and we have killed 23,146 terrorists. On 22nd January, 1994, we, in this very House, unanimously adopted a Resolution condemning “strongly the continued support and encouragement Pakistan is extending to subversive and terrorist activities in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir”, stopping short of a stronger resolution to send a message to not only Pakistan but also the rest of the world that we will not take Pakistan sponsored terrorism as business as usual. We stopped short, Sir.

Until now, successive Governments, except for Shrimati Indira Gandhi’s 1971 defeat of Pakistan in Bangladesh and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s crushing of Pakistan in Kargil, have done very little and continued to have meaningless debates and kept running to major powers to pressure Pakistan. It is for first time with this Government that we have demonstrated military resolve and use of the Army with its surgical strikes. But there is more that we can do and must do by using our diplomatic, legal and economic strengths. Our basket of options to bring Pakistan to book must be expanded beyond military. Which is precisely why I have introduced this Bill to use economic trade, sports, cultural sanctions with Pakistan, to review and repeal the Most-Favoured Nation Status given by India to Pakistan and to review the Indus Water Treaty and to further punish those who aid and abet Pakistan.

Sir, let me just describe the Bill in a few sentences. The Bill is to declare any country, this is the format that will help India, and the Parliament and the Government can declare any Government, any State that sponsors terrorism against India. Whilst we recognise Pakistan as our principle aider and abettor of terrorism, this Bill can apply in future to other countries also that directly or indirectly aid terror attacks against India. I will not mention the names, Sir, but we have a fair understanding of which the other countries are.

This Bill, in Section 2(b), defines what a State sponsor of terrorism is. It is any country which, through its instrumentalities or retired officials or through deliberate

[Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar]

negligence, provides support to terrorist acts directly or indirectly. Sir, this Bill defines terrorist act. It defines in 2(b) the State sponsor of terrorism and in 2(c) it defines terrorist act.

As one of the principal victims of terrorism for many, many decades, we can set the basis of defining what a terror act is even while the United Nations still struggles to define terrorism. It is one of the ironies of the contemporary age that the United Nations even today struggles for declaring Hafiz Saeed a terrorist because they are quibbling about the definition of terrorist act. So, this Act defines under 2(c) what a terrorist act is. Through the following clauses, it lays out in very clear form what the economic and other consequences are that would be applicable to a State sponsor of terrorism that aids, abets, directly or indirectly, the terrorist act.

Sir, take for example, it talks about Heads of States of State sponsor of terrorism being prohibited to travel to and from India. It talks about business entities that are linked to the State sponsor of terrorism being sanctioned against conducting trade, investment or any form of other economic and commercial activity with any entity or the State, the country of India. It talks about overflight restrictions for entities that are linked to the State sponsor of terrorism. It talks about coastal prohibitions for entities that are linked to the State sponsor of terrorism. Sir, I will conclude now. I can go on and on about this but I believe that the Government and Parliament must act now. The winds of change are blowing in the world against terrorism and terror sponsors. This is obvious and was obvious in the universal condemnation of Pakistan during the Uri terror attacks. In a sense it is a little ironical also that we, as a Parliament, have not done anything more than the 1994 Resolution because in September, 2016, the US Congress introduced a Bill. Senator Ted Poe and Congressman Dana Rohrabacher introduced a Bill titled, "Pakistan State Sponsor of Terrorism Designated Act". They were quite clear. They actually included the name "Pakistan" in the name of the Bill. I am actually trying to be much broader and saying this is not directed at Pakistan, but it is a declaration of State sponsor of terrorism. Senator Poe introducing the Bill stated and I quote, "Not only is Pakistan an untrustworthy ally, Islamabad has also aided and abetted enemies of the United States for years. From harbouring Osama Bin Laden to its cozy relationship with the Haqqani network, there is more than enough evidence to determine whose side Pakistan is on in the war of terror. And it is not America's." Sir, if you just take the word "America" out of that quote and insert "India", that quote holds good for us. Therefore, Sir, it is ironical and I repeat that while the US Congress, a nation that is miles away from Pakistan, has introduced a Bill and is debating a Bill or has debated a Bill, our Parliament has done very little since 1994. And I am going to cite one more

quote from the same gentleman. He states, “Pakistan’s reckless behavior in this regard is a serious security risk to its neighbours and India, unfortunately, pays the price all too often. Not only is Pakistan an untrustworthy ally, Islamabad has also aided and abetted enemies for years.” So, Sir, let me end by saying, the terror attacks on India has not just caused loss to lives, it has caused significant economic loss to us. On one hand our businesses bleed due to Pakistan-sponsored terror, yet on the other hand we have continued to grant Pakistan the Most Favoured Nation status without the same being granted to us reciprocally. Pakistan poses a continual risk to the peace, security and stability of the region, harbouring terrorists and funding terror outfits that have orchestrated terrorism the world over. In addition to its diplomatic and military options, India can and should use its economic and trade strengths to send out a strong and firm message that we intend to change the relationship with Pakistan into one where Pakistan is a more responsible and accountable neighbour. There is no justification in the world that allows a nation or group to perpetrate violent crime against innocent people. With this Bill, Sir, we in Parliament can reflect the will of our people because there is not a man or woman — as I said earlier — in this country who does not want that Pakistan be declared a State that sponsors terrorism. Sir, it is time that we should define what national interest means because we are seeing what the rest of the world is doing to protect their nations and their own people. I appeal to the House and all my colleagues here to start a discussion around this Bill to signal, internally and externally, the depth of our national resolve that there will be no more half measures when it comes to protecting India and its people from terrorism. Thank you, Sir. *Jai Hind*.

The question was proposed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Now, Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu. Your time will be up to 5 o’ clock only.

श्री आनंद भास्कर रापोलू (तेलंगाना): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सम्माननीय स्वतंत्र सदस्य दिखने के लिए तो स्वतंत्र दिखता है, मगर सत्ताधारी सदस्यों से बहुत जुड़ा होता है। मेरे भाई राजीव चंद्रशेखर द्वारा प्राइवेट रूप में लाए गए बिल के ऊपर चर्चा के दौरान, मैं सोच रहा हूँ कि कहां गए वे दिन? हम सोचते थे कि चाय पर चर्चा के लिए कराची तक जा सकते हैं, पाया पाने के लिए पेशावर तक जा सकते हैं, 2014 के बाद आप माहौल इतना बदलने वाले हैं कि अगल-बगल में हमेशा शरीफ और मोदी बैठने वाले हैं। What has happened exactly in between? With this, I am looking at the initiative of my esteemed friend, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar. Our people, particularly the younger generation, are expressing their views during the sport and cultural events; and making us to follow what to do and what not to do, how to behave with a neighbour, how to stand, put forth our view, how to stand up. Since the present Government could not withstand and

[श्री आनंद भास्कर रापोलू]

stand up to the exigencies of bilateral relations and cross border terrorism. They have very closely allied with the ruling dispensation. The hon. Member, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar had to go for a resolution first, and now to come with a Private Member Bill to debate on this sensitive issue. We know that how we have invited the investigators across the border. They have come over here to have the luxury of the VIP movement in the classified and restricted areas.

I belong to a party which is known for its sacrifices. We all know how Indira Gandhi had sacrificed her life; and how she stood for and what she had achieved. What was the achievement of my leader, late Rajiv Gandhi? We all know how we used to have India as a great idea of the sub-continent. Where exactly are we standing now? These are all the things that are coming to my mind while discussing about my friend, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar's Bill. ...(*Interruptions*)... Yes, your concern. I appreciate your effort to make a detailed study and come up with 10 clauses. It is a great detailed Bill. This can be taken up by the Government for further consideration. But why has this occurred? Why is this happening? This is unnecessarily a futile exercise. It is not at all diplomatic. It is just a novice. It won't take the expert view and guidance from the right people. This type of decline has happened in our bilateral relations. What is happening in the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir? How are we looking at that problem? What are the concerns of the people living there? What is happening in Balochistan? How are we responding to those people? But just a lip sympathy is not going to serve in any way. The son of Gujarat used to speak about those sensitive issues. He knows how sensitive the Rann of Kutch is. We know how he used to provoke the then UPA Government and challenge the Government with 56 inches chest. 56 इंच का वह सीना कहाँ गया? ...(*व्यवधान*)... वह सीना कहाँ गया? हम सोच-सोच कर गिर पड़ रहे हैं और साधना में, दिखाने में, करने में, हर चीज में आप गिरते-गिरते आ रहे हैं, इसीलिए यह बिल लाए हैं। Respected Vice-Chairman, this is a point of highlight. This is an occasion for the Union Government to take note of.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Mr. Rapolu, as the Deputy Chairman has already informed, this Bill could be discussed till 5 o'clock; and the House should adjourn after that. But we have a certain other Business to take up. This Bill will be carried forward to the next day of Private Members' Bill as and when the House decides. Now the statement by the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Shipping, Shri Mansukh L. Mandaviya.

5.00 P.M.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Action taken in aftermath of ship collision off Kamarajar Harbour

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I rise to make a statement on the actions taken in the aftermath of ship collision which took place off Kamarajar harbour.

Two vessels namely, M.T. BW MAPLE and M.T. DAWN KANCHIPURAM while crossing each other collided at 3.45 A.M. on 28 January, 2017 off the Kamarajar harbour. The vessel M. T. DAWN KANCHIPURAM, which was carrying 32813 Tonnes of POL, suffered a rupture which led to oil spill. There was no casualty or injury to the crew members. My colleague, Shri Pon. Radhakrishnan visited the collision site on 30.01.2017 and inspected the area where the vessels were anchored and gave appropriate directions to the Kamarajar Port officers.

Kamarajar Port deployed oil boom around the vessel to contain seepage. After examination, the damaged vessel was towed safely and berthed at Kamarajar Port on 30 January, 2017. This vessel has already discharged 30013 tonnes of POL and the remaining quantity is expected to be discharged today. This major step has prevented any further possibility of oil spill.

A massive cleanup operation was launched in Tiruvallur, Chennai and Kancheepuram Districts by engaging more than 2000 persons at various sites including Emavur, Chennai Fishing Harbour, Marina Beach, Besant Nagar, Kottivakkam, Palavakkam, Neelankarai and Injambakkam beaches. The Coast Guard has been co-coordinating the cleaning operations jointly with Chennai Port, Kamarajar Port, the State Government and its agencies, Indian Oil Corporation, NGOs, Cadet Trainees from maritime educational institutions and fishermen. A team of senior officers from Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and D.G. Shipping were sent for an on the spot inspection of the affected areas and to coordinate and review the cleaning operations. They also met the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu who has also held review meetings and is regularly monitoring the remedial measures being taken. The District Administration is actively involved in the cleanup operations. The Chennai Port and Kamarajar Port have set up Control Rooms.

At Ernavur, which had the maximum drift of sludge, booms have been deployed

[Shri Mansukh L. Mandaviya]

along the shore line to contain the oil spread. More than 1000 people were deployed here with portable pollution cleaning equipment for shore line cleaning. The required logistics and equipment support has been provided by the Chennai and Kamarajar Ports. Sufficient gum boots, gloves, buckets, mugs, liquid hand wash and drums have been provided to facilitate manual cleaning. In addition, 3 Super Suckers and submersible pumps have also been deployed to remove the oil spill. Coast Guard has also sprayed Oil Spill Dispersants for removal of oil slick. The total quantity of sludge which has been removed till today is 65 tonnes. In addition, Super Suckers have removed 54 tonnes which contains 70 per cent water. More than 80 per cent of the work has been completed and most of the residual work is expected to be completed within two-three days. The Indian Oil Corporation has provided special bio-remediation material for treatment of the collected oil sludge for its safe disposal.

The Coast Guard ship and helicopters are carrying out regular sorties for continuous monitoring of oil slick. If oil spillage accumulation is spotted anywhere, manpower and material under the overall supervision of Coast Guard will be deployed.

The Directorate General of Shipping has instituted an inquiry under the Merchant Shipping Act to ascertain the cause and contributory factors that led to the accident. The Government is taking all measures to manage the situation. My colleague, Shri Radhakrishnan P., will also be visiting the affected area again to take stock of the situation.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Thank you. Now, clarifications. Shri Tiruchi Siva.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Vice-Chairman, Sir.

Sir, this is a very, very serious issue in Chennai. Fishermen are not able to ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): No speech, please; only clarifications.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Yes, I am seeking clarifications, Sir. Fishermen are not able to go out for fishing. I have a very specific clarification. This vessel, which has carried 32,813 tonnes has now discharged 30,013 tonnes; 2,800 tonnes is still remaining. But we would like to know how much has spilled over. The first information that was given by the Port Trust was that it was just one ton. Later, his hon. colleague mentioned 20 tonnes. But now, they say that 65 tonnes of sludge has been removed and the Super Suckers have removed 54 tonnes; also, they say it contains 70 per cent of water. But how has this been evolved? We do not know. So, even when

they have agreed that 65 tonnes of sludge has been removed, I feel that much more is left there. Very rare species have perished and died due to this oil spill. Apart from the Government's efforts to remove the sludge, the youth present at the Marina Beach, who were agitating a few days back for *Jallikattu*, voluntarily came forward to help, and they used simple buckets. Now, technology has gone ahead to a different level and while foreign countries use much higher levels of technology, we are still depending upon buckets and manual operations. I think the Government's intervention on a war-footing alone would save the fishermen and other people as well as the species found in the sea. So, Mr. Minister, you are saying that 80 per cent of the work has been done; but, in reality, it is not so. The situation in Chennai is still very bad. The oil spill has started spreading towards Neelankarai. It was near the Kamarajar Port, but now it has spread up to Mamallapuram. So, this point about 80 per cent recovery is not acceptable, but I would urge the Government to act much more swiftly to set right the situation. Kindly give us the correct statistics. People should not be misguided; we should not be misled with information saying it was one ton earlier, 20 tonnes later and now, 60 tonnes and 54 tonnes. So, any information that is given by the authorities should be factual. It should not mislead the people.

श्री अजय संचेती (महाराष्ट्र): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, जो वहां एक्सीडेंट हुआ है, मैं उस सिलसिले में क्लेरीफिकेशन तो नहीं, लेकिन भारत सरकार को सिर्फ इस बात के लिए बधाई देना चाहता हूं कि without any casualty इतनी बड़ी दुर्घटना को स्टेट गवर्नमेंट की मदद से काबू करने की कोशिश की गई है। इसलिए मैं भारत सरकार और राज्य सरकार, दोनों को बधाई देता हूं।

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, one small thing. It says that the vessel had a rupture. When vessels carry such substances that could cause ecological damage, much care should be taken to check if the vessels are certified to sail on the sea.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): So, it is a suggestion.

श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया: सर, एम.टी. बीडब्ल्यू मैपल और एम.टी. डॉन कांचीपुरम नामक दो शिप्स का एक्सीडेंट हुआ। जब यह एक्सीडेंट हुआ, तो उसके तुरन्त बाद ही सरकार और वहां की जो लोकल व्यवस्था थी, डिजास्टर मैनेजमेंट की सारी टीम वहां पहुँची। वहां पहुँचने के बाद उसको तुरन्त ही tow कर लिया, जिससे कि उसमें से ज्यादा ऑयल बह न जाए। उसमें से जितना भी ऑयल बह गया, उसके संदर्भ में तुरन्त ही कार्यवाही की। तत्काल कदम के तौर पर ऑयल एंड नैचुरल गैस वालों की टीम, हमारी टीम, हमारे मिनिस्टर भी वहां गए और वहां जाकर सब मॉनिटर किया। मॉनिटर करने के बाद जो टीम काम में लगी हुई थी, फिशरमेन या जो भी उसमें जुड़े, जिस-जिस की भी आवश्यकता थी, सभी को उस काम में लगा दिया गया। सर, मुझे इस बात की खुशी है कि दो-तीन दिनों में यह सारा ऑपरेशन पूरा होने को आया है। तिरुची शिवा जी ने जो कहा कि उसमें जो तेल बह गया है, उसमें 65 टन जो गाद है, वह तो

[श्री मनसुख एल. मांडविया]

हट गयी, लेकिन इसके अतिरिक्त जो 54 टन गाद है, उसको भी रिमूव किया गया है। उसमें थोड़ा सा odour भी होगा। उसके लिए भी suckers और submersible pumps तथा जिस-जिस मशीनरी की भी आवश्यकता है, वह मशीनरी हम लगा रहे हैं। अच्छी बात यह है कि दो-तीन दिनों में वहां से जो जानकारी उपलब्ध हुई है और माननीय सदस्य ने कहा है कि शायद उसको और भी गति मिले। आज हमने यहां से सरकार से बोला भी है कि वहां मॉनिटरिंग करने के लिए हमारी शिपिंग मिनिस्ट्री के ऑफिसर्स भी वहां उपस्थित हैं और वहां टाइम-टु-टाइम मॉनिटर कर रहे हैं। इसमें कैजुअल्टी नहीं हुई है और जो ऑयल बह गया है, उसको भी दो-तीन दिन में सेफली रिमूव किया जाएगा। कामराजार पोर्ट में जो hazardous है, उसको रिमूव करने की सारी कार्यवाही खूब एक्टिवली चल रही है और उसका रिमूवल किया जाएगा।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY): Now, Special Mentions. Shri Basawaraj Patil, not present. Prof. M. V. Rajeev Gowda, not present.

श्री आनंद भास्कर रापोलू (तेलंगाना): वाइस चेयरमैन साहब, मेरी स्पीच कंटीन्यू होगी न?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सुखेन्दु शेखर राय): वह बाद में देखा जाएगा।

श्री आनंद भास्कर रापोलू: बाद में कैसे, सर?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सुखेन्दु शेखर राय): वह बाद में देखा जाएगा। ...(व्यवधान)... अगर टाइम है, तो मौका जरूर मिलेगा। ...(व्यवधान)... यह बिल कंटीन्यू होगा और अगर आपकी पार्टी का टाइम बचा हुआ है, तो आपको मौका जरूर मिलेगा।

Now, the House stands adjourned till 11 a.m. on Monday, the 6th February, 2017.

*The House then adjourned at twelve minutes past
five of the clock till eleven of the clock on
Monday, the 6th February, 2017.*

