

Vol. 243

No. 19



Friday

11 August, 2017

20 Shravana, 1939 (Saka)

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
RAJYA SABHA
OFFICIAL REPORT

CONTENTS

Felicitations to the Chairman (pages 1-39)

Messages from Lok Sabha — *Reported*

The State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017 — *Laid on the Table*
(pages 40-41)

Motion received from Lok Sabha seeking appointment of Members to the
Joint Committee on the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill,
2017 — *Reported* (pages 40-41)

Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on External
Affairs — *Laid on the Table* (page 42)

Reports of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Information Technology — *Laid on the Table* (page 42)

Statements of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee
on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution — *Laid on the Table*
(pages 42-43)

Reports of the Public Accounts Committee — *Laid on the Table* (page 43)

[P.T.O.]

©

RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

PRICE : ₹ 100.00

Statements by Ministers —

Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Thirty-Sixth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance — *Laid on the Table* (page 43)

Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twentieth Report and Twenty-eighth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers — *Laid on the Table* (page 44)

Leave of Absence — *Granted* (page 44)

Statements by Ministers Correcting Answers to Questions — *Laid on the Table* (pages 44-45)

Papers laid on the Table (page 45)

Government Bill — *Referred*

Motion for reference of the Financial Resolution and the Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017 to Joint Committee — *Adopted* (pages 45-47)

Private Members' Resolutions — *Deferred* (page 47)

Valedictory Remarks (pages 47-49)

National Song (page 49)

Written Answers to Starred Questions (pages 49-85)

Written Answers to Unstarred Questions (pages 85-326)

RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 11th August, 2017/20th Shravana, 1939 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

FELICITATIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

प्रधान मंत्री (श्री नरेंद्र मोदी): आदरणीय सभापति जी, सदन की तरफ से, देशवासियों की तरफ से आपको बहुत-बहुत बधाई और बहुत-बहुत शुभकामनाएँ।

आज 11 अगस्त, इतिहास की एक महत्वपूर्ण तारीख से जुड़ा हुआ है। आज ही के दिन 18 साल की छोटी उम्र वाले खुदीराम बोस को फांसी के तख्त पर चढ़ा दिया गया था। देश की आजादी के लिए संघर्ष कैसा हुआ, बलिदान कितने हुए और उसके परिप्रेक्ष्य में हम सबका दायित्व कितना बढ़ा है, इसका यह घटना स्मरण कराती है।

हम सबका ध्यान इस बात की ओर जरूर जाएगा कि आदरणीय श्री वेंकैया नायडु जी देश के पहले ऐसे उपराष्ट्रपति बने हैं, जिन्होंने स्वतंत्र भारत में जन्म लिया है। श्रीमान वेंकैया जी पहले ऐसे उपराष्ट्रपति बने हैं, मैं समझता हूँ कि शायद वे अकेले ऐसे हैं, जो इतने सालों तक इसी परिसर में, इन्हीं सबके बीच में पले हैं, बढ़े हैं। शायद इस देश को ये पहले ऐसे उपराष्ट्रपति मिले हैं, जो इस सदन की हर बारीकी से परिचित हैं। सदस्यों से लेकर समितियों तक, समितियों से लेकर सदन की कार्यवाही तक, स्वयं उस प्रक्रिया से निकले हुए ये पहले उपराष्ट्रपति देश को प्राप्त हुए हैं। वे सार्वजनिक जीवन में जेपी आंदोलन की पैदाइश हैं। विद्यार्थीकाल में जयप्रकाश नारायण के आह्वान को लेकर, शुचिता को लेकर, सुशासन के लिए जो राष्ट्रव्यापी आंदोलन चला, आंध्र प्रदेश में एक विद्यार्थी नेता के रूप में उन्होंने अपने आपको उसमें झोंक दिया था। तब से लेकर, विधान सभा हो या राज्य सभा हो, उन्होंने अपने व्यक्तित्व का भी विकास किया और कार्य-क्षेत्र का भी विस्तार किया और आज उसकी बदौलत हम सबने उनको पसंद किया और इस पद के लिए एक गौरवपूर्ण जिम्मेवारी उनको दी।

वेंकैया जी किसान के बेटे हैं। मुझे उनके साथ कई वर्षों तक कार्य करने का सौभाग्य मिला है। गांव हो, गरीब हो, किसान हो, इन विषयों पर वे बहुत ही बारीकी से अध्ययन करते हुए हर समय अपने इनपुट देते रहे हैं। कैबिनेट में भी वे अरबन डेवलपमेंट मिनिस्टर थे, लेकिन कैबिनेट के अंदर चर्चाओं में मुझे ऐसा लगता था कि वे जितने समय अरबन विषयों पर कैबिनेट में बात करते थे, उससे ज्यादा रुचि से वे रूरल और किसान के विषयों पर बात करते थे। यह उनके dear to heart रहा और शायद उनका बचपन, उनका पारिवारिक बैकग्राउंड इसका कारण है।

वेंकैया जी उपराष्ट्रपति पद पर बैठे हैं तब पूरी दुनिया को इस बात से हमें परिचित करवाना होगा और मैं मानता हूँ कि हम सब का एक दायित्व है, राजनीतिक दीवारों से परे भी दायित्व है और वह दायित्व यह है कि भारत का लोकतंत्र कितना matured है। भारत के संविधान की बारीकियों की कितनी बड़ी ताकत है। हमारे उन महापुरुषों ने जो संविधान दिया, उस संविधान का सामर्थ्य यह है कि आज हिन्दुस्तान के संवैधानिक पदों पर वे लोग बैठे हैं, जिनकी पृष्ठभूमि गरीब की है, गांव की है, सामान्य परिवार से है, वे किसी रईस खानदान से नहीं आये। पहली

[श्री नरेंद्र मोदी]

बार देश के सर्वोच्च पदों पर इस पृष्ठभूमि के व्यक्तियों का होना, यह अपने आप में भारत के संविधान की गरिमा और भारत के लोकतंत्र की maturity को प्रदर्शित करता है और जिसका गर्व हिन्दुस्तान के सवा सौ करोड़ देशवासियों को है। हमारे पूर्वजों ने हमें जो विरासत दी है, मैं उन पूर्वजों का सम्मान इस घटना के साथ देख रहा हूँ। मैं फिर से एक बार उन संविधान निर्माताओं का भी नमन करना चाहूँगा।

वैकैया जी, उनका व्यक्तित्व भी है, कृतृत्व भी है और वक्तृत्व भी है। इन सब के वे धनी हैं और उनकी तुकबंदी से तो सब भली-भांति परिचित हैं। कभी-कभी जब वे भाषण करते हैं, वह भी अगर तेलुगु में करते हैं, तो ऐसा लगता है कि सुपरफास्ट चला रहे हैं। ऐसा तब संभव होता है जब विचारों के अंदर स्पष्टता हो, audience के साथ connect हो। वह शब्दों का खेल नहीं होता है। जो व्यक्तित्व की दुनिया से जुड़े हैं, उनको पता है कि शब्दों के खेल किसी के मन-मंदिर को नहीं छू सकते हैं, लेकिन श्रद्धाभाव से पनपी हुई विचारधारा के आधार पर जब अपने conviction और vision के साथ चीजें निकलती हैं, तो जनहृदय को अपने आप स्पर्श कर देती हैं और वह वैकैया जी के जीवन में देखा गया है, पाया गया है।

यह भी सही है कि ग्रामीण विकास के अंदर आज कोई भी ऐसा सांसद नहीं है, जो एक विषय पर सरकार से बार-बार आग्रह न करता हो, चाहे वह सरकार डा. मनमोहन सिंह जी के नेतृत्व की हो, चाहे वह सरकार मेरे नेतृत्व की हो। सांसदों की एक मांग लगातार रहती है और वह अपने क्षेत्र में प्रधान मंत्री ग्राम सड़क के कार्य के लिए है। हम सभी सांसदों के लिए गर्व की बात है कि देश को प्रधान मंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना की कल्पना, उसकी योजना — यह तोहफा अगर किसी ने दिया है, तो यह हमारे उपराष्ट्रपति जी ने दिया, आदरणीय वैकैया जी ने दिया। ये चीजें तब निकलती हैं, जब गांव के प्रति, गरीब के प्रति, किसान के प्रति, दलित, पीड़ित, शोषित के प्रति अपनत्व होता है, उनको कठिनाइयों से बाहर निकालने का संकल्प होता है, तब यह होता है।

आज जब उपराष्ट्रपति पद के रूप में वैकैया जी हमारे बीच में हैं, इस सदन में हम सब को कुछ पल एक कठिनाई रहेगी, क्योंकि बार में से कोई वकील अगर जज बन जाता है, तो शुरू-शुरू में उस कोर्ट में उसके साथी, नीचे जब बार के मेम्बर बात करते हैं, तो जरा अटपटा लगता है कि कल तक तो मेरे साथ खड़ा रहता था, मेरे साथ बहस करता था। आज यहां मैं कैसे व्यवहार करूँ। तो कुछ पल हम सब के लिए भी, खासकर इस सदन के सदस्यों के लिए विशेष होते हैं, जिन्होंने उनके साथ एक दोस्ताना रूप में काम किया और आज वे इस पद पर बैठे हैं। यह हमारे लोकतंत्र की विशेषता है कि व्यवस्था के अनुकूल हम अपनी कार्य-शैली बनाते हैं और मुझे विश्वास है कि हमारे बीच से, इतने लंबे समय तक राज्य सभा के सदस्य रहकर, हर बारीकी से निकले, एक पके-पकाए व्यक्ति, उपराष्ट्रपति पद और इस सभागृह के सभापति के रूप में हम लोगों का मार्गदर्शन करेंगे, हमें दिशा देंगे, इस की गरिमा को और ऊंचा उठाने में उनका योगदान बहुत बड़ा होगा। मुझे यह विश्वास है। मैं एक बहुत बड़े बदलाव के संकेत देख रहा हूँ और वे बदलाव अच्छे के लिए होंगे, अच्छाई के लिए होंगे।

आज जब वैकैया जी इस गरिमापूर्ण पद को ग्रहण कर रहे हैं, तब मैं उसी बात को स्मरण करना चाहूँगा कि, "अमल करो ऐसा अमन में, जहां से गुजरें तुम्हारी नज़रें, उधर से तुम्हें सलाम

आए।" मैं इसी बात से जोड़ते हुए आगे कहना चाहूंगा, "अमल करो ऐसा सदन में, जहां से गुजरें तुम्हारी नज़रें, उधर से तुम्हें सलाम आए।" बहुत-बहुत शुभकामनाएं, बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

विपक्ष के नेता (श्री गुलाम नबी आज़ाद): माननीय चेयरमैन साहब, मैं आपको अपनी तरफ से और हमारे साथियों की तरफ से भारत के नए उपराष्ट्रपति बनने पर हार्दिक बधाई देता हूँ और विशेष रूप से हमारे इस सदन, राज्य सभा के चेयरमैन बनने पर बधाई देता हूँ।

आप इस सदन के लिए नए नहीं हैं। आपने एम.पी. के रूप में, मंत्री के रूप में भी और विशेष रूप से जब आप Parliamentary Affairs Minister थे, तब हम प्यार से भी रहे और लड़ते-झगड़ते भी रहे, लेकिन सदन से जब बाहर जाते थे, तो फिर हम सदन को अच्छी तरह से चलाने के लिए agreement भी करते थे। आपकी जो public life रही, उस में मैंने देखा कि student life से लेकर, youth organization से लेकर अपनी parent party में आपने काम किया और एक बार तो आप अपनी पार्टी के राष्ट्रीय स्तर के अध्यक्ष भी बने, लेकिन आप उन चंद लोगों में से हैं, जो नीचे से आए, जमीन से आए और ऊपर तक, अपनी पार्टी में भी और आज इस उपराष्ट्रपति के पद पर भी पहुंच गए। यह किसी भी व्यक्ति और उनके चाहने वालों के लिए ही नहीं बल्कि दूसरी पार्टियों के लिए भी, जो अपने-अपने दलों में, अपनी पार्टियों में निष्ठा से काम करते हैं, उन सब के लिए गौरव की बात होती है। कल हम येचुरी जी की बात कर रहे थे, वे भी इसी तरह अपने student career से आज अपनी पार्टी के General Secretary हैं। ऐसे बहुत सारे लोग, दोनों तरफ हैं, चौतरफा हैं, जोकि नीचे से उठकर अच्छे-अच्छे पदों पर आए हैं। यह हमारे लोकतंत्र की सब से बड़ी कामयाबी है कि इस में गरीबी और अमीरी का सवाल नहीं है। आज बहुत सारे लोग बड़े-बड़े पदों पर हैं, जो शायद बड़े जमींदार नहीं थे, बड़े पूंजीपति नहीं थे, उनके परिवार के लोग ज्यादा पढ़े-लिखे नहीं थे। उनको ज्यादा अवसर नहीं मिला, लेकिन अपनी मेहनत से, अपनी लगन से वे इन पदों पर पहुंचे। लेकिन इसके पीछे एक ताकत है, उस ताकत को हमें भूलना नहीं चाहिए — वह है लोकतंत्र, वह है हमारा कांस्टीट्यूशन। उस जगह हमको किसने पहुंचाया? मैं इस देश के करोड़ों मजदूरों, नौजवानों, गरीबों को सेल्यूट करता हूँ जिन्होंने यह सम्भव किया। लेकिन मैं उनको भी सेल्यूट करता हूँ जो उस वक्त करोड़पति थे, जो उस वक्त पूंजीपति थे, जो बड़े-बड़े जमींदार थे। मैं मोती लाल नेहरू जी का उल्लेख करूंगा, वे कितने बड़े वकील थे। मेरे ख्याल से आज के हिसाब से अगर हम उस समय के रुपए को तब्दील करेंगे तो शायद आज वह सात-आठ करोड़ रुपया या दस करोड़ रुपया एक दिन का बनता है। गांधी जी का फैमिली बैक ग्राउंड बहुत अच्छा था, वे बहुत अच्छे वकील थे इसीलिए तो उनको मुकदमा लड़ने के लिए साउथ अफ्रीका जाना पड़ा। उन्होंने कपड़ों को भी त्याग दिया, परिवार को भी त्याग दिया। तो आज इस देश में हमें उनको भी नहीं भूलना चाहिए जो सम्पन्न थे, पढ़े-लिखे थे, लेकिन फिर भी उन्होंने देश की आजादी के लिए अपने आपको कुरबान किया, अपनी दौलत को कुरबान किया, अपने बच्चों को कुरबान किया, अपने परिवार को कुरबान किया। आज हम ऐसे लोगों को नहीं भूल सकते चाहे वे गांधी जी हों, सुभाष चंद्र बोस को हम भूल नहीं सकते। पंडित जवाहर लाल नेहरू जी को कौन भूल सकता है, वे 14-15 साल जेल में रहे। सरदार पटेल को कौन भूल सकता है, मौलाना आज़ाद को कौन भूल सकता है, तिलक को कौन भूल सकता है? ऐसे लोग जो सम्पन्न थे, जिन्होंने देश के लिए कुरबानी दी, सब कुछ छोड़ दिया और हमें ऐसा संविधान दिया, जिससे आज हमको ये तमाम चीजें मिलीं और इसी की वजह से आज कोई भी

[श्री गुलाम नबी आज़ाद]

देश का राष्ट्रपति, उपराष्ट्रपति, प्रधान मंत्री, जज, सुप्रीम कोर्ट जज, आर्मी जनरल बन सकता है, मैं आज उन सबको सेल्यूट करता हूँ।

सर, जिन्दगी में इंसान को जीवन में कई रूप धारण करने पड़ते हैं। जब संगठन में होते हैं तो आप एक पॉलिटिकल पार्टी — चाहे इधर के हों या उधर के — एक पॉलिटिकल पार्टी के साथ चिपके होते हैं और अपनी पार्टी का जो व्यू प्वाइंट है उसको लोगों तक पहुंचाने का पूरा प्रयास करते हैं। लेकिन जब वही आदमी, वही व्यक्ति पार्टी से हट कर मंत्रिमंडल में आ जाता है तो वह बिल्कुल बदल जाता है, उसका दृष्टिकोण बदल जाता है। उसको पार्टी का भी ख्याल रखना है, देश का भी ख्याल रखना है, विपक्ष का भी ख्याल रखना है और जो नॉन-पार्टी पर्सन हैं, उनका भी ख्याल रखना है, क्योंकि आपको काम करना है। आप सिर्फ पार्टी का काम नहीं कर सकते हैं या अपनी पार्टी के लोगों का ही काम नहीं कर सकते हैं, आपको हर व्यक्ति का काम करना है। लेकिन एक तीसरा पद है जिस पद पर आज आप बैठे हैं, जिसके पीछे एक तराजू है इसके लिए मैं मुबारकबाद देता हूँ।

चाहे जज हों, स्पीकर हों या चेयरमैन, राज्य सभा हों, यह तराजू हमें बार-बार याद दिलाता है जब हम कुर्सी पर बैठते हैं तो हम निष्पक्ष हैं, नो पार्टी पर्सन, बल्कि मैं कहूंगा कि उस वक्त इंसान चाहे जज हो या ऐसे ही पद पर हो, इंसान सिर्फ इंसान रहता है, उसका धर्म उसके मन में होता है, लेकिन न्याय करते वक्त न उसका धर्म होता है, न पार्टी होती है। आज आपको अल्लाह ने इस जगह पर नवाजा है। बहुत कम खुशकिस्मत लोग हैं, जिनको ऐसी जगहें मिलती हैं, ऐसा पद मिलता है, जहां इंसान होता है। आज आपको यह इंसान बनने का मौका मिला है। हम आपकी लम्बी आयु की कामना करते हैं। आप सेहतमंद रहें, स्वस्थ रहें और यह सदन अच्छी तरह से चले।

माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी ने रात को एक अच्छी बात कही थी, मैं उसके लिए उनको बधाई देता हूँ, क्योंकि कल बहुत सारे लोग इस सदन में और वहां पर भी जो परम्पराएं हैं, उनके बारे में बता रहे थे। यहां कोई भी चेयरमैन पद छोड़कर जाता है, तो जैसा पी. एम. साहब ने कहा था कि लीडर्स इसलिए भी याद दिलाते हैं कि अगले चेयरमैन को उन परम्पराओं पर चलना है और उसको improve करना है। हमारे इस सदन में एक परम्परा रही है और आपने हमेशा उसको MP के रूप में और मंत्री के रूप में देखा है कि हर इंसान को, हर पार्टी को और हर व्यक्ति को बोलने की आजादी है तथा उसको accommodate करना चाहिए तथा उसको बोलने के लिए adjust करना चाहिए, यही वह जगह है। लोग मैदान में, field में नारे दे सकते हैं, गालियां दे सकते हैं, लेकिन आप कुछ नहीं कर सकते हैं। हमारे संविधान ने हमको एक forum दिया है कि जहां public के representatives, चाहे वे directly elect होकर आएँ या indirectly आएँ—जिस तरह से इस सदन की धारणा बनाई गई है, यह indirect है, बल्कि मैं यह कहूंगा कि यह direct वालों का representative है। जो हमारे MLAs चुनकर आते हैं, उनको देश के करोड़ों लोग चुनकर भेजते हैं और वे हमें यहां चुनकर भेज देते हैं, इसलिए हम दो लोगों को represent करते हैं। हम उन MLAs को भी represent करते हैं और उन MLAs को, जिन करोड़ों लोगों ने चुनकर भेजा है, उनको भी indirectly represent करते हैं। हमारे इस हाउस की जो जिम्मेदारी है, मैं समझता हूँ कि वह डबल है। इस हाउस की जिम्मेदारी public की है और हमारी जिम्मेदारी public की भी

ہے اور جو سٹेटس میں Legislatures ہیں، انکی بھی ذمہ داری ہے، اسلئے جو اسکی importance ہے، وہ کسی بھی طرح سے کم نہیں ہونی چاہیے۔ جو پرمپرا رہی ہے کہ یہاں دن میں کوئی بھی بیل پاس نہیں ہوتا ہے، مجھے پورا ویسواں اور ہوسا ہے اور میں پورے ویسواں کی طرف سے آپ سے انورودھ کرؤنگا کہ وہ پرمپرا کایم رھنی چاہیے۔ اسی کے ساتھ میں اک دفا فیر آپکو ہاردیک بدھاؤ دےتا ہوں، بہت-بہت دھنیاوا۔

†قائد حزب اختلاف (جناب غلام نبی آزاد): مان گئے چیئرمین صاحب، میں آپ کو اپنی طرف سے اور ہمارے ساتھیوں کی طرف سے بھارت کے نئے اپ-راشٹری بننے پر باردک بدھائی دیتا ہوں اور خاص طور سے ہمارے اس سدن، راجیہ سبھا کے چیئرمین بننے پر بدھائی دیتا ہوں۔

آپ اس سدن کے لئے نئے نہیں ہیں۔ آپ نے ایم-پی۔ کے روپ میں، منتری کے روپ میں بھی خاص طور سے جب آپ پارلیمنٹری افیئرس منسٹر تھے، تب ہم پیار سے بھی رہے اور لڑتے جھگڑتے بھی رہے، لیکن سدن سے جب باہر جاتے تھے، تو پھر ہم سدن کو اچھی طرح سے چلانے کے لئے ایگریمنٹ بھی کرتے تھے۔ آپ کی جو پبلک لائف رہی، اس میں، میں نے دیکھا کہ اسٹوڈینٹ لائف سے لیکر یوتھ آرگنائزیشن سے لیکر اپنی پیرینٹ پارٹی میں آپ نے کام کیا وار ایک بار تو آپ اپنی پارٹی کے راشٹریہ اسٹر کے ادھیکش بھی بنے، لیکن آپ ان چند لوگوں میں ہیں، جو نیچے سے آئے، زمین سے آئے اور اوپر تک اپنی پارٹی میں بھی اور آج اس اپ-راشٹری کے عہدے پر بھی پہنچ گئے۔ یہ کسی بھی شخص اور ان کے چاہنے والوں کے لئے بھی، بلکہ دوسری پارٹیوں کے لئے بھی، جو اپنے اپنے دلوں میں، اپنی پارٹیوں میں نشٹھا سے کام کرتے ہیں، ان سب کے لئے گورو کی بات ہوتی ہے۔ کل ہم یچوری جی کی بات کر رہے تھے وہ بھی اسی طرح اپنے اسٹوڈینٹ کیریئر سے آج اپنی پارٹی کے جنرل سکرٹری ہیں۔ ایسے بہت سارے لوگ دونوں طرف ہیں، چوطرفہ ہیں، جو کہ نیچے سے اٹھ کر اچھے اچھے عہدوں پر آئے ہیں۔ یہ ہمارے لوگ -تنتر کی سب سے بڑی کامیابی ہے کہ اس میں غریبی اور امیری کا سوال نہیں ہے۔ آج بہت سارے لوگ بڑے بڑے عہدوں پر ہیں، جو شاید بڑے زمیندار نہیں تھے، بڑے پونجی -پتی نہیں تھے، ان کے پریوار کے لوگ زیادہ پڑھے لکھے نہیں تھے۔ ان کو زیادہ موقع نہیں ملا، لیکن اپنی محنت سے، اپنی لگن سے وہ ان عہدوں پر پہنچے۔ لیکن اس کے پیچھے ایک طاقت ہے، اس طاقت کو ہمیں بھولنا

[श्री गुलाम नबी आज़ाद]

نہیں چاہئے — وہ بے لوک-تنتر، وہ بے ہمارا کانسٹی ٹیوشن۔ اس جگہ ہم کو کس نے پہنچایا؟ میں اس دیش کے کروڑوں مزدوروں، نوجوانوں، غریبوں کو سیلیوٹ کرتا ہوں جنہوں نے یہ ممکن کیا۔ لیکن میں ان کو بھی سیلیوٹ کرتا ہوں جو اس وقت کروڑ پتی تھے، جو اس وقت پونجی -پتی تھے، جو بڑے بڑے زمیندار تھے۔ میں موتی لال نہرو جی کا ال یکھہ کروں گا، وہ کتنے بڑے وکیل تھے۔ میرے خیال سے آج کے حساب سے اگر ہم اس وقت کے روپے کو تبدیل کریں گے تو شاید آج وہ سات آٹھ کروڑ روپیہ یا دس کروڑ روپیہ ایک دن کا بنتا ہے۔ گاندھی جی کا فیملی بیک-گراؤنڈ بہت اچھا تھا، وہ بہت اچھے وکیل تھے اسی لئے تو ان کو مقدمہ لڑنے کے لئے ساؤتھ افریقہ جانا پڑا۔ انہوں نے کپڑوں کو بھی تیاگ دیا، پریوار کو بھی تیاگ دیا۔ تو آج اس دیش میں ہمیں ان کو بھی نہیں بھولنا چاہئے جو سمپن تھے، پڑھے لکھے تھے، لیکن پھر بھی انہوں نے دیش کی آزادی کے لئے اپنے آپ کو قربان کیا، اپنی دولت کو قربان کیا، اپنے بچوں کو قربان کیا، اپنے پریوار کو قربان کیا۔ آج ہم ایسے لوگوں کو نہیں بھول سکتے چاہے وہ گاندھی جی ہوں، سبھاش چندر بوس کو ہم بھول نہیں سکتے۔ پنڈت جواہر لال نہرو جی کو کون بھول سکتا ہے، وہ 14-15 سال جیل میں رہے۔ سردار پٹیل کو کون بھول سکتا ہے، مولانا آزاد کو کون بھول سکتا ہے، تلک کو کون بھول سکتا ہے؟ ایسے لوگ جو سمپن تھے، جنہوں نے دیش کے لئے قربانیاں دیں، سب کچھ چھوڑ دیا اور ہمیں ایسا سنودھان دیا، جس سے -آج ہم کو یہ تمام چیزیں ملیں اور اسی کی وجہ سے آج کوئی بھی دیش کا راشٹرپتی، اپ راشٹرپتی، پردھان منتری، جج، سپریم کورٹ جج، آرمی جنرل بن سکتا ہے، میں آج ان سب کو سیلیوٹ کرتا ہوں۔

سر، زندگی میں انسان کو جیون میں کئی روپ دھارن کرنے پڑتے ہیں۔ جب سنگٹھن میں ہوتے ہیں تو آپ ایک پولیٹیکل پارٹی — چاہے ادھر کے ہوں یا ادھر کے ایک پالیٹیکل پارٹی کے ساتھ چپکے ہوتے ہیں اور اپنی پارٹی کا جو ویو -پوائنٹ - بے اس کو لوگوں تک پہنچانے کا پورا پریاس کرتے ہیں۔ لیکن جب وہی آدمی، وہی ویکتی پارٹی سے ہٹ کر منتری منڈل میں آ جاتا ہے تو وہ بالکل بدل جاتا ہے، اس کا نظریہ بدل جاتا ہے۔ اس کو پارٹی کا بھی خیال رکھنا ہے، دیش کا بھی خیال

رکھنا ہے، وپکش کا بھی خیال رکھنا ہے اور جو نون - پارٹی پرسنس ہیں، ان کا بھی خیال رکھنا ہے، کیوں کہ آپ کو کام کرنا ہے۔ آپ صرف پارٹی کا کام نہیں کر سکتے ہیں یا اپنی پارٹی کے لوگوں کا ہی کام نہیں کر سکتے ہیں، آپ کو ہر آدمی کا کام کرنا ہے۔ لیکن ایک تیسرا عہدہ ہے جس عہدے پر آج آپ بیٹھے ہیں، جس کے پیچھے ایک ترازو ہے اس کے لئے میں مبارکباد دیتا ہوں۔ چاہے جج ہوں اسپیکر ہوں یا چیئرمین، راجیہ سبھا ہوں، یا ترازو ہمیں بار بار یاد دلاتا ہے جب ہم کرسی پر بیٹھتے ہیں تو ہم نشپکش ہیں، نو پارٹی پرسن، بلکہ میں کہوں گا کہ اس وقت انسان چاہے جج ہو یا ایسے ہی عہدہ پر ہو، انصاف صرف انصاف رہتا ہے اس کا دھرم اس کے من میں ہوتا ہے، لیکن نیائے کرتے وقت نہ اس کا دھرم ہوتا ہے، نہ پارٹی ہوتی ہے۔ آج آپ کو للہ نے اس جگہ پر نوازا ہے۔ بہت کم خوش قسمت لوگ ہیں، جن کو ایسی جگہیں ملتی ہیں، ایسا عہدہ ملتا ہے، جہاں انصاف ہوتا ہے۔ آج آپ کو یہ انصاف کرنے کا موقع ملا ہے۔ ہم آپ کی لمبی عمر کی کامنا کرتے ہیں، آپ صحت مند رہیں، سوستھہ رہیں اور یہ سدن اچھی طرح سے چلے۔

مان گئے پردھان منتری نے رات کو ایک اچھی بات کہی تھی، میں اس کے لئے ان کو بدھائی دیتا ہوں، کیوں کہ کل بہت سارے لوگ اس سدن میں اور وہاں پر بھی جو پرمپرائیں ہیں، ان کے بارے میں بتا رہے تھے۔ یہاں کوئی بھی چیئرمین کا عہدہ چھوڑ کر جاتا ہے، تم پی-ایم۔ صاحب نے کہا تھا کہ لیڈرس اس لئے بھی یاد دلاتے ہیں کہ اگلے چیئرمین کو ان پرمپراؤں پر چلنا ہے اور اس کو improve کرنا ہے۔ ہمارے اس سدن میں ایک پرمپرا رہی ہے اور آپ نے ہمیشہ اس کو ایم-پی۔ کے روپ میں اور منتری کے روپ میں دیکھا ہے کہ ہر انسان کو، ہر پارٹی کو اور ہر آدمی کو بولنے کی آزادی ہے اور اس کو accommodate کرنا چاہئے اور اس کو بولنے کے لئے ایڈجسٹ کرنا چاہئے، یہی وہ جگہ ہے۔ لوگ میدان میں، فیلڈ میں نعرے دے سکتے ہیں، گالیاں دے سکتے ہیں، لیکن آپ کچھ نہیں کر سکتے ہیں۔ ہمارے سنودھان نے ہم کو ایک forum دیا ہے کہ جہاں پبلک کے representative، وہ directly elect ہوکر آئیں یا indirectly آئیں۔ جس طرح سے اس سدن کی دھارنائیں بنائی گئی ہیں، یہ Indirect ہے، بلکہ میں یہ کہوں گا کہ یہ ڈائریکٹ

[श्री गुलाम नबी आज़ाद]

والوں کا representative ہے۔ جو ہمارے ایم۔ایل۔اے۔ چن کر آتے ہیں، ان کو دیش کے کروڑوں لوگ چن کر بھیجتے ہیں اور وہ ہمیں یہاں چن کر بھیج دیتے ہیں، اس لئے ہم دو لوگوں کو represent کرتے ہیں۔ ہم ان ایم۔ایل۔ایز کو بھی represent کرتے ہیں اور ان ایم۔ایل۔ایز کو، جن کو کروڑوں لوگوں نے چن کر بھیجا ہے، ہم ان کو بھی indirectly، ریپریزینٹ کرتے ہیں۔ ہمارے اس ہاؤس کی جو ذمہ داری ہے میں سمجھتا ہوں کہ وہ ڈبل ہے۔ اس ہاؤس کی ذمہ داری پبلک کی ہے اور ہماری ذمہ داری پبلک کی بھی ہے اور جو اسٹیٹس میں لیجسلیچرس ہیں، ان کی بھی ذمہ داری ہے، اس لئے جو اس کی امپورٹینس ہے، وہ کسی بھی طرح سے کم نہیں ہونا چاہئے۔ جو پرمپرا رہی ہے کہ یہاں din میں کوئی بھی بل پاس نہیں ہوتا ہے، مجھے پورا وشواس اور بھروسہ ہے۔ میں پورے وپکش کی طرف سے آپ سے انورودھہ کروں گا کہ وہ پرمپرا قائم رہنی چاہئے۔ اسی کے ساتھ میں ایک دفعہ پھر آپ کو باردک بدھائی دیتا ہوں، بہت بہت دھنیواد -

प्रो. राम गोपाल यादव (उत्तर प्रदेश): माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपका अपनी तरफ से और अपनी समाजवादी पार्टी की तरफ से अंतरमन से स्वागत करता हूँ। आपका बहुत लम्बा राजनीतिक जीवन रहा है। छात्र जीवन से लेकर, एक बहुत बड़ी पार्टी के राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष तक किसी व्यक्ति का पहुंचना अपने आप में यह साबित करता है कि उसके व्यक्तित्व में कुछ तो खासियत है ही। यह लोकतंत्र का ही कमाल है कि आम व्यक्ति, मामूली घर में पैदा होने वाला व्यक्ति भी बड़े से बड़े पद पर पहुंच सकता है। आपने मंत्रिमंडल में रहकर ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय को भी देखा और शहरी विकास मंत्रालय को भी देखा। मुझे याद है, जब आप ग्रामीण विकास मंत्री थे, तो सांसद सबसे ज्यादा प्रसन्न आप से ही थे। क्योंकि मंत्री रहते हुए, एम.पी.जी. को जो आपने दिया है, वह किसी और मंत्री ने नहीं दिया है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि आपकी लोकप्रियता और ज्यादा बढ़े। जब आप इस पद पर पहुंचे हैं, तब आदमी की political life में जो एक रैडिकल चेंज होता है, आपका भी वह रैडिकल चेंज हुआ है। जब एक political activist ऐसे पद पर पहुंचे, जहां उसे यह कहना पड़े कि वह किसी पार्टी का नहीं है, वह सारे देश का है, जब ऐसी स्थिति होती है, तब सारे लोगों की यह उम्मीद होती है, उन्हें पूरा भरोसा होता है कि आप सारे संसद सदस्यों की नजर में पूरी तरह से खरे उतरेंगे और उस पद पर रहते हुए, जो छोटी से भी छोटी पार्टी है, अगर उस पार्टी का सदस्य अपनी कोई बात कहना चाहता है, तो उसको भी अपनी बात कहने की इजाजत मिलेगी।

सभापति जी, मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि इस पद पर political लोग भी आए और non-political लोग भी आए, हालांकि मेरा निजी तौर पर हमेशा यह मानना रहा है कि इन पदों पर politics में रहने वाले, political life गुजारने वाले लोग ही आने चाहिए। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय

प्रधान मंत्री जी से भी यह कहना चाहूंगा कि एक बार किसी कमीशन ने यह रिपोर्ट दी थी कि गवर्नर्स non-political आदमी हों, लेकिन गवर्नर्स भी political लोग ही होने चाहिए, क्योंकि non-political लोग political लोगों की समस्याओं को, देश की समस्याओं को उतना नहीं समझते, जितना political आदमी समझता है। आज मुझे खुशी है — क्योंकि एक बात, जो कल प्रधान मंत्री जी ने इशारे में कही थी कि जो कहा जा रहा है, वह आने वाले के लिए indirect way में एक इशारा भी है। हालांकि यह सही है कि शोर-शराबे के बीच कोई बिल पास नहीं होना चाहिए, लेकिन इसमें अकेले चेयर की ही जिम्मेदारी नहीं होती, बल्कि शोर-शराबा करने वालों को भी यह सोचना चाहिए कि किस बात पर शोर-शराबा किया जाए, किस बात पर नहीं किया जाए। मैं कामना करता हूँ कि आपका कार्यकाल बहुत ही सफल हो और अभी बीच में जो ब्रेक हो गया है, उपराष्ट्रपति के बाद जो और पद है, आप उस पद पर भी पहुंचें। मेरी आपके लिए यह कामना है, धन्यवाद।

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, hon. Prime Minister, hon. Leader of the Opposition and other hon. Members of this august House. At the outset, I would like to thank our hon. Prime Minister for selecting the most competent gentleman to hold the post of hon. Vice-President and Chairman of this House. It is a well-known fact that our hon. Chairman was very close to our hon. Amma. Had she been alive, she would have been happier than any of us and she would have attended this function. Definitely, our hon. Chairman is having the blessings of hon. Amma. He will definitely be a successful Vice-President and Chairman of this House. Sir, you have got the ability to connect with each and every region of India. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, we feel that you hail from Tamil Nadu. You know Tamil Nadu better than me or anybody else. So, we are very happy. Likewise, you can connect with each and every region of India. Further, Sir, I have got immense faith, belief and trust that you would connect with each and every Member of this House effectively so as to redress his grievances and that each and every Member will get his due opportunity to make his speeches and express his views before this august House. A common man has become the hon. Vice-President of India and the Chairman of this House. So, each and every Indian must thank our hon. Prime Minister for providing this opportunity to a common man to become the Vice-President of India and the Chairman of this House. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, now that I have to address you not as 'Venkaiahji' but as 'Mr. Chairman' for the first time, let me welcome you in your favourite style – ten couplets in rhyme. From Ms. Mamata Banerjee, Trinamool and me, our best wishes to you and your family.

And, as you begin this new term, we are sure you will keep your sense of humour and yet remain firm.

[Shri Derek O'brien]

Mr. Chairman, I have a simple proposition, may the Chair always listen to the voice of the Opposition.

Sir, even when the debates get overheated, we are absolutely confident you won't lose your cool, but please keep a special eye on my colleagues from Trinamool.

And, of course, we are all confident you will not commit that one sin of ever passing a Bill in the din.

Short Duration Discussions and Calling Attentions we will seek, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will allow, at least, two every week.

And, when the hon. Ministers give sketchy answers in Question Hour, with your experience you will guide them and use your sage-like power.

And now, Sir, I will say something very serious. So, please pay careful attention to this. And, of course, we know your love for legendary prawn, Sir, we wish you well as you begin this new dawn.

Sir, the couplets are over but no speech to Venkaiahji, as the Chairman, can be complete without an acronym. We wish you very well, Sir, and you have made acronyms a new national pastime. I know many people are suggesting to you that you should stop the acronyms, but we would like to say that you should carry on with your acronyms because you take some letters and make some wonderful words out of them. So, I have taken the courage to conclude with one acronym because we believe that is your role here, and that acronym is for 'NAIDU' – Now All India's Dearest Umpire. Thank you, Sir.

श्री बशिष्ठ नारायण सिंह (बिहार): सभापति महोदय, आपके द्वारा सदन के सभापति का पद ग्रहण करने के बाद और इस देश के उपराष्ट्रपति की जिम्मेदारी संभालने के बाद मैं अपनी ओर से, अपनी पार्टी की तरफ से, बिहार की जनता की तरफ से आपको साधुवाद देता हूँ, आपको बधाई देता हूँ और भविष्य में आपको आपके कार्यकाल की एक शानदार सफलता मिले, इसके लिए भी शुभकामना देता हूँ। सभापति महोदय, जिन्दगी एक सफर है और वह सफर कैसे गुजरता है, इसी से लोग देखने का प्रयास करते हैं, किसी व्यक्तित्व का आकलन करते हैं कि उसका सफर कैसा रहा। यदि आपकी जिन्दगी को परखा जाए और कुछ मोड़ों पर केंद्रित किया जाए, तो तीन मोड़ ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण दिखाई पड़ते हैं। पहला मोड़ है संघर्ष का प्रारम्भ, दूसरा मोड़ है संगठन का और तीसरा मोड़ है सरकार चलाने का। मैं संघर्ष की बात का उल्लेख इसलिए करता हूँ कि आपका प्रारम्भिक जीवन, जो छात्र संघर्ष का रहा है और जिस मोड़ पर आपने जेपी आन्दोलन में संघर्ष किया था, उसका सहयात्री होने का हम लोगों को भी मौका मिला था। आपने विश्वविद्यालय की छात्र राजनीति से सार्वजनिक जीवन में प्रवेश करने का काम किया। छात्र राजनीति तो शुचिता का प्रतीक होती है। उसके सामने घर-परिवार, किसी की चिंता नहीं रहती है। उसके सामने तो

केवल जुनून रहता है, जो आगे बढ़ता चला जाता है, आप उस धारा से आए हैं। आप ऐसी धारा से आए हैं, जो भारत के राजनैतिक इतिहास के एक स्वर्णिम अध्याय के रूप में आज भी चर्चित होता रहता है — जेपी आन्दोलन। यदि संगठन में एक छात्र नेता विश्वविद्यालय के अध्यक्ष पद की जिम्मेदारी सँभालता हो और उसकी कार्यकुशलता ऐसी हो कि पार्टी के अध्यक्ष के रूप में उसको कार्य करने का मौका मिल जाए, तो यह उसकी दक्षता, उसकी योग्यता और उसकी संगठन क्षमता को प्रमाणित करता है। तीसरा मोड़ आपके मंत्री पद और अनेक पदों पर जाने का है। ऐसा सफर तो बहुत कम लोगों का होता है। जिन्दगी की तुलना तो नदी के प्रवाह से की जाती है। सभापति महोदय, जब नदी का प्रवाह रुक जाता है, तो नदी की महत्ता खत्म हो जाती है। यदि जिन्दगी में प्रवाह बराबर चलता रहता है, वह व्यक्ति अनेक पदों पर जाता है और उन पदों पर अपना कीर्तिमान और यश स्थापित करता है, तो वही जिन्दगी का सही अर्थ है, जिसको आपने निभाने का काम किया, जिसको आपने आगे बढ़ाने का काम किया।

मैं मानता हूँ कि आपके ऊपर एक बहुत बड़ी जिम्मेदारी आई है और ऐसी जिम्मेदारी आई है कि आपको दायें भी देखना है और बायें भी देखना है ...(व्यवधान)... और बीच में भी देखना है। तीनों कोणों के बीच सामंजस्य और सौहार्द बनाने में, आपके जीवन में जो तीन लक्ष्य रहे हैं, जिनमें आपको सफलता मिली है, मुझे लगता है कि इसमें भी आपको शानदार सफलता मिलेगी। मैं मानता हूँ कि इस सदन में आपके लंबे काल से रहने के बाद और सदस्यों के प्रति आपका जो ममता और स्नेह का भाव रहा है, यहां सब लोगों के सहयोग से आपका यह कार्यकाल भी कार्य के मामले में बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण होगा, शानदार होगा और सफल होगा।

सभापति महोदय, कुर्सी की व्याख्या की गई है कि उस पर बैठने वाले व्यक्ति से कुर्सी की महत्ता बढ़ती है और उस पर बैठने वाले व्यक्ति से कुर्सी की महत्ता कम भी होती है। यदि कुर्सी पर बैठने वाला व्यक्ति अपने कार्य से कुर्सी की महत्ता बढ़ा देने का काम करे, तो यह लोकतंत्र के लिए भी आवश्यक है, सार्वजनिक जीवन के लिए भी आवश्यक है और भारत के सामाजिक जीवन के लिए भी आवश्यक है।

अंत में मैं आपको शुभकामना देता हूँ। आपको यश मिले, प्रतिष्ठा मिले, आपका यह कार्यकाल भी शानदार हो, बेमिसाल हो और आपको इस सदन के लोगों का सहयोग मिले। इतना ही कह कर अपनी शुभकामना देते हुए मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Sitaram Yechuryji. The last speech I am going to hear from him.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir, a very warm welcome to you from the bottom of my heart. I am very confident that your innings here will be very, very illustrious. Whether you call it a queer twist of fate or a very, very ironic coincidence, you will be making your first remarks as the Chairman of this House from the Chair and I am making my last remarks welcoming you to this Chair.

माननीय प्रधान मंत्री महोदय ने जो कहा, बिल्कुल सही कहा। एक चीज की मुझे खुशी है कि मैं अटपटाहट से बच जाऊंगा, जैसा आपने कहा। वेंकैया नायडु जी को हम काफी सालों से जानते हैं। छात्र जीवन से लेकर आज तक लगभग 40 साल तो हो गए हैं, हर समय हम

[Shri Sitaram Yechury]

एक-दूसरे के आमने-सामने होते थे, लेकिन अपनी विचारधारा के आधार पर विवाद भी होता था। मुझे याद है एक समय किसी पत्रकार ने पूछा कि आप दोनों एक दूसरे के खिलाफ इतना बोलते हुए भी एक ही जगह पर कैसे हैं? आप तो श्री वेंकैया नायडु की sense of humour जानते ही हैं। उन्होंने उस पत्रकार से कहा कि मैं क्या करूँ — अगर मैं ट्रेन में चढ़ गया और कंपार्टमेंट में सीताराम को देखूँ, तो क्या मैं उतर जाऊँ ? इनका ऐसा जवाब सुनकर वह पत्रकार परेशान हो गया। हमारा व्यक्तिगत relationship is such.

I am very happy that you are here. You know this House better than most of the people here. You know what should be done, so there is nothing much that I can tell you as I leave. But, Sir, only one observation I would like to make. You are sitting under two symbols. One is the Ashoka Chakra where it says Satyameva Jayate. It means, 'the truth shall prevail'. Another is the scale of justice. This seat, Sir, I would say is the seat of Vikramaditya. From this seat, it is not only the truth, but whatever you do has to be just. Justice has to be given to whatever is raised in this House. And I hope that this is something that you will uphold. I am very confident that you will uphold that and also the various requests that the other Members made because I won't be here. I join them in their request because I want the House to function like that.

Sir, you and I have grown up in our mother tongue Telugu. I hope the interpretation is there. * We know how Shri Gurazada Apparao described our nation. Sir, I request you to kindly bear that in mind. Keeping aside our ideologies, deliver your duties accordingly.

The country is not bricks and mortar. The country means its people. I hope that that principle will be supreme in your judgement here and that you will be able to do that.

Finally, Sir, you are now in a very important position in our constitutional scheme of things. I am very happy and glad that you are in that position. I am very happy and glad that your entire family is here. I share my personal happiness with them also. That is apart from my political party and view. You are the custodian of our Constitution. The Constitution begins by saying, 'We, the people..' and we end our Preamble by saying '...adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution.' The essential feature is the people. The people are supreme. The sovereignty of the country lies with the people. Now, how do people exercise this sovereignty? They exercise this sovereignty through the elected Members of Parliament or Legislatures. The elected Members keep the Government accountable to the Parliament and the

* English translation of the original speech delivered in Telugu.

Legislatures. The Executive is accountable to us. We are accountable to the people and that is the link of this sovereignty. If this link breaks and if Parliament does not function and discharge its responsibility, then people's sovereignty just dissolves. That is something which is not permissible. I am sure you will agree, the Prime Minister will agree, the ruling party will agree and all of us will agree. So, please allow this institution and this august House to function and discharge that responsibility. You have that onerous responsibility now to ensure that this happens with justice and dignity. And I am confident that you will discharge that. My very, very best wishes to you! Of course, we will meet outside this august House, but in this august House, as my last remark, I would say that I am very happy to welcome you in the Chair and as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Thank you, Sir.

श्री दिलीप कुमार तिकी (ओडिशा): आदरणीय चेयरमैन महोदय, सबसे पहले मैं अपनी और हमारे ओडिशावासियों की तरफ से आपको मुबारकबाद देना चाहूंगा। पहली बार मुझे हमारे प्रधान मंत्री जी के सामने बोलने का मौका मिला, यह मेरे लिए गौरव की बात है, इसलिए मैं थोड़ा घबराया हुआ भी हूँ। ...**(व्यवधान)**... महोदय, आपको मैंने पिछले पांच साल में एमपी के तौर पर देखा, फिर मिनिस्टर के रूप में देखा और आज हम आपको राज्य सभा के चेयरमैन और देश के उपराष्ट्रपति के तौर पर देख रहे हैं।

महोदय, एक दिन था, आप जब युवा थे, तब आंध्र प्रदेश सहित पूरे देश के लिए बोलते थे। एक दिन वह भी था, जब आप राइट साइड से बोलते थे और एक दिन वह भी था जब आप लेफ्ट साइड से बोलते थे, लेकिन आज गणतंत्र के सर्वोच्च पद पर पहुंच कर आप लेफ्ट, राइट, सेंटर और पूरे देश की बात सुनेंगे। इसी से हमें अंदाज़ा हो रहा है कि आपने अपने जीवन में कितनी मेहनत की होगी। ...**(व्यवधान)**... जी हां, सामने वालों की भी सुनेंगे।

युवा रहते हुए आप जेपी मूवमेंट में भी शामिल थे, इससे भी हम अंदाज़ा लगा सकते हैं कि आप कितनी हिम्मत वाले इंसान थे। आपके पास स्टुडेंट लाइफ के भी बड़े एक्सीपीरियंस हैं, पब्लिक लाइफ के भी एक्सीपीरियंस हैं और पॉलिटिकल लाइफ के भी एक्सीपीरियंस हैं, इसलिए निश्चित तौर पर मैं आपकी गाइडेंस में राज्य सभा में अच्छा काम कर सकूंगा। अपनी पार्टी की ओर से सदन के संचालन में हम लोग आपका हर संभव सहयोग करेंगे, इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी और हमारे ओडिशावासियों की तरफ से फिर से आपको शुभकामना देता हूँ, धन्यवाद।

***SHRI C.M. RAMESH (Telangana):** Mr. Chairman Sir, today people of the State of Andhra Pradesh are both happy and sad. We are happy because you are elected to the second highest constitutional post of India. It is a matter of pride for the people of Andhra Pradesh and for the people of entire India as well. The people of Andhra Pradesh consider you as their elder brother and they always look towards you for help and guidance. We used to address our problems to you. Sir, today we are equally sad because we apprehend that we might lose that opportunity to put forth our problems before you. Sir, yesterday in the televised speech you have assured

[Shri C. M. Ramesh]

that you will always strive for the development of India and for the development of Andhra Pradesh as well.

Sir, since my childhood days as a student, I used to look at your pictures and read your statements. Sir, on this occasion I would like to thank two great personalities. I read about them long back in newspapers. One is Shri O. Durga Prasad and the other is Shri Somaiah. Sir, as you said earlier, these two personalities are the reason for your disciplined lifestyle and today you were able to attain this highest position because of their teachings. So I want to thank these two great persons who inspired you.

Sir, I still remember how you started gaining reputation. I think I was at the age of fourteen or fifteen then. It was in your college days when you came to know that a cinema theatre owner had committed a mistake unintentionally. As a college student you made him apologise and this news was spread all over the district of Nellore and the surrounding areas. This is how your reputation started.

Sir, I am telling all these now so that every member will come to know of you. When you contested for the first time from Udayagiri constituency in Nellore district you were the only member to win with thumping majority from Janata Party in Nellore district. In the subsequent elections for the Andhra Pradesh Assembly, you were the only candidate to win from Janata Party in Nellore District. We used to follow your speeches delivered in the State Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh. There was no live telecast of the proceedings of the Assembly at that period of time. So we used to see in Doordarshan Channel in the evening and read in newspapers the next day. Sir, these days we are missing quality speeches delivered by you, by Shri Gouthu Latchanna and by Shri Jaipal Reddy in the Assembly. I wish you will guide every member to be able to deliver such quality speeches in this august House.

Sir, we feel proud of you because of your participation in the Student's movement and the initiative you took during Shri Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao's period of crisis and many such occasions. Unlike other politicians no one from your family is into politics. Not even as Sarpanch. We have read in books that you belong to a family with agricultural background in Chavatapaleman, Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh and you used to commute by bicycle to school and colleges. You have been a Member of Rajya Sabha continuously for four terms because of your services rendered to the party and to the country.

Sir, people from Telugu speaking States are happy because after fifty years a person from Telugu speaking States is occupying this highest position. It is in 1962

that Shri Zakir Husain was elected as Vice President of India and now after fifty years a person from Telugu speaking States is elected as Vice President of India. I want to congratulate our hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Bharatiya Janata Party for this privilege.

Sir, we have learnt many things from you. We have seen you in Opposition, in Treasury benches and now we are seeing you as the Chairman of Rajya Sabha. We wish you will perform your duties as meticulously as you have performed in your earlier responsibilities. Thank You Sir.

श्री सतीश चंद्र मिश्रा (उत्तर प्रदेश): सभापति महोदय, मैं बहुजन समाज पार्टी की तरफ, अपनी पार्टी की राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष सुश्री मायावती जी की तरफ से और स्वयं अपनी ओर से इस पद को ग्रहण करने के लिए आपका अभिनंदन और स्वागत करता हूँ। जब मैं आज सुबह यहां आ रहा था, तो सत्ता पक्षा के एक मेम्बर ऑफ पार्लियामेंट, जो हमारे मित्र हैं, वे मिले और उन्होंने कहा कि अब सतर्क रहिएगा। मैंने पूछा, क्यों? उन्होंने कहा कि अब बहुत स्ट्रिक्ट प्रिंसिपल आ गए हैं, आज से बहुत स्ट्रिक्ट प्रिंसिपल बैठेंगे। मैंने उनको यह याद दिलाया कि आपको ज्यादा सतर्क रहने की जरूरत है। जैसा कि माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी ने वकीलों के बारे में एक बहुत ही अच्छा उदाहरण दिया, मुझे तो वकालत करते हुए 42 वर्ष से ज्यादा हो गए। उन्होंने कहा, "कहते हैं कि लीजिए अभी तक तो हमारे साथ बैठते थे, ऊपर बैठ गए, अब ऐसे बोल रहे हैं या ये कर रहे हैं, लेकिन इसके साथ-साथ वकीलों के बारे में मुझे एक और उदाहरण याद आता है और वह यह है कि जो सरकारी वकील होते हैं, जैसे चीफ स्टैंडिंग काउंसिलर हुए, गवर्नमेंट एडवोकेट हुए, वे 20-20 वर्षों से सरकार की तरफ से खड़े होकर बहस करते रहे,... मैं भी Advocate-General रहा हूँ, भले ही जज नहीं बन पाया, लेकिन जब कोई जज बन जाता है, उस समय सारे सरकारी वकील सोचते हैं कि अब तो ये जज बन गए, कल तक हमारे बीच में थे, अब इधर आ गए हैं, लेकिन पहले ही दिन झटका उन्हें तब मिलता है, जैसे ही वे सरकार की तरफ से खड़े होकर पैरवी करते हैं, जरा सी भी इधर-उधर गलती हुई और पहला order सरकार के खिलाफ पास होता है। उस समय उन्हें लगता है कि ये अब ऐसी गद्दी पर बैठ गए हैं, जहां उनके सामने सब बराबर हैं। वह बात अलग है कि जो तराजू ऊपर लगा है, वह थोड़ा इधर झुका हुआ नज़र आ रहा है। संभव है कि हम इधर खड़े हैं, इसलिए लगता हो, लेकिन तराजू दोनों पक्षों के लिए बराबर होता है। मुझे याद है, जब आप यहां बैठते थे, हम इधर बैठते थे, मैं खुले तौर से हाउस में कहता हूँ कि मैं आपका admirer रहा हूँ। Admirer इसलिए कि जो ability and intelligence आपमें थी, आप हर विषय पर, जब भी हम लोग आपसे सलाह-मशविरा करते थे, जब भी कोई ऐसा विषय यहां आता था, जो गरीबों, दलितों और खास तौर से शोषितों से संबंधित हो, मुझे वह दिन याद है जब आप कहते थे कि नहीं, नहीं, दबने की जरूरत नहीं है, यह आपका right ही नहीं, आपकी duty भी है कि आप इस विषय पर खुलकर बोलें, अपनी बात रखें। आप स्वयं हमें ऐसी सलाह देते थे।

आज आपका जिस तरह से यहां परिचय दिया गया, पहले से ही सबको मालूम है कि आप कैसे और कहां से चलकर इस पद तक पहुंचे हैं। वह हमारे लिए एक example है। यह पद सिर्फ अपनी मेहनत और निष्ठा से ही हासिल किया जा सकता है, जिसे आपने हासिल किया है। इसके

[श्री सतीश चंद्र मिश्रा]

12.00 Noon

साथ-साथ हम लोगों को और खास तौर से हमारी पार्टी को यह उम्मीद भी जागी है कि आगे ऐसा दिवस नहीं आएगा, जैसा 18 जुलाई को सदन में आया था, जब दलितों और शोषितों के विषय पर एक National Party की राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष, हमारी पार्टी की लीडर को यहां बोलने का मौका तक नहीं दिया गया। अफसोस सिर्फ इस बात का हुआ कि जैसे ही उन्होंने बोलना शुरू किया, सत्ता-पक्ष के सदस्यों ने ही नहीं, बल्कि मंत्रीगण ने खड़े होकर हल्ला करना शुरू कर दिया और अपने साथियों से भी कहा। यहां कई माननीय सदस्य ऐसे हैं, जो अभी मंत्री in-waiting हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि जल्द ही वह chapter close हो जाएगा, जब माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी कुछ नये मंत्री बना देंगे। फिर कम-से-कम वे लोग, जो यह सोचकर straight-away खड़े हो जाते हैं कि हमें बताना है, दिखाना है कि देखिए, हम खड़े हो गए, वह दिवस दोबारा नहीं आएगा और हर विषय पर बोलने का मौका जरूर मिलेगा।

इसके साथ-साथ मैं पिछली benches पर बैठने वाले माननीय सदस्यों के सवाल को भी आपके सामने रखना चाहूंगा। आज आप जहां बैठे हैं, जब मैं इस सदन में 13 वर्ष पहले आया था, उस समय last bench पर बैठकर ही मैंने अपना कार्यकाल शुरू किया था। Last benches पर बैठने वाले माननीय सदस्यों में हमेशा से एक murmuring होती रहती है कि आगे बैठने वाले सदस्यों को तो बोलने का मौका मिल जाता है, आगे से थोड़ा पीछे बैठने वालों को भी मिल जाता है, लेकिन उनकी तरफ चेयर की निगाह नहीं जाती है। मैं समझता हूँ कि आप इस experience से गुजर चुके हैं और आप last benches पर बैठने वालों की तरफ जरूर ध्यान देंगे। इतना ही कहते हुए, इस पद पर आसीन होने के लिए मैं दोबारा आपको बधाई देता हूँ और अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ, धन्यवाद।

श्री प्रफुल्ल पटेल (महाराष्ट्र): सभापति महोदय, सबसे पहले मैं आपको NCP के अध्यक्ष, शरद पवार जी, मेरी ओर से और अपनी पार्टी की ओर से बहुत-बहुत बधाई देता हूँ। हमें बहुत खुशी है, जैसे यहां अनेक माननीय सदस्यों ने अपनी खुशी व्यक्त करते हुए कहा, मुझे भी आपको कई वर्षों से जानने का सौभाग्य प्राप्त हुआ है। इतना ही नहीं, आपके साथ अलग-अलग पदों पर, अलग-अलग परिस्थितियों में संवाद करने का, बातचीत करने का और काम करने का मौका भी मिला है। अभी कई माननीय सदस्यों ने अपनी-अपनी बातें कहीं, जिन्हें फिर से दोहराना मैं आवश्यक नहीं समझता हूँ, लेकिन हमारे भारत के लोकतंत्र की एक शक्ति है, जिसके माध्यम से आज आप देश के इस सर्वोच्च पद पर आसीन हुए हैं। एक सामान्य व्यक्ति भी आपकी तरह ऊँचाइयों तक पहुँच सकता है और मैं समझता हूँ कि यह आगे आने वाली पीढ़ियों के लिए एक बहुत बड़ी मिसाल साबित होगी। आपने इस पद को ग्रहण किया है और अब आप इसको सही तरह से, अपने कार्य के माध्यम से सिद्ध करेंगे कि इस गरिमा को भी उसी तरह से बरकरार रखा जा सकता है।

मैं संक्षेप में इतना ही कहूँगा कि सदन अच्छे-से चले, यह सबकी मंशा है, इधर वालों की, उधर वालों की और शायद हम बीच वालों की भी। मैं बीच वालों की बात इसलिए भी कहता हूँ, क्योंकि कई बार हम देखते हैं — मैं यह इसलिए नहीं कह रहा हूँ कि हमारी इधर या उधर के पक्ष से कोई affiliation है, लेकिन अक्सर ऐसा होता है कि जब इधर से चिल्लाहट होती है या

उधर से होती है, तो फिर हम लोग अपनी जगह पर ही बैठे रह जाते हैं और हमें मालूम नहीं होता है कि अब सदन की कार्यवाही आगे कैसे बढ़ेगी। इसलिए आप कभी-कभी इधर की बात पर भी जरा ज्यादा तवज्जो दें, यह मैं आपसे गुजारिश करता हूँ।

मैं एक और बात कहते हुए अपनी बात समाप्त करूँगा कि मैं दोनों सदनों का सदस्य रहा हूँ। हमने इंद्रजीत गुप्त जी को भी देखा है, हमने सोमनाथ बाबू को भी देखा है और अटल जी, चंद्रशेखर जी जैसे कई उत्तम Parliamentarians को भी सुना है। कई यहां पर भी बैठे हैं। ...**(व्यवधान)**... देखिए, मैं पार्लियामेंट की बात कह रहा हूँ। आज से 26 साल पहले जब मैं एक नया सदस्य बनकर लोक सभा में आया था, तब चाहे वह सदन हो या यह सदन, पार्लियामेंट में पहले जो level of debate होती थी, वह आज सदन में देखने को नहीं मिलती है। अब यहां पर व्यवधान ज्यादा होता है, कोई meaningful debate नहीं होती है और कई बार हम जैसी पार्टियों को समय के दायरे में भी जिस तरह से बांधा जाता है, उसमें हम दो मिनट, तीन मिनट या चार मिनट में अपनी बात नहीं रख सकते हैं। इसलिए चाहे आप कम अवसर दीजिए, लेकिन जब भी अवसर मिले तो उचित अवसर मिले, इसके लिए भी मैं आपसे विनती करता हूँ।

अंत में, मैं यही कहूँगा कि हाउस बराबर चले, यह आपकी भी जिम्मेदारी है और हमारी भी है, लेकिन थोड़ा हँसी-मज़ाक भी होना चाहिए। इस सदन से हँसी-मज़ाक नदारद हो गया है। अब हँसी-मज़ाक व्यंग्य में इस तरह परिवर्तित हो गया है कि इनका कटाक्ष उधर और उनका कटाक्ष इधर। कम से कम आपके माध्यम से — क्योंकि आप इस देश में इसके लिए एक जानी-मानी बहुत महान हस्ती हैं, इसलिए आप हँसी-मज़ाक और छोटे-छोटे चुटकुलों के माध्यम से ऐसे वातावरण को काफी defuse कर सकते हैं। आप इस सदन में भी इस भावना को काफी प्रचलित करेंगे, आपसे मैं यही गुजारिश करता हूँ। मुझे मालूम है, आप बाहर से जितने सख्त हैं, मन से उतने ही विनम्र हैं। आपको खूब लम्बी आयु मिले, अच्छा कार्यकाल मिले और आपको हम सब लोगों का हमेशा सहयोग रहेगा, इतना ही कहते हुए मैं आपको शुभकामनाएँ देता हूँ, धन्यवाद।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you Prafulji. Now, Shri Tiruchi Siva.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I would prefer to speak in Tamil. ...**(Interruptions)**...

श्री सभापति: प्लीज़, शांति बनाए रखिए।

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: But, Sir, translation is not there. ...**(Interruptions)**...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Siva, you have not made the request earlier.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I have given it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They have not made the arrangement because it was not received in time. You can be bilingual. Speak in Tamil and English also for the sake of others. Please go ahead.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, on behalf of my party DMK, I would like to extend a hearty welcome to you. ...**(Interruptions)**...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. ...(Interruptions)... I understand Tamil also. So don't worry. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI TIRUCH SIVA: Sir, you are the first ever Vice-President where a serving Member has become the Chairman of this House. Sir, you have come to this position, not with the help of an elevator, but you have climbed the steps of a ladder. You had started as a grass-root worker in a village, transcended your path and come to this high Constitutional authority position. Now, you are custodian of the Constitution as well as the custodian of this House.

Sir, we have seen you in various capacities. I know you for the past two decades; since 1996 we were Members in the Lok Sabha; and many of our colleagues here like the Railway Minister, we were all together. You have been a very simple man. You have been a very humble person. We have walked together holding hands. We also crossed swords. But your approach to us has never been different. Even to the Opposition parties, Sir, you have been very cordial. As a Minister, your performance which everyone has mentioned has made a mark in whatever portfolios you have held. So also your timely interventions in this House have made everyone of us to remind us of the rules which we have to observe while conducting. You will be in a better position to observe the rules, and we expect very, very humbly, Sir, that your outlook to the Members of this House would be unbiased.

Sir, I would also like to say that amongst many of the things which you have done — to establish the neutrality which you have to maintain — I don't hesitate to say, you have resigned from the party which is very close to your heart for more than five decades. There is a balance in the Chair where you are sitting. There is a couplet in *Thirukkural*, "*Saman Saidhu Seerthookum kolpol amainthiruppal, Kodamai Sandrorukku ani.*" What great saint Thiruvalluvar has said was, "Like balance weights, just after balancing, unbiased side is the hallmark of the voice." So, Sir, we expect and we believe that your outlook to the Members of this House would not be different. Both Opposition parties and the Treasury Benches are equal to you. Your experience would reflect in the coming days.

Sir, again, I would like to say that when a Hindi-speaking Member wants to speak in Hindi, he speaks in Hindi, and immediately we get a translation. When we speak in English, we get translation in Hindi. But if we want to speak in Tamil, we have to give it in writing. Even though we have given it in writing, if the Interpreter has not come, we are in a sorry state. Sir, we feel that justification has to be rendered to not only all the political parties, but also to all the regional languages in this country. During your tenure, we expect that such arrangements should be made in the House that if we want to speak in our mother tongue, we

should have an opportunity because I started with an emotion. You can understand but my colleagues can't. I can express myself better in my language, as also many other Members in this House. So, I request you to take necessary steps in the coming days. I hope that your tenure as the Chairman of the House will throw more light and add more glory because all your performances have been distinct and dignified in the past and this, I am sure, would be in future also. We welcome you heartily. Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Next, Shri Sanjay Raut. Hon. Members, we are only half way through. We have to cover the remaining Members also. Please keep that in mind.

श्री संजय राउत (महाराष्ट्र) : आदरणीय चेयरमैन सर, मैं, अपनी पार्टी, शिव सेना, पार्टी चीफ उद्धव ठाकरे जी और अपनी तरफ से आपका अभिनन्दन करता हूँ, स्वागत करता हूँ। अगर आज शिव सेना प्रमुख बाला साहेब ठाकरे जी जीवित होते तो वे भी आपको आशीर्वाद देते, क्योंकि आप बाला साहेब के बहुत प्यारे थे और आप भी उनको बहुत चाहते थे। सर, मैं सुन रहा था। हमारे बहुत से साथी हैं, जैसे—शिवा जी, सीताराम येचुरी जी, रेणुका जी, रमेश जी, आपने भी कहा, चेयरमैन साहब तेलुगु बिड्डा हैं, तेलुगु अस्मिता हैं। वह तो है, लेकिन आज के पहले से भी वेंकैया जी देश के एक सुपुत्र भी हैं, हिन्दुस्तान के बिड्डा हैं, क्योंकि हमेशा आपकी पहचान एक आन्दोलनकारी के रूप में रही है। जहां भी संघर्ष है, जहां भी झगड़ा है, गरीबों के लिए, वहां वेंकैया जी का नेतृत्व हमेशा रहा है। आपने छात्र जीवन से ही जो संघर्ष किया, वह अब तक खत्म नहीं हुआ है। आपके बारे में आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी ने कहा कि आप इस देश के ऐसे पहले उपराष्ट्रपति हैं, जो स्वतंत्र हिन्दुस्तान में जन्मे हैं। यह सही है, लेकिन मैं एक बात और आपको बताना चाहता हूँ, सदन को बताना चाहता हूँ कि आप इस देश में एक ऐसे उपराष्ट्रपति हैं, जो हिन्दुस्तान की दूसरी आज़ादी की लड़ाई के भी सिपाही रहे हैं, हमेशा क्रांतिकारी रहे हैं। छात्र जीवन में आपने लोकनायक जय प्रकाश नारायण जी की विचारधाराओं से प्रभावित होकर दूसरी आज़ादी की लड़ाई में जो संघर्ष किया, उसके लिए आपको जेल जाना पड़ा। यह आपके राष्ट्रीय जीवन की शुरुआत थी। इसलिए आपको मालूम है कि स्वतंत्रता संग्राम क्या है, संघर्ष क्या है। मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूँ कि आपके जीवन की शुरुआत छात्र संगठन से, छात्र संगठन के आन्दोलन से हुई है। आपने जहां से शुरुआत की थी, उस छात्र संगठन के आप अध्यक्ष भी रहे हैं। लेकिन एक बार फिर, आप ऐसे पद पर पहुँचे हैं कि हम सब छात्र हैं और इस छात्र संगठन के आप अध्यक्ष बन गये हैं। आप फिर एक बार उसी चेयर पर हमारे हेडमास्टर बन कर, हमारे प्राचार्य-आचार्य बन कर बैठे हैं और हम सब आपके छात्र हैं। मैं आपको विश्वास दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि ये छात्र अच्छे हैं, आपका बहुत सम्मान करते हैं, आपका ब्लड प्रेशर हम नहीं बढ़ने देंगे और हम आपकी हमेशा चिन्ता करेंगे।

सर, आपके पीछे जो न्याय का तराजू है, मैं मानता हूँ कि आप इस पद पर बैठे ऐसे व्यक्ति हैं कि यह न्याय का तराजू हमेशा जिस बैलेंस में रहा है, उसी तरह से रहेगा, क्योंकि आपने इस देश को 40 साल से देखा है, सभी आन्दोलनों के और सभी विचाराधाराओं के लोग आपके साथ जुड़े हैं। सर, आप हमेशा संकटमोचक रहे हैं, उसका अनुभव हमने भी बहुत बार लिया है।

[श्री संजय राउत]

इसलिए मुझे विश्वास है कि इस सदन में अब वह संकट कभी पैदा नहीं होगा, जिसके कारण यह सदन बन्द पड़े, इस सदन में गड़बड़ हो। लेकिन दो बातें हैं, जैसे प्रफुल्ल पटेल जी ने कहा था, छोटी-छोटी पार्टियों को भी उनकी बात रखने के लिए समय मिलना चाहिए। हम भी 13 साल पहले पीछे बैठे थे, अब आगे आ गये हैं, लेकिन हमारे साथी जो आज पीछे बैठते हैं, उनकी हमेशा यह तकलीफ रही है कि आप हमारी तरफ नहीं देखते हैं।

शिवा जी, मैं आपकी भी बात मानता हूँ। मैं मानता हूँ कि इस देश की जो भाषा है, चाहे आप न मानें, हिन्दी का महत्व इस देश में रहेगा। यह देश को जोड़ने वाली भाषा है। अंग्रेज़ी भी रहेगी, लेकिन हर राज्य की भाषा भी राष्ट्र भाषा है — चाहे तमिल हो, मराठी हो, बंगला हो, पंजाबी हो या तेलुगू हो, सभी National Languages हैं। तो जो भी जिस भाषा में अपना विचार यहाँ रखना चाहते हैं, उसका पूरा ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): All languages are national languages.
...*(Interruptions)*...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir, all languages are national languages.
...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is also saying the same thing. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Hindi is the Official Language. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री संजय राउत: सभी भाषाओं का सम्मान होना चाहिए। यहाँ जिस भाषा में जो बोलना चाहें, तुरन्त उसका अनुवाद होना चाहिए। मैं इसकी उम्मीद करता हूँ कि यह व्यवस्था आपके कार्यकाल में होगी। सर, मैं फिर एक बार आपको शुभकामनाएँ देता हूँ, जय हिन्द।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Friends, I have 16 more names, and another ten requests have come. We have only thirty minutes. Please keep that in mind. Every hon. Member is requested to speak for two minutes, without any signal from here. If we cooperate, then I can operate better. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, don't threaten a surgical strike.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will not do that. Now, Sardar Balwinder Singh Bhunder.

सरदार बलविंदर सिंह भुंडर (पंजाब): ऑनरेबल चेयरमैन सर, मैं आपको सबसे पहले जोरदार लफ्जों में बधाई देना चाहता हूँ कि जब हम लड़ते थे, अपोजिशन में होते थे, जैसे इमरजेंसी की लड़ाई या और लड़ाइयाँ, उस समय हम कहते थे कि इस देश का भला तब होगा, जब इस देश की सबसे बड़ी सीट जो राष्ट्रपति की है, उस पर गरीब दलित का बेटा बैठेगा और जो वाइस प्रेज़िडेंट की सीट है, उस पर किसान का बेटा बैठेगा। आज हमें खुशी है कि दोनों चीज़ें अब मुकम्मल हो गई हैं। दोनों सीटों पर देश के गरीब परिवार और किसान का बेटा बैठा है। इसका मतलब यही था कि राजे-रजवाड़े दोबारा नहीं आयेंगे। जिन लोगों ने देश को आज़ादी दिलाने में कुर्बानियाँ दी हैं, उन लोगों को देश पर राज करने का मौका मिलेगा, ताकि गरीब की सुनवाई

हो। जिस सपने के लिए हम लड़े, मुझे लगा कि आपकी उम्र मेरे बराबर ही है, लेकिन आप मुझसे छोटे हैं। आपने स्टूडेंट होते हुए इमरजेंसी में जेल काटी है और मैंने पहली दफा एम.एल.ए. होते हुए जेल काटी है। आप जे.पी. साहब की मूवमेंट में शामिल हुए थे और हमने पंजाब में बड़ी-बड़ी कांफ्रेंसेज कीं और जे. पी. मूवमेंट की सबसे बड़ी कांफ्रेंस हमने की थी। बादल साहब हमारे राज्य के चीफ मिनिस्टर थे और बाद में वे अपोजिशन के लीडर भी थे। मैं ज्यादा समय नहीं लूंगा, क्योंकि समय बहुत कम है। मैं दो लफ़्ज और कहना चाहूंगा। मैं पहले 6 टर्म असेम्बली में रहा, मिनिस्टर रहा और अब तीसरी टर्म में यहां आया हूं। जो असेम्बली में होता था, जब पहले ज्ञानी जी चीफ मिनिस्टर थे, उस समय हम पहली बार एम.एल.ए. बनकर आए थे। उस समय असेम्बली का 60 दिन सेशन चला था और अब दो-दो दिन, तीन-तीन दिन चलता है। यह पार्लियामेंट पहले एक साल में पांच महीने चलती थी, अब इसका सेशन महीने का रह गया है और 20 दिन, 15 दिन का रह गया है। एक तो सभी पार्टियों से बातचीत करके इसका टाइम बढ़ना चाहिए, ताकि हर पार्टी को, हर मेम्बर को बोलने का मौका मिले। दूसरी बात यह है कि हम हाउस में discipline रखें और अपनी बातों को प्यार से रखें, मुस्कान से रखें। हम सब को भी सोचना चाहिए कि हम भी कोशिश करें कि एक जो डेमोक्रेसी की लकीर है, जो लोग हमारी तरफ देखते हैं, उनको महसूस हो कि यह अपर हाउस है, यह देश की पार्लियामेंट है, इसमें जो लोग व्यवहार करते हैं, वह ठीक करते हैं — हमें ऐसा व्यवहार करना चाहिए क्योंकि हमारे व्यवहार से नीचे व्यवहार जाता है।

सर, मैं एक लफ़्ज और कहना चाहता हूं कि जो टाइम है, जैसा कि पटेल साहब ने कहा और राउत साहब ने कहा कि जब हमारा टाइम किसी सब्जेक्ट पर बोलने के लिए आता है, तो हमें दो मिनट या तीन मिनट का समय मिलता है, तो हम कैसे दो-तीन मिनट में अपनी बात करें? इसलिए टाइम कैसे बढ़े, कैसे छोटी-छोटी पार्टियों को ज्यादा टाइम मिले, जिससे कि वे अपनी बात पूरी तरह से कह सकें। इन लफ़्जों के साथ आपको और जिन लोगों ने, बीजेपी ने, पी.एम. साहब ने आपका नाम चुना और हम सभी ने साथ दिया, इसके लिए मैं उनको बधाई देना चाहता हूं कि यही देश की आशा थी जो आपने पूरी की है। आपको एक बार फिर से बहुत-बहुत बधाई और परमात्मा करे आपकी हमेशा तबियत ठीक रहे और आप खुश रहें।

श्री सभापति: श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद। सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी वाले बता रहे हैं कि सर, आप कल की पार्टी को भूल गए।

विधि और न्याय मंत्री; तथा इलेक्ट्रानिकी और सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री (श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद): सभापति महोदय, आपका बहुत ही अभिनंदन है। आपका व्यापक अनुभव, देश की संसदीय परम्परा, देश की राजनीति, देश की संवैधानिक मर्यादा और देश की विविधता इन सबका अनुभव जो आपने छात्र जीवन से प्राप्त किया है, उसका सदुपयोग आप इस उच्च पद पर करेंगे। हम लोगों का परम सौभाग्य रहा है कि हमें आपके साथ लम्बे समय तक कार्य करने का अवसर मिला है। आज का दिन है, जब मैं इस सदन को बहुत विनम्रता से बताऊं कि आप स्वयं राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष बने, लेकिन आपने हमारी पार्टी की एक बहुत बड़ी युवकों की पीढ़ी को भी तैयार किया, जो देश की राजनीति में आगे आई। यह मेरा सौभाग्य है कि उनमें से मैं भी एक हूं। मेरे मित्र मुख्तार अब्बास नक़वी जी बैठे हैं, वे भी उनमें से एक हैं और आज दर्जनों लोग देश के महत्वपूर्ण राजनीतिक पदों पर हैं, उन सभी को आगे बढ़ाने में आपका बहुत बड़ा हाथ रहा है। आज के दिन आप

[श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद]

पार्टी से अलग हैं, इसलिए हम औपचारिक रूप से अपनी वह कृतज्ञता भी ज्ञापित करते हैं कि हम लोगों को आगे बढ़ाने में आपका आशीर्वाद रहा है। आज आप एक बड़े पद पर हैं, लेकिन हम लोगों का अपनी पार्टी के अंदर आपके प्रति जो सम्मान और अधिकार-भाव रहा है, अब वह अधिकार-भाव समाप्त है और आदर-भाव व कृतज्ञता-भाव है, जिसमें हम सब बहुत कुछ सीखेंगे।

अंत में मुझे आपके द्वारा सिखाए गए मानदण्डों के अनुसार एक बात कहनी है, *The Opposition must have its say but the Treasury Bench should also have its way*. जब यह चलेगा, तो संसद ठीक से चलेगी। आपका बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद और अभिनंदन।

DR. K. KESHAVA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the thing is, I am rendered speechless for the simple reason that I have known you for more time than many other Members here. I have known you for the last sixty years. We were together in the Legislative Assembly in 1978. Whatever it may be, there is one apprehension, as Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad said. आपने हजारों बच्चों को ट्रेड किया है, तैयार किया है, वही हमारी दिक्कत है। दिक्कत यह है कि जाहिर है कि आप अपने बच्चों को तो अब छोड़ नहीं सकते, हम चाहते हैं कि आपकी मोहब्बत इतनी न हो जाए कि आप उनके ऊपर ही नज़र रखें और हमें भूल जाएं। यह बात सतीश चंद्र मिश्रा साहब ने कही, प्रफुल्ल पटेल साहब ने कही और रवि शंकर प्रसाद साहब ने याद दिलायी। But I can assure them all that I was safe, having worked with you, having worked in opposition, bitter opposition in critical days, we have never been ones who have shown this kind of sides when a political stance had to be taken and you stood the stead. That is what exactly gives us the confidence today. When you are here, I would not like to go back and say what our relations have been, but nonetheless I would say, as the Prime Minister has said, you have some kind of an oratory, an art which made us forget what exactly we were opposing you for, or, why we were opposing you, or, why you were opposing us. The confusion is so much, the entire encircling engulfed the debate so much so that we came out asking for peace. Sir, as somebody said just now, you must use this kind of wit, which many people don't know, because this House, for the last ten years, when I was here, has sometimes become too dry. It became as if we were really fighting each other. शेखावत जी कभी-कभी एक-दो बातें ऐसी कह देते थे और पूरा हाउस हंसने लगता था और debate फिर शुरू हो जाती थी। हम आपसे वही expect करते हैं। सर, Parliamentary wit के बारे में एक किताब भी है।

सर, एक और बात करना चाहूंगा। मैं कांग्रेस पार्टी में सी.डब्ल्यू.सी. में रहकर भी last bench में बैठता था और last bench वालों की हर वक्त यही complaint रहती थी कि साहब की नज़र हर जगह जाती है, लेकिन इधर नहीं आती है। The backbench is different from the centre bench and the centre bench is different from the front bench. Even if my friends feel bad, I say that people in the Ruling Party always have a grouse, and a genuine grouse, that they are not allowed to express their voice for two reasons; one, their

leaders take it over and number two, the Chair does not give that much of an importance which they otherwise give to the leader. That also must go away when you are trying to build up some kind of equity here. Sir, I would not say anything more, except to say that I have known you for the last sixty years, through and through, first as youth leader and of fifty years in active politics. So, I think, to my heart, you would do justice not only to the Office of Chairman but play a wider role of greater implication as far as national and international affairs are concerned. Thank you very much.

श्री नजीर अहमद लवाय (जम्मू और कश्मीर): ऑनरेबल चेयरमैन साहब, मैं आपको जम्मू और कश्मीर के लोगों और अपनी सरकार की चीफ मिनिस्टर मेहबूबा मुफ्ती जी की तरफ से बहुत मुबारकबाद देता हूँ।

सर, मुझे बहुत खुशी हुई, जब मैंने सुना कि आपका फॉर्म Vice President पद के लिए भरा जा रहा है। उस समय आप जम्मू-कश्मीर में थे। उससे सारे जम्मू-कश्मीर में एक उम्मीद सी जग गई कि हमारे जो Vice-President of India होंगे, वे आप होंगे। सर, मैं आपको एक मिसाल बता रहा हूँ कि जब 2002 में आप भारतीय जनता पार्टी के President बने थे, तब मैं घर में बैठा TV पर देख रहा था। मैं भी उन्हीं दिनों politics में आया था। मेरे साथ मेरी मिसेज भी बैठकर TV देख रही थी, तब मैंने उससे कहा कि शायद आने वाले कल में ये हमारे देश के प्रधान मंत्री होंगे, लेकिन अल्लाह ताला, ऊपर वाला कायनात का सुप्रीम है, जो उसको करना होता है, वह वही करता है।

सर, मैं आपको बहुत-बहुत बधाई देता हूँ कि आप इस वक्त Vice-President of India हैं। मैं आप से एक बात और कहना चाहता हूँ, अभी हमारे कुछ MPs भाइयों ने भी कहा है कि जो हमारी जम्मू और कश्मीर की भाषा है, वह कश्मीरी है अगर मुझे कश्मीरी में बोलने का मौका मिलता, तो मैं अपने सारे expressions आपके सामने लाता, लेकिन यह संभव नहीं है। मेरी आप से एक गुजारिश है कि जिस प्रकार हमारे प्रधान मंत्री जी लड़कियों और महिलाओं को आगे लाने के लिए serious हैं और "बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ" का नारा दे रहे हैं, इसी प्रकार आप भी सदन में हमारी MPs बहनों को बोलने में नम्बर वन priority दें, ताकि देश में जो हमारी बेटियों और महिलाओं के मसायल हैं, उनको उजागर करने में उनका अहम रोल रहे, बहुत-बहुत शुक्रिया।

†جناب نذیر احمد لوائے (جموں وکشمیر): انریبل چئیرمین صاحب، میں آپ کو جموں وکشمیر کے لوگوں اور اپنی سرکار کی چیف منسٹر محبوبہ مفتی جی کی طرف سے بہت مبارکباد دیتا ہوں۔

سر، مجھے بہت خوشی ہوئی، جب میں نے سنا کہ آپ کا فارم وائس پریزیڈنٹ

عہدہ کے لیے بھرا جا رہا ہے۔ اس وقت آپ جموں وکشمیر میں تھے۔

[श्री नज़ीर अहमद लवाय]

اس سے سارے جموں و کشمیر میں ایک امید سی جگ گئی کہ ہمارے جو وائس پریسیڈنٹ ا ف انڈیا ہونگے، وہا پ ہونگے۔ سر، میں ا پ کو ایک مثال بتا رہا ہوں کہ جب 2002 میں اپ بھارتیہ جنتا پارٹی کے صدر بنے تھے، تب میں گھر میں بیٹھا TV پردیکھ رہا تھا۔ میں انہیں دنوں پالیٹیکس میں آیا تھا۔ میرے ساتھ میری مسیز بھی بیٹھ کر TV دیکھ رہی تھیں، تب میں نے اس سے کہا کہ شاید ا نے والے کل میں یہ ہمارے دیش کے پردھان منتری ہونگے، لیکن للہ تعالیٰ، اوپر والا کائنات کا سپریم ہے، جو اس کو کرنا ہوتا ہے، وہ وہی کرتا ہے۔

سر، میرا پ کو بہت بہت بدھائی دیتا ہوں کہا پ اس وقت وائس پریزیڈنٹ ا ف انڈیا ہیں۔ میں ا پ سے ایک بات اور کہنا چاہتا ہوں، ابھی ہمارے کچھ ایم پیز بھائیوں نے بھی کہا ہے کہ جو ہماری جموں و کشمیر کی بھاشا ہے، وہ کشمیری ہے اور مجھے کشمیری میں بولنے کا موقع ملتا، تو میں اپنے سارے ایکپریشنس ا پ کے سامنے لاتا، لیکن یہ ممکن نہیں ہے۔ میرا پ سے ایک گزارش ہے کہ جس طرح ہمارے پردھان منتری جی لڑکیوں اور مہیلاؤں کو ا گے لانے کے لیے سنجیدہ ہیں اور ”بیٹی بچاؤ، بیٹی پڑھاؤ“ کا نعرہ دے رہے یں، اسی پرکار ا پ بھی سدن میں ہماری ایم پیز بہنوں کو بولنے میں نمبر ون priority دیں، تاکہ دیش میں جو ہماری بیٹیاں اور مہیلاؤں کے مسائل ہیں، ان کو اجاگر کرنے میں ان کا اہم رول رہے، بہت بہت شکریہ۔

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri D. Raja. Once again I request you all to keep the time in mind. We have a couple of speakers from different parties. Some people are saying 'small parties', but I don't consider any party small. The number may be small, but parties are not small.

SHRI D. RAJA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of my party, the CPI, and on my personal behalf, I welcome you. I give you good wishes on the success of becoming the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Sir, you are now the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. You are the Vice-President of India, the second highest Constitutional position in our country. The Prime Minister has rightly underlined that you are from a very humble farming background. Sir, I am also the son of a landless agricultural worker and I went to school for my secondary education in a small place in Vellore district on the bank of River Palar which remains dried up even today and that small place has produced 20 freedom fighters who fought for

Independence and who became martyrs. Sir, I went to college in a place called Gudiyatham. It was represented by great Kamaraj in the Tamil Nadu Assembly and the weavers of that place take pride even today. They only spanned the tricolor flag during the freedom movement. Sir, that is why I always consider the millions of faceless, nameless Indians — the fellow citizens who make the history of our country — the strength of our democracy. Today, we have a Constitution which is a Republican Constitution, which upholds the secular, democratic values. We have a Parliamentary democratic system. We are a multi-party system which ensures Centre-State relations, the federal governance in our country. Rajya Sabha is one which really represents the States. That is why it is called the Council of States and it is the symbol of federal governance in our country. Whether you call it cooperative federalism or federalism, it is a symbol. In such a House, you are the Chairman and in a multi-party democracy, I need not tell you, you have such rich experience from being a student activist to being the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. You are the Vice-President. It is a remarkable rise. One should appreciate; one should congratulate you on that. But being the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, underlying the importance of multi-party democracy, you must give space for all dissenting voices, all different viewpoints and it is not that we can have unanimity on all issues. There will remain differences, divergent views. It should be appreciated in a democracy, as we have today. As the Chairman, you will appreciate this point and, accordingly, you move forward. I would like to say that you can be assured of cooperation from me and from all other colleagues. But, the Constitutional values and Constitutional morality must be upheld. I hope, it will be done under your Chairmanship.

Thank you very much.

श्री राम कुमार कश्यप (हरियाणा): सभापति जी, मैं अपनी ओर से और अपनी पार्टी इंडियन नेशनल लोक दल की तरफ से आपको भारतवर्ष का उपराष्ट्रपति बनने पर और सदन का Chairman बनने पर बहुत-बहुत हार्दिक बधाई और शुभकामनाएँ देता हूँ। मैं भगवान से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि भगवान आपको इतनी असीम शक्ति दे कि आप इस पद पर रहते हुए पूरे सफल हों। भगवान ने हर एक नागरिक को इतनी क्षमता, इतना talent देकर यहां भेजा है कि अगर उसे यह समझ आ जाए कि उसके अंदर भी योग्यता है, उसके अंदर भी talent है और आपकी तरह वह उस योग्यता का सदुपयोग करे, तो हर नागरिक बड़े से बड़े पद पर पहुँच सकता है। आपने यह करके दिखाया है। भारत का हर नागरिक आपसे प्रेरणा लेकर, भारत का बढ़िया से बढ़िया नागरिक बनकर राष्ट्र के निर्माण में अहम योगदान दे सकता है। मैं अंत में पुनः अपनी ओर से और अपनी पार्टी की तरफ से आपको बहुत-बहुत शुभकामनाएँ देता हूँ, जय हिंद-जय भारत।

श्री वि. विजयसाई रेड्डी (आंध्र प्रदेश): माननीय सभापति महोदय, नमस्कार। सबसे पहले तो मेरी तरफ से आपको बहुत-बहुत बधाई। Sir, you are a multilingual personality. It is an inspiration for all of us to follow you. Therefore, I am trying to speak in Hindi for the first time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Good. I am glad.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: I take pride in saying that you are from Andhra Pradesh and I am also from Andhra Pradesh. We both belong to the same Nellore District. We both belong to the same constituency. Of course, your village is a few kilometers away from my village where I was born.

It is really a pride. I have no hesitation to say that you are not only the pride of the people of Andhra Pradesh but you are the real pride of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Sir, the inspirational speeches delivered by you during your student days, as a leader of the ABVP and also as a youth leader of Bharatiya Jan Sangh, at V. R. College grounds and at Cooperative Bank grounds in Nellore where I was born, are all memorable and can never be forgotten. They are truly inspirational.

The way you had fought for the country against the Emergency is really remarkable.

Your performance in the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh, as an MLA, during the late 70s and early 80s, was really historic and I wish to recall here that people used to call you as 'Assembly Tiger.' Therefore, the role played by you, as a Member of the Legislative Assembly can never be forgotten by the people of Andhra Pradesh.

Coming to the very important issue of your political journey, I wish to say that right from the beginning of your childhood till you occupied this post as the Vice-President of India, you continued to be in one party — Bharatiya Jan Sangh and, subsequently, Bhartiya Janata Party — which very few people could do it. I am very confident, as the Vice-President of India, you would lead the nation with wisdom and pride.

Finally, Sir, on behalf of my party President, Shri Jaganmohan Reddy Garu, my party and on my own behalf, we wish you all the best.

Thank you.

सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री रामदास अठावले): ऑनरेबल चेयरमैन सर,

वैकैया नायडु जी को उपराष्ट्रपति पद देकर,
 नरेंद्र मोदी और अमित शाह जी ने रच दिया इतिहास।
 वैकैया जी थे बीजेपी के नेता खास,
 आपके साथ मजबूती के साथ खड़ा रहेगा अठावले रामदास,
 क्योंकि मैं हूँ सच्चा भीम दास।
 बहुत मुश्किल है इस हाउस को चलाना,
 बहुत ही कठिन है कांग्रेस और बीजेपी को आपस में मिलाना।
 लेकिन हर बार मुझे बोलने के लिए बुलाना,
 नहीं तो आपको मुश्किल होगा हाउस को चलाना।

सर, हमें बहुत खुशी है कि आज एक किसान के बेटे को इतने बड़े पद पर जाने का मौका मिला। एक कार्यकर्ता के रूप में, चाहे भारतीय जनसंघ हो, चाहे भारतीय जनता पार्टी हो, आप युवा नेता रहे, स्टुडेंट नेता रहे। मैं तो आपको 19 साल से जानता हूँ, जब 1988 में पहली बार मैं चुन कर आया था, उस वक्त मैं उनके साथ था, अब आपके साथ हूँ। आप अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी की सरकार में ग्रामीण विकास मंत्री भी रहे, आपका कार्यकाल बहुत अच्छा रहा है। जवाब देने में तो आप बहुत तेज रहे हैं, लेकिन अब उस कुर्सी पर बैठने के बाद आपको थोड़ा-थोड़ा बोलना पड़ेगा। जब आप यहां थे, तो आपको बहुत बोलने का मौका मिलता था, आप ऑपोजिशन को, अपने सामने वालों को चुप कराकर बैठाने का काम करते थे। आपको अभी भी हम सब को चुप कराकर बैठाने का मौका मिलेगा, लेकिन हम वैसे चुप नहीं बैठेंगे, क्योंकि हम सब तो यहां आवाज उठाने के लिए आए हैं। यह हाउस चलाने का आपको अनुभव है, आप 24 साल से यहां हैं, मतलब चार बार आप राज्य सभा के मेम्बर रहे हैं। आपको हाउस चलाने के लिए उधर के लोग तो कोऑपरेशन देंगे, उधर के सदस्य भी देंगे — उधर के कितना देते हैं, यह तो आगे देखेंगे, लेकिन अभी उधर से भाषण में तो कहा गया है कि हम आपको सहयोग देंगे, आपको कोऑपरेशन देंगे। बाकी विषयों में कोऑपरेट न करें तो भी चलेगा, लेकिन सरकार के बिल पास करने के लिए उनकी मदद मिलेगी, इस बात का मुझे पूरा विश्वास है। कांग्रेस पार्टी एक बड़ी पार्टी है, बड़ी पार्टी के रूप में उन्होंने काम भी किया है, वे लोग लोकतंत्र को जानते हैं, बहुत सालों तक सत्ता में रहकर उन्होंने कई बिल पास किए हैं और तब इन लोगों ने इनको सहयोग दिया है। अब आप बिल पास कराने के लिए उधर आए हैं, इसलिए मुझे बिल्कुल भी चिंता नहीं है, क्योंकि आप वहां से एक बार खड़े हो जाएंगे, तो वे सब लोग बैठ जाएंगे और आप इस हाउस को अच्छी तरह चलाएंगे। मेरी जो रिपब्लिकन पार्टी है, बाबा साहेब अम्बेडकर जी की पार्टी है, वह संविधान को मजबूत करने वाली पार्टी है, देश को मजबूत करने वाली पार्टी है। इस पार्टी की तरफ से मैं आपको हार्दिक बधाई भी देता हूँ और उम्मीद भी रखता हूँ कि पांच साल के बाद, जो दूसरा बड़ा पद है वह बड़ा पद भी आपको मिलेगा। आप इस देश के उस बड़े पद पर भी जाएंगे, ऐसा मैं विश्वास व्यक्त करता हूँ। जय भीम, जय भारत।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI Y. S. CHOWDARY): Sir, I am really proud to welcome you as the Chairman of this august House on my own behalf, on behalf of my leader and Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Chandrababu Naidu Garu, and also on behalf of my party. Though you are born as a son of Andhra Pradesh, today is a great day that you could emerge as a national leader. We also have to recognize the fact of our robust Constitution and the beauty of democracy paved the way for you to occupy this Chair.

Undoubtedly, today is a great day for all those people who like you a lot. In a lighter sense, many of us will be missing meeting you in an informal manner. Particularly the people of Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai will be missing the programmes of 'meet and greet'. The organizing-people will also be missing you a lot.

I always admire you for your patient hearing. Whoever will be coming to you with whatever issues, you would always, as a solution provider, be coming out with proper guidance.

I have seen you as a party-man; I have seen you as a Member of Parliament; I have seen you as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party; I have seen you as a Minister, twice; and, today, I am really very happy to see you as the Vice-President of this great nation, and as the Chairman of this august House.

Today, one secret whisper in the corridors is going on that आज से हमारे strict Principal आ गए हैं। So, we will have to be extra careful.

Thank you very much, Sir, for having given me this opportunity.

श्री आनन्द शर्मा (हिमाचल प्रदेश) : माननीय सभापति महोदय, आपको भारत के उपराष्ट्रपति बनने पर, देश के दूसरे उच्च संवैधानिक पद पर आसीन होने पर और राज्य सभा के सभापति बनने पर हार्दिक बधाई और शुभकामनाएँ। आपके व्यक्तित्व के बारे में, आपके अनुभव के बारे में, आपकी इस देश की समस्याओं की, लोगों की आकांक्षाओं की पहचान के बारे में प्रधान मंत्री से लेकर विपक्ष के नेताओं ने, सभी सदस्यों ने बात कही। यह हर्ष की बात है कि आज आप पीठ पर आसीन हैं और आपको हर पक्ष का अनुभव है। आप दूसरे ऐसे व्यक्ति हैं, महान विभूतियाँ इस पीठ पर रही हैं, जो एक बड़े राष्ट्रीय दल के अध्यक्ष रहे हैं। डा. शंकर दयाल शर्मा पहले यहां आसीन हुए, जो भारतीय राष्ट्रीय कांग्रेस के लंबे समय तक अध्यक्ष रहे। आप भारतीय जनता पार्टी के अध्यक्ष रहे, मंत्री रहे, यह अनुभव आपके पास है। इस सदन में दोनों तरफ कुछ लोग हैं, जिनको यहां से वहां जाने का, वहां से यहां आने का, फिर यहां से वहां जाने का अनुभव है। इसलिए वे शासन, प्रशासन और चुनौतियों को समझते हैं। आप उनमें से एक ऐसे अनुभवी

व्यक्ति हैं, जिनको हर पक्ष का अनुभव रहा है। यह सही है कि हमारे लोकतंत्रात्मक, पंथनिरपेक्ष गणराज्य की सबसे बड़ी शक्ति है विचारों का आदान-प्रदान और सदन के अन्दर वाद और विवाद। जहां कई दलों का प्रजातंत्र हो, संसदीय प्रणाली हो, सही मायने में विचारधाराएँ, विचार और दृष्टिकोण अलग-अलग होना अनिवार्य है। भले ही धारा अलग हो, लेकिन मुख्यधारा एक है, वह मुख्यधारा भारत की है। पक्ष और प्रतिपक्ष के बारे में मुझे कहना है कि देखने में यह लगता है और वास्तविकता भी यही है कि ये नदी के दो किनारों की तरह हैं। नदी का पानी धाराप्रवाह बहता रहता है। ये दो किनारे जरूरी हैं, वरना न नदी रहेगी, न नदी का प्रवाह रहेगा। इसके साथ ही वह नदी जाकर एक सागर में जरूर मिलती है। हमारे देश के प्रजातंत्र की जो नदियां चलती हैं, अलग-अलग सोच की, अलग-अलग विचार की, वह एक ही महासागर में जाकर मिलती हैं, जो भारत राष्ट्र है। हम सबको इस बात की जानकारी है। इसलिए मैं कहूँगा कि आपसे हमारी यह उम्मीद है कि जैसे हमारा देश पंथनिरपेक्ष है, आप भी पक्ष-निरपेक्ष हो गए हैं। अब वहां पर बैठ कर आप स्वयं इस बात की पहचान रखते हैं, जो आपने कहा भी है। आज यह कहना उपयुक्त होगा कि हम जो भगवान का रथ लेकर चलते हैं, देवताओं का रथ लेकर चलते हैं, वह देवता का रथ एक चक्र पर नहीं चलता है, उसके लिए दो पहिये आवश्यक होते हैं। प्रजातंत्र के रथ के भी दो पहिये हैं, सरकार और विपक्ष। यह दूसरा पहिया भी उतना ही मजबूत रहे, हमारा आपसे यह आग्रह है। आप वहां थोड़ा कम देखें, इधर थोड़ा ज्यादा देखें। आपको हम सबकी ओर से पूर्ण सहयोग और सम्मान मिलता ही रहेगा और आपका जो निर्णय होगा, उसको भी हम स्वीकार करेंगे। मैं कई बार देखता हूँ, आज एक टिप्पणी हुई कि चर्चा का स्तर गिर गया है, लेकिन गतिरोध और व्यवधान के बावजूद भी हमने हाल ही में देखा है, पिछले कुछ वर्षों के अंदर, इस सत्र में भी और पहले के सत्रों में भी ऐसे कई विषय आए हैं, जिनमें इस सदन में चर्चा का स्तर बहुत ऊंचा गया है। हम आशावान हैं कि आगे भी ऐसे कई विषय आएंगे, जो जनता से संबंधित होंगे, उन पर भी उसी तरह से चर्चा होगी।

अंत में एक सदस्य के रूप में मैं कहूँगा कि हम सभी को यह समझना है कि यह देश साझा है, हमारी विरासत साझी है, इसीलिए जब सत्र का आरम्भ होता है, तो राष्ट्रगान होता है और जब अंत होता है, तो राष्ट्रगीत होता है। हम 'जन-गण-मन' से सत्र का आरम्भ करते हैं और 'वन्दे मातरम्' पर समाप्त करते हैं। इसी तरह से हमारा कौमी नारा — 'जय हिन्द' है, जो सुभाष चंद्र बोस का दिया हुआ है। हम सभी भारत माता के सुपुत्र और सुपुत्रियां हैं, इसी को समझते हुए, हमारे इस पक्ष की सोच और उस पक्ष की सोच बड़ी स्पष्ट है। आज का दिन ऐसा है, जिसमें कुछ बात कहना, कुछ विचार व्यक्त करना जरूरी हो जाता है, इस आशा के साथ कि सदन सुचारू चलेगा। सदन में जान नहीं रहेगी, जब तक कहीं न कहीं मतभेद और आदान-प्रदान नहीं होगा, क्योंकि वह प्रजातंत्र का जीवन होता है। प्रजातंत्र का जो जीवन दिखना चाहिए, वह हमेशा दिखता रहेगा, इसी आशा के साथ आपको शुभकामनाएं।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Sir, I am aware of the time constraints, because I know that you desire to speak at 12.45 p.m. It is already 12.45 p.m.; therefore, I don't want to take more of your time. First of all, I associate myself with all the Members who spoke here from both sides. All of them complimented you. All of them welcomed you. I also join them in heartily welcoming you here, congratulating you and extending to you my greetings and best wishes. You have

[Prof. P. J. Kurien]

been in Parliament for a long time, as a Member of the Rajya Sabha — not only in the Treasury Benches but in the Opposition side also — and as a Minister. So, you have a vast experience. You are also thorough with the Constitution and the Rules. You know the Rules very well. Therefore, I think there will be no problem. Under your leadership, the House will function smoothly, giving justice to both the sides. As the Deputy Chairman of the House, I will extend to you my fullest cooperation. I also assure you that I will work under your guidance and according to the Rules and the Constitution. Once again, my best wishes to you, Sir. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Friends, I have the names of Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy, Shri Rajeev Shukla, Shri Ripun Bora, Shrimati Vijila Sathyananth, Shri T.G. Venkatesh, Shri Mohd. Ali Khan, Shrimati Thota Seetharama Lakshmi, Shri Harivansh and also my friend, Shri Naresh Agrawal who has just sent a letter. But, because of the paucity of name, I am sorry that I am not able to oblige. Now, the Leader of the House. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, please allow, at least, the first name. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please bear with me. ...(*Interruptions*)... I should be more than happy if somebody is talking about me, but the point is of time.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Then, Sir, please accept my best compliments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. It is deemed to have been said.

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Mr. Chairman, Sir, yours has been a journey, close to five decades, of a grassrootlevel political worker who literally has climbed every step of the political ladder, and who has worked his way and worked hard to reach this position.

I first recollect about you when you were very young, and, as a student leader, when you used to come to Delhi. This was in the early 70s and you grew from there, grew into an office-bearer, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, an office-bearer of a State Party, National Party, a Member of Parliament, and today, with close to 20 years' experience as the Member of this House, you now have the honour of presiding over this House. Since you have been a Member for very long, you, obviously, know the traditions, the culture and the functional style of this House itself.

Sir, there have been times where the relevance of Parliament used to get pushed into the background, one Party used to have an overall majority. We have also seen days where the whole Opposition was in jail and the Constitution Amendments were

passed by a depleted strength. Obviously, those are distant memories. But each one of them has taught us a lesson. As some of the Members rightly mentioned, we need the full participation and the cooperation of all in order to effectively run this House, and, I am sure, your experience, as a Member of twenty-year standing, will come as a considerable aid. Obviously, the Opposition is naturally concerned that the Opposition must have a say. It is undoubtedly true. Parliament is a forum. We have also been in the Opposition in the past and we have always felt that Parliament is a legitimate forum where in discussions and debates, the Opposition does get a time and, maybe, some extra time in order to put forward its views. But, ultimately, there is a balancing act that has to be performed and the balancing act is that matters of public interest which the Opposition wants to raise or some other Members want to raise must be given adequate time. At the same time, there is Government Business. The country depends on policy which is framed or the legislations which are framed which come up for discussion and therefore there must be an adequate balance struck between the two, and, I am sure, with your wisdom and experience, you will be able to strike the balance itself. It is a good principle which my friend, Mr. Derek, and several others have advocated of not passing Bills in din. Well, this principle has been strictly adhered to post-2014. Prior to 2014, there was no such principle. I hold 21 Bills, prior to 2014, which were passed in the din. ...(*Interruptions*)... The last one was the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act.

SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL (Uttar Pradesh): What is your suggestion? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Therefore, if this principle has to be adhered to, then, as was mentioned yesterday, and this is my specific suggestion, Dr. Radhrakrishnan was quoted that Parliament can't be the tyranny of the Government, it also can't be the tyranny of the Well. Therefore, the balance will have to be struck between adequate time to raise issues of public importance as also to discharge Government functions. Once, we, the Members, are able to have a consensus on how that balance is to be maintained, your job, as a Chair, would be very easy and ultimately we will all be bound by your directions.

I join my friends in the House in saying, please give adequate time for discussion but leave some time for Government Business also, and, I think, with that balance, we will be able to conduct the function of this House very well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I once again feel sorry that I could not accommodate some of our Members who had expressed the desire to speak. As I told you, because of the paucity of time, and because we have some more Business

[Mr. Chairman]

also before we adjourn *Sine Die*, I could not oblige them. Sorry to disappoint you on the very first day itself, but I have taken this decision keeping in view the general mood of the House. All those names would also be there on record.

Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendrabhai Modiji, respected Leader of the House, Shri Arun Jaitleyji, respected Leader of the Opposition, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azadji, hon. Deputy Chairman, Prof. P. J. Kurienji, hon. Ministers, distinguished Members of this august House, when I first entered this august House as a Member in 1998, I never had even the faintest idea that one day I would have the honour of presiding over this House as its Chairperson. This is the beauty and majesty of our parliamentary democracy and its strength as well. It can lift a commoner like me to such an exalted position and offer opportunities to discharge onerous responsibilities that go with this position.

I am from a small village, the son of a farmer, even now fond of agriculture, because the basic culture of India is agriculture. I feel proud that I am an agriculturist. From there, I had a long journey. You are all aware of it. I had a very humble background. I lost my father and mother at a very young age. I lost my mother when I was one year and three-four months old. I can't even recollect my mother's face. But keeping in view the responsibilities that have been cast upon me at various levels, I have always tried to do my best. Ultimately, you, Members of Parliament of both the Houses, have been kind enough to elect me as the Vice-President of India. I feel really humbled by the honour given to me.

I have also been given the responsibility of presiding over this House; as Vice-President, assisting the President, performing the constitutional responsibilities and also presiding over this august House, the Upper House. I am grateful to all concerned for reposing faith and confidence in me and entrusting such responsibility to me. I don't wish to talk anymore about parties, which party has supported me and which party has not. That is not an issue. That is over now. Now, I am an all-party man, above party politics. आनन्द शर्मा जी ने निरपेक्षता के सम्बन्ध में जो अपेक्षा व्यक्त की, मैं उनकी उस अपेक्षा को जरूर पूरा करूँगा, निश्चित रहिए। I will be a person above politics. I will try to see to it that this House is functional and every one of you gets an opportunity; small or big is not an issue. The only thing is that if everybody follows the rules, regulations and the procedures, then everybody would surely get an opportunity.

Before I elaborate on my thoughts as the Chairman of this august House, I would like to briefly reflect on the origin and role of this federal Chamber of the Parliament of India. With its roots in the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918,

1.00 P.M.

the Council of States first came into being in 1921, further to the Government of India Act, 1919, as a second Chamber of the then Legislature with a restricted franchise. Subsequently, there were extensive debates on the need for this House in the Constituent Assembly. It was considered that a single, directly elected House would be inadequate to meet the challenges before free India. Accordingly, the Council of States was created as a federal Chamber, that is, a House elected by the elected Members. An element of dignity and prestige was accorded to this Chamber by making the Vice-President of India the ex-officio Chairman of this House. The learned Members of the Constituent Assembly envisaged this Chamber as a House of reflective and evaluative reasoning. Late Shri N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar termed it as a House which can reign in passions of the moment.

Late Shri Loknath Mishraji described it as "a sobering House, a reviewing House, a House standing for quality, and the Members will exercise their right to be heard on the merits of what they say, for their sobriety and knowledge of special problems." This House of Elders is meant to ensure federal equilibrium and equanimity in legislation. A provision has also been made to nominate a good number of knowledgeable persons from different walks of life to further enrich the debates. That is the purpose. This House is also expected to protect the interests of the States in the federal scheme of things. This goes to prove that this august House has a clear mandate to perform, provided the Members do not desire, even unintentionally, to reduce its role to that of a superfluous and irrelevant one, as is already being referred to in some quarters in a muted manner. It is a choice in the hands of the hon. Members. Hon. Members, as the world's largest democracy, the fastest growing economy, our country needs efficient and effective legislations to administer its processes, mobilize resources, build partnerships, ensure socio-economic equality, etc. The entire world economy is slowing down. Even our neighbour's economy, which is a powerful economy, is going negative. We are fortunate that we are the one country, India, that is Bharat, which is moving forward and which has got a bright future. Hon. Members, time is not on our side. Even after seventy years of Independence, we are grappling with basic issues of poverty, illiteracy, inequality, agrarian and rural development challenges, sometimes abuse of power at various levels, and then regional inequalities, economic disparities. Some countries, similarly placed with us at the time of our attaining freedom, are marching ahead with lot more focus and a sense of urgency, marshalling their energies in a much better manner. Keeping these challenges in mind, we must all come together, work together and then try to take the country forward. For the success of an individual, institution or a nation, time management is very crucial. We don't have the luxury of time. We need to make up for the lost opportunities over the last seven decades if our country

[Mr. Chairman]

were to realize its full potential, given its huge stock of human and natural resources and other advantages. We have a great human resource, a great intellect, and a great culture and heritage bestowed upon us by our forefathers. This august House meets for much less than a hundred days per year. Should the hon. Members not make the best use of this available time in furtherance of the cause of our country and the people? The choice is to be made by the enlightened Members. We take pride in our diversity and unity that flows from it. If that be the case, can't we be united in the pursuit of common national goals in enabling young Indians realising their aspirations? Our democratic polity allows flourishing of different ideas and thoughts on a range of socio-economic issues. But adversarial politics should not be allowed to have adverse impact on the functioning of Parliament which, in turn, impacts the progress of our nation. We are all Indians; we are all working for the betterment of India in our own sphere of activity according to the principles in which we believe. We may belong to different parties, but our common aim is to strengthen India, to make India stable, strong and prosperous and to see that the fruit of development reach the man in the last line, what you call the Antyodaya, uplifting the poorest of the poor. Political democracy is a sacred instrument in the pursuit of national interest. But a fractious polity, finding its echoes in the legislature, impedes the forward march of our country and the people. No Chamber of our parliamentary democracy can be allowed to be an extension of such a fractious polity. We are only rivals. I firmly believe, I am speaking from my heart, hon. Members, that we are all political rivals; we are not enemies. As I said, each one, according to his belief, is working hard, pursuing his own political thought and process to strengthen the country and to help the people. So, keeping it in mind, we must act together; we must come together; we must discuss. Yesterday, I can share it with you, I had an occasion to go and meet the outgoing President, hon. Shri Pranab Mukherjee. He is one of the most senior politicians and statesmen of the country, and he told me what he had said earlier also. I repeat what he said. He said, "The Parliament should discuss, debate, decide, not to disrupt." We should not use the last 'D'. It is very easy to say, but, at the same time, it is not impossible to implement also. Keeping that in mind, I hope that everybody understands. Every election gives the winner a mandate and the Opposition the responsibility of ensuring accountability of the Executive. I had been in the Opposition for a long time. The Ruling Party has the power. The Opposition must, at least, have its say. But, at the end of the day, the democracy says that the Opposition must have its say, and the Government must have its way because it is as per the mandate of the people. And, all of us must respect the mandate of the people.

Friends, democracy is not only about numbers but also about trying to understand and appreciate each other's point of view. It does not necessarily mean that we reduce the functioning of our Legislature to a mere numbers game. The play of numbers should stop with the formation of Governments and thereafter, it should be resorted to only in the rarest of the rare cases. As the Leader of the Opposition was mentioning earlier, and even some other senior Members were also saying, when we function, when we discuss, we discuss in depth and also, we always offer an enlightened debate better than others. That is the general feeling. But the only issue is that we must discuss, we must debate and then we should decide. Then we will be able to deliver the best. So, this is my request to all of you. The play of numbers should stop with the formation of the Government and, thereafter, it should be resorted to in the rarest of the rare cases only.

An emerging economy like ours should be guided more by a shared destiny in the functioning of our Legislature. More and more discussion, referring it to the Committees, and then discussion in the Committee goes beyond party lines. I myself was the Chairman of some Committees, particularly I was the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Home Affairs for five years. Even on important issues, tricky issues, at the end of the day, we used to come to some common understanding. As there was no media and there was no other such thing, people used to speak out of their heart on what they believed and they used to appreciate and understand each other's point of view. That is why, the historic Land Boundary Agreement by both the Houses of Parliament, the historic GST Bill, and even the historic legislations that have been passed over the years, not only during this regime but in earlier regimes also, were the products of correct wisdom of both the Houses of Parliament. That was after a meaningful debate.

Hon. Members, all that the people of our country desire is that the Parliament should be the voice of sanity, echoing their concerns and finding solutions to their problems as the best way forward. Over the years, both the Houses of Parliament have done a reasonably good job but, somehow, there is a growing concern and resentment among the people about our functioning. As the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, I used to go and meet the media at the end of the Session and then outline as to how many legislations had been approved, how many hours we sat, how we made up for the loss of time, etc. But, at the same time, as some of the Members were suggesting today from the back benches or from the so-called small parties, the time that is available is...

AN. HON. MEMBER: In the middle also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, in the middle also. In the front, left, right and straight, everybody is bright. I am aware of it. But the point is that it is only a question of management of time. If you are able to utilise the full time, you will have enough time. If you spend time in procedural wrangles and other things, then the time, that will be lost, will be a loss to the smaller parties and ordinary Members. So, keeping that in mind, I will try to do my best to see that all the Members get their right and also their due while debates take place.

All that is needed is an attitude of give and take on the part of both the sides. This is possible through strategizing for effective functioning of the House rather than for its disruptions. This needs an enlightened approach on the part of all the concerned. I always say that let the Government propose, let the Opposition oppose, let the House dispose either way, this way or that way. That is the way forward. Unfortunately, obstruction and disruption of the proceedings is increasingly being chosen as the first Parliamentary option. I don't want to dwell on that, but countrymen get disillusioned sometimes. As there is live coverage, when they see what is happening in the Parliament, they get disillusioned. We must understand their feelings. Now, we are in an aspirational India, India that is going forward. The younger generation is taking more and more interest in the public affairs of the country. Keeping that fact in mind and keeping their aspirations in mind, we must live up to their expectations. The school children look to the Legislature, the Legislature to the Parliament, and the people, in general, of the other countries look to the Indian democracy because we are the finest Parliamentary democracy in the world.

So, friends, what I say is, let us utilize the time that is available in an effective manner. I will be more than happy if you all come together and the Government also is willing to extend the time of the sittings of the House. I will be more than happy to welcome it. I can only impress upon the Government provided the time that is already available is spent meaningfully, constructively. Then, we can plead our case, make a request and suggest to the Government to extend the session timings. When you are not able to utilize the time that is already made available to you, then, going and asking for extending it will not have any rationale and it will not be appreciated. So, I hope, in the coming days, we will be able to put our best efforts together. The best way of enforcing accountability of the Executive by the Opposition is to engage the Government and corner them in an informed debate.

I have experience in Legislature. Dr. Keshava Rao was mentioning about it. Dr. Subbarami Reddy and others also know, I used to be a very bitter critic but, at the same time, I never used to cross the line. We enjoyed it also as an Opposition.

The best part of my legislative life was the time when I was in the Opposition rather than in position. Digvijaya ji is saying something ...(Interruptions)... Yes, this side. It was so because we had constructive debates and we used to score points and feel happy.

At this juncture, as the Chairman and the custodian of this House, I also have an advice to the media that the media also should report the constructive debates that take place in the House. The Members come prepared. I have seen that some of the Members, as and when the debate is allowed, make very valuable contribution, they make a lot of good references, but, unfortunately, — and, this is the feeling among all the Members including myself — the media is only giving weightage to sensationalism, to negativism, to controversies, and to dramatics rather than realistic attitude.

So, I have a suggestion to the media. The media is free. We are in an independent India, I cannot direct them but the only thing that I can convey to them from this Chair in the beginning of my tenure is, please focus more on constructive debate. I want to share with each one of you one thing. When I came to this House, I was asked to speak on agriculture, which was my favourite subject. I prepared myself, went to library and gone through Swaminathan Commission recommendations, gone through so many Reports and speeches of Acharya Ranga, the great farmer leader and all, and, after a lot of efforts, I prepared myself and came to the House. Thanks to the Chairman at that time, I was allotted 52 minutes' time because at that time, the party to which I belonged, also had a substantial time.

Everybody came to me. Even Swaminathan ji himself, Sharad Pawar ji, Ram Gopal Yadav ji, Raja ji and all complimented me for my speech. Next day, to my disappointment, there was no mention of it. Only one paper wrote, 'Mr. Venkaiah Naidu spoke elaborately on agricultural problems'. So, there is a heart-burning among the Members. You report what is happening here. I am not stopping that. I have no right to advise you that way. But, at the same time, also report what is positively happening in the House, what is being constructively debated. That is the sacred duty of the media also. So, I thought, I should give this advice from the Chair to the friends from the media also because sensationalism alone is not going to help.

One headline is not going to be a deadline. The main line is thinking of the Parliamentarians and the collective decision of the Parliamentarians. That is the main line and that has to be taken care of. Friends, we, as the Upper House, must show the way forward to the other legislatures across the country. As a Member of this august House for more than 19 years, most of the time as an Opposition Member,

[Mr. Chairman]

I am aware of the sensitivities of both sides of the House, the Rules of Business, rights and privileges of the hon. Members, the feelings and even the frustrations on some occasions. I am also conscious that eminent persons like Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Dr. Zakir Husain, Justice Hidayatullah, Shri R. Venkataraman ji, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Shri K.R. Narayanan, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat ji, and, others had presided over the proceedings of this august House with distinction. We have also been fortunate to observe Shri Hamid Ansari, the outgoing Vice-President, who had a diplomatic career and who conducted this House. That's all there in front of us. My immediate predecessor, Shri Hamid Ansari, did so for ten years. It shall be my endeavour to uphold the traditions and standards set by these worthy people. I am also happy to have an able and experienced colleague and deputy, Shri P.J. Kurien. I have seen him taking most of the suffering from the Chair and, at the same time, normally not losing cool and maintaining balance. But sometimes there are gravest provocations. After all, he is a human being. He is not God.

I would like to appeal to the hon. Members on this occasion to keep in mind the poorest of the poor who want to be recognised. The poorest of the poor of the country need to be recognised. Their voice has to be heard. Their aspirations have to be understood and these have to be met. That should be uppermost in our mind and they should not be deprived of their rightful opportunity which is guaranteed under the Constitution, which is part of our parliamentary democracy.

Friends, let us be guided by the shining principles of our Constitution, the ideals of freedom struggle, the noble thoughts of great souls like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and all other leaders who gave their sweat and blood for bringing our country this far. Always be reminded of the great speeches made by great leaders.

As a legislator, I used to go to the library and read what Indrajit Guptaji said, what Bhupesh Guptaji said, what Nath Paiji said, what Vajpayeeji said, what Piloo Modyji said, what Minoo Masaniji said and what Acharya Rangaya said, and in the Assembly, what Tenneti Viswanadhamji said, what Gouthu Latchannaji said and the great speeches of Anna of Tamil Nadu. These things I keenly observed. That really brought me to this place. I am sharing it with you. I am opening my mind and sharing it with you. I have no support of dynasty. I come from a very humble family. From there to reach here took two things. One is hard work and second is study. This is my request to all the hon. Members. Of course, there are many senior Members. We will be missing Sitaram Yechuryji who is one of the seniormost Members of this House. He is a very experienced and knowledgeable person. He has

a different ideology. There is nothing wrong in that. That is the beauty of democracy.

Friends, we all must work hard to get the due place in the comity of nations and ensure smile on the face of every citizen. Let us be guided by the right of the people for a better future. There is a certain new sense of purpose and urgency being demonstrated by the Union and the State Governments in a spirit of competitive and cooperative federalism. I am happy the hon. Prime Minister has given a call that the Centre and the States must work as Team India. That is the need of the hour. Not only the Centre and the States but also the local bodies. Keeping in view the spirit of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments whereby the powers to be given to the lower level of the democratic system, three Fs (funds, functions and functionaries) should be transferred to the local bodies be it the panchayats or the municipalities. That should be our guiding principles. Keeping that in mind, we must start from ourselves. We must all work in the spirit of a competitive and cooperative federalism to quicken the pace of development, to offer more opportunities to people for bettering their lives. Let us play the role of a catalyst in fulfilling this national quest. I would like to assure you that it shall be my endeavour to uphold the dignity of the office of the Vice-President of India and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and live up to the trust you have reposed in me. I am at your service and always open to your suggestions for improving the functioning of this august House as per your collective wisdom.

In the end, I would like to remind the hon. Members of the Resolution adopted by this august House at the Special Session on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of our Independence in 1997 after fifty years of independence. Both the Houses sat together, discussed elaborately and approved a pledge. The Members resolved to preserve and enhance the prestige of the Parliament by conscious and dignified conformity to the entire regime of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Houses and direction of the Presiding Officers. Some of the Members have suggested that the tradition of not passing the Bill in din should be continued. I hope that there won't be any scope for such a situation. No din, then no passage of a Bill in the din. Both can go together. If we have a quiet atmosphere and have a meaningful discussion, then we can pass the legislations after a thorough discussion. That is how I think about it. Friends, I conclude by recalling once again what Shri Pranab Mukherjee, the outgoing President, said, "Let us debate, discuss and decide. Let us forget to disrupt." I would like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for giving me this opportunity. *Namaskar!*

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*)

MESSAGES FROM LOK SABHA

(I) The State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017

**(II) Motion received from Lok Sabha seeking appointment of Members
to the Joint Committee on the Financial Resolution and
Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017**

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report to the House the following messages received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha:—

(I)

“In accordance with the provisions of rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017, as passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 10th August, 2017.”

(II)

“I am directed to inform you that Lok Sabha, at its sitting held on Thursday, the 10th August, 2017, adopted the enclosed motion in regard to the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017.

2. I am to request that the concurrence of Rajya Sabha in the said motion, and also the names of the members of Rajya Sabha appointed to the Joint Committee, may be communicated to this House.”

Motion

That the Bill to provide for the resolution of certain categories of financial service providers in distress; the deposit insurance to consumers of certain categories of financial services; designation of systemically important financial institutions; and establishment of a Resolution Corporation for protection of consumers of specified service providers and of public funds for ensuring the stability and resilience of the financial system and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of the Houses consisting of 30 members, 20 from this House, namely:—

1. Dr. Kirit Somaiya
2. Shri Gopal Chinayya Shetty
3. Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria
4. Shri Nishikant Dubey

5. Shri Shivkumar C. Udasi
6. Shri Anil Shirole
7. Shri Abhishek Singh
8. Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
9. Shri Sanjay Jaiswal
10. Shri Jagdambika Pal
11. Shri Jayadev Galla
12. Shri Gajanan Chandrakant Kirtikar
13. Shri Chirag Paswan
14. Shri Gaurav Gogoi
15. Shri S. P. Muddahanumegowda
16. Dr. P. Venugopal
17. Prof. Saugata Roy
18. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
19. Shri Konda Vishweshwar Reddy
20. Shri P. Karunakaran

and 10 Members from Rajya Sabha;

that in order to constitute a sitting of the Joint Committee, the quorum shall be one-third of the total number of members of the Joint Committee;

that the Committee shall make a report to this House by the last day of the first week of the next Session;

that in other respects the Rules of Procedure of this House relating to Parliamentary Committees shall apply with such variations and modifications as the Speaker may make: and

that this House do recommend to Rajya Sabha that Rajya Sabha do join the said Joint Committee and communicate to this House the names of 10 Members to be appointed by Rajya Sabha to the Joint Committee."

The above motion was adopted by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on Thursday, the 10th August, 2017.

I lay a copy of the State Banks (Repeal and Amendment) Bill, 2017 on the Table.

**REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

DR. KARAN SINGH (NCT of Delhi): Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Sixteenth Report of the Committee on External Affairs (2016-17) on the subject 'Indo-Pak Relations'.

**REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन (बिहार): महोदय, मैं विभाग संबंधित सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी संबंधी संसदीय स्थायी समिति (2016-17) के निम्नलिखित प्रतिवेदनों की एक-एक प्रति (अंग्रेजी तथा हिन्दी में) सभा पटल पर रखती हूँ:—

- (i) Thirty-ninth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Thirty-fourth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2017-18) relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting;
 - (ii) Fortieth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Thirty-fifth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2017-18) relating to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications); and
 - (iii) Forty-first Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Thirty-seventh Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2017-18) relating to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts).
-

**STATEMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOOD, CONSUMER AFFAIRS
AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**

SHRI RIPUN BORA (Assam): Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the Final Action Taken Statements showing action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in Chapter I and final replies in respect of Chapter V of the following Action Taken Reports (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution (2016-17):—

- (i) Statement showing Action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in respect of observations/recommendations contained in Chapter-I and V of Thirteenth Report of the Committee (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action

Taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in their Tenth Report on Demands for Grants (2016-17) pertaining to Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution); and

- (ii) Statement showing Action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in respect of observations/recommendations contained in Chapter-I and V of Fourteenth Report of the Committee (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in their Eleventh Report on Demands for Grants (2016-17) pertaining to Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Consumer Affairs).

REPORTS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA (Assam): Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Reports of the Public Accounts Committee (2017-18):—

- (i) Eightieth Report on Action Taken by Government on observations/recommendations of the Committee contained in Forty-first Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on “Loss for train Parting Due to Failure of Central Buffer Coupler (CBC) Components”; and
- (ii) Eighty-first Report on Action Taken by Government on observations/recommendations of the Committee contained in Forty-fourth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on “Extra Avoidable Expenditure by ANURAG”.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Thirty-Sixth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I make a statement regarding Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance on Demands for Grants (2016-17) pertaining to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twentieth and Twenty-eighth Reports of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on 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, I make the following statements regarding:—

- (i) Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twentieth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers on the subject 'Functioning of Autonomous Institution-Institute of Pesticide Formulation Technology (IPFT)'; and
- (ii) Status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twenty-eighth Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers on the Action Taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Twentieth Report of the Committee on the subject 'Functioning of Autonomous Institutions-Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET)'.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that a letter has been received from Shri K.G. Kenye stating that he is unable to attend the sittings of the current Session due to preoccupation in his home-State. He has, therefore, requested for grant of Leave of Absence from 18th July to 8th August, 2017 of this Session of the Rajya Sabha.

Does he have the permission of the House for remaining absent from 18th July to 8th August, 2017 during the current Session of Rajya Sabha?

(No Hon. Member dissented)

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

**STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS CORRECTING
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Statement by Minister correcting answer to question; Shri Arun Jaitley.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I rise to make a Statement correcting the answer to Starred Question 17 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th July, 2017 regarding ‘Concerns of textile traders/sellers about GST’.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Rajen Gohain.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): Sir, I rise to lay on the Table, a Statement (in English and Hindi) correcting the answer to Unstarred Question 781 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 21st July, 2017, regarding ‘Representation against circular of Railway Board’.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Arun Jaitley to lay a copy each of Economic Survey (Volume II) and Re-translated Version of the Economic Survey.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each of the following papers:—

- (i) Economic Survey (Volume II), 2016-17 (in English and Hindi); and
[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 7498/16/17]
- (ii) Re-translated Version of the Economic Survey, 2016-17 (in Hindi only).
[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 7499/16/17]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Supplementary Business.

GOVERNMENT BILL

Motion for reference of the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017 to Joint Committee

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I move the following motion:—

“That this House concurs in the recommendation of the Lok Sabha that this House do join in the Joint Committee of the Houses on the Bill to provide for the resolution of certain categories of financial service providers in distress; the deposit insurance to consumers of certain categories of financial services; designation of systemically important financial institutions;

[Shri Arun Jaitley]

and establishment of a Resolution Corporation for protection of consumers of specified service providers and of public funds for ensuring the stability and resilience of the financial system and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto and resolves that the following Members of the Rajya Sabha be nominated to serve on the said Joint Committee:—

1. Shri Ajay Sancheti
2. Shri Bhupender Yadav
3. Shri Naresh Gujral
4. Shri Anand Sharma
5. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita
6. Shri Praful Patel
7. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
8. Shri Ram Chandra Prasad Singh
9. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy
10. Shri Satish Chandra Misra”

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:—

“That this House concurs in the recommendation of the Lok Sabha that this House do join in the Joint Committee of the Houses on the Bill to provide for the resolution of certain categories of financial service providers in distress; the deposit insurance to consumers of certain categories of financial services; designation of systemically important financial institutions; and establishment of a Resolution Corporation for protection of consumers of specified service providers and of public funds for ensuring the stability and resilience of the financial system and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto and resolves that the following Members of the Rajya Sabha be nominated to serve on the said Joint Committee:—

1. Shri Ajay Sancheti
2. Shri Bhupender Yadav
3. Shri Naresh Gujral
4. Shri Anand Sharma
5. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita

6. Shri Praful Patel
7. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
8. Shri Ram Chandra Prasad Singh
9. Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy
10. Shri Satish Chandra Misra”.

The motion was adopted.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ RESOLUTIONS

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I have given a request to carry forward today’s Business. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is about Private Members’ Business. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): We both are there. ...(*Interruptions*)...

(MR. CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Friends, I have received a request from Shri D. Raja to carry forward the Private Members’ Business listed for today to the next Session as per the convention. There is no convention but, as an exception, we are allowing it. We will take it up in the next Session but this will not be a precedent. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: My name is the second, Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)... My name is next to him. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Once we receive that letter, we will consider that also. ...(*Interruptions*)... Dr. Subbarami Reddy, please.

VALEDICTORY REMARKS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, the 243rd Session of Rajya Sabha, which commenced on July 17th, 2017, comes to a close today. The House had 18-plus sittings during which it deliberated for more than 78 hours. Over all, the Session was productive with debates on various topics of national concern raised with occasional disruptions. The House welcomed two Members from the States of Goa and Madhya Pradesh and bid a warm and touching farewell to 10 Members from the States of

[Mr. Chairman]

Goa, Gujarat and West Bengal. The House also bid an emotional farewell to Shri M. Hamid Ansari, former Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

Obituary References were made to the passing away of two sitting Members, including a Union Minister and 11 former Members of this august House.

A Reference was made on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Quit India Movement, followed by a discussion and unanimous adoption of a Resolution. The Question Hour functioned on 11 out of 19 scheduled days. Out of the 285 Starred Questions listed, 46 were orally answered and 187 Supplementaries were raised. Individual Members got opportunity to make 77 submissions on urgent public issues during Zero Hour. Members also expressed their concern on matters of public importance through 87 Special Mentions.

Substantial Legislative Business transacted by the House was indicative of the co-operation extended by all sections of the House and also speaks their commitment to fulfill the objective and purpose of this august House. Nine Government Bills were passed and 4 were withdrawn. The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2017 was referred to the Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha and the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017 was referred to the Joint Committee of both Houses. Private Members introduced 13 Bills and 2 of their Bills, which were taken up for consideration, and, were withdrawn by the leave of the House.

The propensity of Members to utilize instruments of parliamentary procedures with skill and determination is reflected in the three Short Duration Discussions, in which 69 Members participated. In addition, two Calling Attentions were also taken up. The eager demand for more such opportunities from Members underlines the need for making more time available for these devices for which a collective effort needs to be made to properly utilize the time available and to ensure smooth functioning of the House without disruptions and an inclination to work longer hours whenever required. I don't think there is any dearth of that in Rajya Sabha because I have the experience of sitting till late night, on this side or on that side.

I have asked the Secretary-General to make available the statistical information relating to this Session to the hon. Members.

I take this opportunity to thank the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers of Parliamentary Affairs, both, the seniors, Shri Ananthkumar as well as Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, the Leaders of various parties and groups and the hon. Members for the co-operation extended by them in the overall functioning of the House.

I also thank the Deputy Chairman, the Members on the Panel of Vice-Chairmen and the officers and staff of the Secretariat for the help and co-operation they have rendered.

Now, the National Song.

NATIONAL SONG

(The National Song, "*Vande Mataram*", was then played.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, the House stands adjourned sine die.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Setting up regulator for fixing prices of agricultural tools

†*271. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that industries engaged in agricultural sector are making huge profits every year while farmers are sinking into debt day-by-day;

(b) whether the reason behind accrual of huge profits to companies engaged in agricultural sector, such as tractor manufacturers, fertiliser manufacturers/suppliers, companies supplying insecticides and seeds, is the faulty policies of Government, which are harming the farmers and benefiting the industries engaged in agriculture; and

(c) whether Government would consider setting up a regulator for fixing prices of the said resources, so as to arrest the trend of earning huge profits on agricultural tools?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Agriculture is a State subject, however, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing various schemes/programmes for benefit of farmers. As per the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) Report on Key Indicators of Situation of Agricultural Households in India {NSS-70th Round (January, 2013–December, 2013)}, 51.9 per cent of the estimated 90.2 million agricultural households in the country were reported to be indebted to either formal or informal or both sources of credit. The average amount of outstanding loan per agricultural household was ₹ 47,000/- (approximately). The State-wise details are given in the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement-I (*See below*). The details of average amount of outstanding loan per agricultural households in respect of States and Group of Union Territories (UTs) are given in the Statement-II (*See below*).

Department of Fertilizers is implementing Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme' w.e.f. 01.4.2010 of Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers. Under the said scheme, a fixed amount of subsidy decided on annual basis, is provided on each grade of subsidized P&K fertilizers depending upon its nutrient content. As the P&K fertilizers are decontrolled, the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) is fixed by Companies as per market dynamics. The MRP printed on each bag of these fertilizers, is exclusive of subsidy given by the Government of India.

To ensure that the fertilizer companies do not make huge profit margin by fixing higher MRP, it has been made mandatory for the manufacturers/importers to furnish cost data in prescribed format for scrutiny of the same by the Department to verify the reasonableness of the MRP. The Government has also engaged certified cost accountants to scrutinize the cost data submitted by the companies. As per the provisions, in cases, where after scrutiny, unreasonableness of MRP is established or where there is no correlation between the cost of production or acquisition and the MRP printed on the bags, the subsidy may be restricted or denied even if the product is otherwise eligible for subsidy under NBS. In proven cases of abuse of subsidy mechanism, Department of Fertilizers may exclude any grade/grades of fertilizers of a particular company or the fertilizer company itself from the NBS Scheme.

After the implementation of NBS Scheme, the Department has moved from regulated price mechanism to free price mechanism. The rationale behind this is that the competitive market dynamics will encourage the P&K fertilizer companies to fix MRP on lower side. However as and when needed, the Department encourages the P&K fertilizer companies to reduce the MRP of these fertilizers. In the month of June, 2016 fertilizer companies have reduced MRP of DAP, MOP and NPK by ₹ 2500/MT, ₹ 5000/MT and ₹ 1000/MT respectively. Further, in the month of December 2016, fertilizer companies have reduced MRP of DAP by ₹ 1300/MT.

To promote the farm mechanization in the country, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare has introduced 'Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization' (SMAM). Under SMAM, the Government is providing subsidy to the farmers for procurement of various Agricultural machinery in the range of 25 to 50% of the cost as agricultural equipment. The subsidy is provided to the farmers through the State Governments after negotiating the price with the agricultural machinery manufactures so that the price become affordable to the farmers.

Mechanization helps in improving utilization efficiency of inputs like seed, fertilizer and pesticides, besides safety and comfort of the agricultural worker, improvements in the quality and value addition of the produce and also enabling the farmers to raise a second crop or multi crop.

There is no proposal of Government to set up a regulator for fixing prices of the agricultural tools. However some of the States negotiate the prices of various agricultural machinery with manufacturers through tender process before these are supplied through subsidy scheme so that the farmers can be benefited by the reduced price.

The Central Government under Section 5 of the Insecticides Act, 1968 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. The act also provides power to State Government for use, manufacture, sale, transport and distribution of insecticides. Generic pesticides accounts for majority of the Indian pesticides market. The intense competition between the manufacturers ensures that the price remains competitive.

The Insecticides Act, 1968 does not provide for a regulator for fixing of the prices. However, certain steps have been undertaken such as pesticide association have been asked to communicate last three years' data on Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of fast moving high consumption generic pesticide and their formulated products so as to deliberate on the ways to provide pesticide to farmers at affordable prices.

Government is also implementing Sub-Mission for Seed and Planting Material (SMSP) under National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET) w.e.f. 01.04.2014 on all India basis through State/UT Departments of Agriculture, State Seed Corporations, State Seed Certification Agencies, State Agricultural Universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, National Seeds Corporation etc. The main objective of the Sub-Mission is to develop/strengthen seed sector and to enhance production and multiplication of high yielding certified/quality seeds of all agricultural crops and making it available to the farmers at affordable prices and also place and effective system for protection of plant varieties, right of farmers and plant breeders to encourage development of new varieties of plants. SMSP is being implemented across all the States of the country to promote agriculture.

Besides Government Seed Agencies, Private Seed Companies also undertake seed production of various crops to supplement the efforts of Government in providing quality seeds to farmers, therefore Private Seed Companies as well as National Seed Corporation (NSC) were asked to voluntarily reduce the prices of hybrid seeds by

10 per cent. They agreed to reduce the prices of hybrid seeds (except cotton seed price which is already regulated) by 10 per cent (on MRP) during Kharif season 2017-18 and issued advisory to distributors/dealers of private seed companies and Regional Managers of NSC to adhere to the above decision.

The Government has issued a Cotton Seeds Price (Control) Order (CSPCO), 2015, on 7.12.2015 under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to provide an effective system for fixation of a uniform maximum price and to curtail monopoly of the MNCs over Bt. Cotton Seeds, and to ensure the availability of the Bt. Cotton hybrids Seeds to the farmers at fair, reasonable and affordable prices.

Under the above Order a Committee was set up to recommend the maximum price of Bt. Cotton seeds, licensing guidelines, etc. Under Section 5 of the Cotton Seed Price (Control) Order, 2015 the Government of India has notified the maximum sale price of Bt.cotton seeds as ₹ 635/- (with zero trail value) and ₹ 800/- (with ₹ 49/- as trail value) per packet for BG-I and BG-II, respectively for Kharif, 2016 on 08.03.2016. The Department has retained same price for Bt.cotton BG-I and BG-II for Kharif, 2017 and notified the same on 10.03.2017.

Statement-I

Estimated number of indebted agricultural households for each State/Group of UTs

State/Group of UTs*	Estimated number of agricultural households (00)	Estimated number of agricultural households with outstanding loans (00)	Proportion of agricultural households with outstanding loan
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	35968	33421	92.9
Arunachal Pradesh	1080	206	19.1
Assam	34230	5995	17.5
Bihar	70943	30156	42.5
Chhattisgarh	25608	9538	37.2
Gujarat	39305	16743	42.6
Haryana	15693	6645	42.3
Himachal Pradesh	8811	2457	27.9
Jammu and Kashmir	11283	3463	30.7

1	2	3	4
Jharkhand	22336	6464	28.9
Karnataka	42421	32775	77.3
Kerala	14043	10908	77.7
Madhya Pradesh	59950	27414	45.7
Maharashtra	70970	40672	57.3
Manipur	1762	421	23.9
Meghalaya	3544	84	2.4
Mizoram	758	47	6.2
Nagaland	2621	65	2.5
Odisha	44935	25830	57.5
Punjab	14083	7499	53.2
Rajasthan	64835	40055	61.8
Sikkim	674	97	14.3
Tamil Nadu	32443	26780	82.5
Telangana	25389	22628	89.1
Tripura	2445	559	22.9
Uttarakhand	10608	5387	50.8
Uttar Pradesh	180486	79081	43.8
West Bengal	63624	32787	51.5
GROUP OF UTs	718	267	37.2
ALL INDIA	902011	468481	51.9

*Figures in respect of States with negligible sample size are not presented. Due to the same reason, a single estimate is provided for Group of UTs.

Source: Key Indicators of situation of agricultural households in India based on Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households, NSS 70th round (January, 2013-December, 2013).

Statement-II

Average monthly income and average amount of outstanding loan per agricultural household during the agricultural year July, 2012-June, 2013

State#	Estimated number of household having outstanding loan	Average monthly income* per agricultural household during July 2012-June 2013 (₹)	Approximate average amount of outstanding loan** per agricultural household (₹)
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	33421	5979	123400
Arunachal Pradesh	206	10869	5400
Assam	5995	6695	3400
Bihar	30156	3558	16300
Chhattisgarh	9538	5177	10200
Gujarat	16743	7926	38100
Haryana	6645	14434	79000
Himachal Pradesh	2457	8777	28000
Jammu and Kashmir	3463	12683	12200
Jharkhand	6464	4721	5700
Karnataka	32775	8832	97200
Kerala	10908	11888	213600
Madhya Pradesh	27414	6210	32100
Maharashtra	40672	7386	54700
Manipur	421	8842	6100
Meghalaya	84	11792	1400
Mizoram	47	9099	2900
Nagaland	65	10048	600
Odisha	25830	4976	28200
Punjab	7499	18059	119500
Rajasthan	40055	7350	70500
Sikkim	97	6798	9900
Tamil Nadu	26780	6980	115900

1	2	3	4
Telangana	22628	6311	93500
Tripura	559	5429	5000
Uttarakhand	5387	4701	35600
Uttar Pradesh	79081	4923	27300
West Bengal	32787	3980	17800
GROUP OF UTs	267	8568	47700
ALL-INDIA	468481	6426	47000

#Figures for remaining States are not published due to inadequate sample size (*i.e.* number of sample households less than 300).

*The income includes income from salary-wages, net receipt from cultivation, net receipt from farming of animals and net receipt from non-farm business.

**Outstanding loans are on date of survey irrespective of the purpose for which loans were taken.

Source: Key Indicators of situation of agricultural households in India based on Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households, NSS 70th round (January, 2013-December, 2013).

Poor quality of food highlighted by CAG report

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

(a) the points of serious deficiencies, highlighted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in the month of July this year, regarding the poor quality of food items of Railways; and

(b) whether the Ministry proposes to take steps to bring radical changes in the railway catering in view of the report of CAG, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, Report on “Catering Services on Indian Railways” for the period of 2013-2014 to 2015-2016 was presented to Parliament on 21.07.2017. In CAG Report No. 13 of 2017, some of the deficiencies pointed out were:—

- (i) Due to frequent policy changes, Indian Railway could not take effective steps to bridge the gap so as to provide necessary infrastructure in terms of base kitchens, static catering units, trains side vending arrangements etc.
- (ii) Gas burners were to be progressively switched over to electric power Equipment in pantry cars in trains as per policy.
- (iii) Zonal Railways did not ensure provision of pantry cars in all long distance trains.

- (iv) Base kitchens were to be set up in railway premises to monitor and control the quality and hygiene of food served in trains.
- (v) Railway Board instructed Zonal Railways to make efforts to improve the sale/availability of Janta meals so as to provide good quality food at affordable price to railway passengers but this was not fully complied.
- (vi) During joint inspections of selected trains, audit observed a number of unauthorized vendors.
- (vii) During the joint inspection in selected 74 stations and 80 trains over Zonal Railways, Audit noticed that in some trains and static units cleanliness and hygiene were not being maintained, bills were not given and printed menu card was not available.

Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its Report No. 13 of 2017 has also recommended the following:

- (A) ICF (Integral Coach Factory) may be directed to keep in view the policy of switch over from gas burners to electric power equipment in pantry cars, while manufacturing pantry cars.
- (B) Provision of pantry cars may be considered in case of long distance trains as per policy.
- (C) Railways may facilitate smooth transfer of catering units including base kitchens to IRCTC by ensuring that the obligations on part of the Zonal Railways are fulfilled and accountability of Zonal Railways to carry forward the new Catering Policy of 2017 is clearly demarcated.
- (D) IRCTC may be obligated to provide low cost Janta meals on stations and these should be effectively advertised amongst the passengers.
- (E) The prescribed monitoring mechanism may be effectively exercised to ensure hygiene, cleanliness and quality of the catering services by IRCTC/licensees.
- (F) Railway Board may frame guidelines for assessing the work ability of rates in catering contracts so that the quality of the services is not compromised.
- (G) Railways may ensure effective checks and controls to stop unfair practices such as, overcharging, serving food stuff less than the prescribed quantity, selling non-authorised food items on stations and in trains, non-exhibition of price card and not issuing receipts for the food stuff sold, by catering service providers.

With respect to Audit's observations and recommendations as mentioned above, Railways has already taken corrective action; New Catering Policy 2017, makes a major shift in handing over all mobile and major static catering to IRCTC by unbundling

catering services. Complete switch over to electrical cooking in pantry cars will be firmly in place as only LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) pantry cars will be manufactured in future. IRCTC has been mandated to develop state of art, modern mechanized base kitchens under the new policy. All out efforts will be made to increase the sale of Janta meals under the new policy. Joint and integrated drives against unauthorized hawkers and vendors by RPF, along with commercial staff are being undertaken. Comprehensive and all inclusive complaint redressal system involving social media, IVRS feedback and SMS/web feedback interface is being utilized. Strict punitive action from fines to terminations has been put in place so as to ensure effective checks and controls to stop unfair practices.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry envisages to bring about radical changes in the railway catering. Large number of major reformative actions has been undertaken by Ministry of Railways in last three years so as to actualize this radical change. These are as under:—

I. Extant of existing Railway Catering business

On Indian Railways, 2.3 crore passengers travel daily. Indian Railways provide approximately 11 lakh meals to passengers every day on board. In addition, more than 1.5 lakh meals are sold through various units in stations. Catering services on Railways can be classified into two broad categories viz. mobile and static. At present, there are 360 pairs of trains with pantry cars, which include 22 pairs of Rajdhani, 25 pairs of Shatabdi, 18 pairs of Duronto trains and 295 pairs of mail/express trains. There are about 9696 Major and Minor Static Units on Indian Railways. There are also eight base kitchens, 29 cell kitchens, 155 Refreshment rooms and 50 Jan Ahaars outlets, in addition to 210 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units. Provision of catering services to passengers with diverse tastes and choices, on such a large scale, are indeed an onerous task.

Bringing about tangible improvement in catering services of this size and scale is challenging and in the last few years, Railways has not only undertaken an in-depth analysis of catering services but also initiated structural reforms to bring in a paradigm shift in catering business. Various committees have been constituted to usher a radical shift in railway businesses. A one man committee headed by Sri E. Sreedharan was constituted in Nov., 2014 to suggest a proper system and procedures in order to ensure accountability and transparency in commercial contracts including handing over catering services to IRCTC. The committee suggested tangible changes in catering business. Also, Bibek Debroy committee was constituted in Sept., 2014 for “Mobilization of Resources for Major Railway Projects and Restructuring of Railway Ministry and Railway Board” and submitted its report in June, 2015. The Committee also *inter alia*

introduction of e-catering and leveraging existing players. In-house group of CCMs was constituted in October, 2015 for working out the modalities of transfer of catering services. The in-house group took an in-depth and inclusive look at the whole gamut of catering services over Indian Railways.

The various Committees' reports revealed that unless the existing catering policy itself was changed and contract frameworks completely overhauled, things would not change. It was also realised that unless the quality of food at source is not controlled, onboard quality would not change. Thus, with a comprehensive view of the existing catering services, through various insights and inputs received, a New Catering Policy was announced in the Railway Budget in 2016. The draft of the New Policy was kept in the public domain for taking feedback from multiple stakeholders *viz.* customers, zonal railways, service providers etc. After much debate and discussion, the New Catering Policy was notified on 27 February, 2017, with the objective of providing quality food to rail passengers, by unbundling catering services on trains, and creating a primary distinction between food preparation and food distribution.

The salient features of the New Catering Policy 2017 are as under:—

- IRCTC shall manage catering service on all mobile units and meals will be picked from nominated kitchens.
- The setting up/development/refurbishment of new or existing Base Kitchens/Kitchen units will be undertaken by IRCTC. These modern, state of the art kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC.
- IRCTC shall engage service providers from hospitality industry for service of food in trains.
- IRCTC to involve/empanel Self Help Groups for providing catering related services.
- Zonal railways shall manage minor static unit (catering stall/milk stalls/trolleys etc).
- Allotments of General Minor Units at all category stations will be done through competitive open tendering system by divisions.
- 33% sub quota for women in allotment of each category of minor catering units at all category of station to be provided.

II. **Major initiative undertaken during the last 3 years**

- (i) **E Catering:** Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice. Initially, E-Catering service was train specific and available in 1350

trains without Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative, in Sept. 2015, this scheme was reoriented to make it Station based and a pilot project was undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' and 'A' category stations. E-Catering service is now available at 306 stations with an average supply of 6000 meals per day as against 400 meals per day in October, 2015. Call centre for E-Catering: IRCTC has established a state of the art call centre for operationalizing E-Catering services where passengers can pre-order the meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations.

- (ii) **Water Vending Machines (WVMs):** With the objective to provide potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, conforming to BIS specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI and other regulations made by the government from time to time, WVMs policy was notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015. These WVMs provide water to passengers at a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water. 1300 WVMs are already installed at stations and another 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly. Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is under finalization.
- (iii) **Introduction of Ready to Eat meals or precooked food providing a wider range of options available to passengers:** In order to provide more options to passengers in trains, IRCTC carried out a pilot project for serving RTE meals like Veg. biryani, Masala Upma, Poha, Idli Samber etc. During the trial period, IRCTC produced various types of Retort food products in Retort pouches such as Veg Biryani, Rajma Rice, Lemon rice, Tamarind Rice etc. These RTE meals have a longer shelf life and are very useful in meeting exigencies like late running of trains due to fog etc. IRCTC is also trying other RTE options including Dehydrated RTE products, which cost less than usual RTE that is being used in Airlines. This technology will ensure provision of hot food to passengers by adding hot water. The scheme of ready to eat meals will be implemented shortly in train no. 12565/66 Bihar Sampark Kranti Express.
- (iv) **Optional catering service in premium prepaid trains:** The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on two trains, Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani and Train No. 12025-26, Pune-SC Shatabdi Exp. w.e.f. 09.06.2016 onwards for 45 days. Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option. Further,

instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01.08.2017 onwards for the journeys to commence on 01.08.2017. This scheme is introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto/Gatiman trains under the management of IRCTC for an initial period of 180 days.

- (v) **Janani Sewa and Children's menu:** Hon'ble MR in Rail Budget Speech 2016-17 announced as under:- "We would like to mitigate the hardships that mothers undergo while travelling with their infants and, for this purpose, we will pilot availability of children's menu items on trains. Further baby foods, hot milk and hot water would be made available on stations and changing boards for babies would be provided in train toilets". In compliance with the above Budget Announcement, to mitigate the hardships faced by travelling mothers, Janani Sewa has been introduced on 27.4.2016 to ensure provision of baby food, milk and hot water from nominated catering stalls. Further, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been advised on 20.05.2016 to ensure availability of children menu through E-Catering.
- (vi) **Self Help Groups (SHGs):** Empanelment of Self Help Groups (SHGs) to provide healthy, wholesome regional cuisine at an affordable cost to the travelling public through E-Catering has been initiated and 9 SHGs have been empanelled at 10 stations. The groups empanelled are as follows:-
- Four in Andhra Pradesh: Shri Vani (Vijayawada), Sri Srinivasa (Vishakhapatnam, Anakapalle and Tuni)
 - One in Karnataka - Spoorthy Janaabhivrudhi Samsthe (Mysore)
 - Two in Kerala Café Kudumbashree (Ernakulam and Ernakulam Town)
 - Three in Madhya Pradesh: Laxmi Mahila Mandal (Saugor), Sanskar Mahila Mandal (Saugor) and Prayas Swa Sahayata Sangatham (Saugor)
 - One in Maharashtra: Maher Lok Sanchalit Sadham Kendra (Savantwadi)
 - One in West Bengal: Manorma Pariseba Sambay Samity (Adra)
 - One at Savantwadi - Maher Loksanchalit Sadhan Kendra
- (vii) **Automatic Vending Machines on trains:** Humsafar trains have been introduced with the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed.

- (viii) Tejas Train has been introduced on 22.05.2017 with optional catering service and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking; catering charges are not included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, meal is provided with an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service, in addition to the cost of catering charges.

III. Plan of Action for implementation of New Catering Policy 2017

In compliance of Catering Policy 2017, the process of handing over of mobile catering units along with associated kitchen units has already been started. The details of takeover plan are as under:—

- (a) **Taken over by IRCTC till 31.07.17:** Trains: 155 pairs and Static units: 39 (Base kitchen-5, Cell kitchen-9, Refreshment Rooms-13, Jan Aahar-12)
- (b) **Planned Take over by IRCTC by 31.08.17:** Trains: 07 pairs and Static units: 47.
- (c) **Take over by IRCTC by 30.09.17:** Trains: 88 pairs and Static units: 83.
- (d) **Take over by IRCTC by 31.10.17:** Trains: 87 pairs and Static units: 82.

Take over Plan by IRCTC: Base Kitchen/Cell Kitchen/RR/Jan Aahar

- (i) **With IRCTC as on 27.02.17 (Date of issue of policy):** 17 (4 Base kitchens, 9 Jan Aahar, 2 Cell Kitchens and 2 RRs)
- (ii) **Taken over between 27.02.17 and upto 31.07.17:** 22 (2 Base Kitchen, 3 Jan Aahar, 7 Cell Kitchens and 10 RRs)
- (iii) **Proposed Timeline for Take over:**
 - By 31.08.17 : - 47.
 - By 30.09.17 : - 83.
 - By 30.10.17 : - 82.

(iv) Proposed Upgradation Plan of Base Kitchens:

- By 31.08.17: 04 (Balasore, Kharagpur Base Kitchens and Jan Aahar at Chennai and Jammu Tawi).
- By 31.01.18: 20 (6 Base Kitchens, 14 Refreshment Rooms/Jan Aahar and Cell Kitchens)

IV. Compliance and Monitoring of Catering Services

On Indian Railways, catering services is monitored 24x7, very closely through the following mechanisms:—

- (1) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances

relating to the catering activities and providing real time assistance to travelling public.

- (2) Operation of All India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services.
- (3) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.
- (4) CPGRAMS (Central Passenger Grievance Monitoring System), COMS, SMS, Email, Facebook etc. are also used to register public complaints and monitor feedback on catering services.
- (5) Complaint books are provided at all major, minor static and mobile catering units.

V. Inspections and special drives

To ensure that systems work, IR has a system of schedules for inspections in place. Commercial department officers conduct around 40,000 catering inspections all over railways every year. Further, joint inspections of Commercial, Railway Protection Force and Medical departments are also carried out from time to time. Food samples are collected and sent for testing in reputed laboratories by medical department. Special drives are launched to ensure lapses are rectified. Recently, from 25.07.2017 a three week drive of officers from all departments to inspect each and every train and static unit has been launched. Till date 2810 inspections have been carried out and fine of ₹ 61 lakh levied.

VI. Third party audit

A third-party audit to examine quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in pantry car and base kitchen, has been mandated which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit as prescribed in the New Catering Policy 2017. Food safety and Hygiene audits are now being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors. Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway. IRCTC has already awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

VII. Punitive Action taken for various lapses in catering services

A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers, including overcharging and other deficiencies in executing catering contracts is in place and following punitive action has been taken:-

- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crore has been imposed during January to June' 2017

as compared to ₹ 4.05 crore imposed during calendar year January to December 2016.

- 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the period of January to July, 2017.
- 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in January to December, 2016.
- Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the period January to December, 2016.

Losses to poultry farmers

*273. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the poultry farmers bear huge losses every year due to sizzling temperature and water shortage in summer season across the country resulting in stunted growth, death of birds and reduced production of eggs and broilers;

(b) if so, the details of estimated loss incurred by the poultry farmers during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to launch a 'save poultry' campaign by educating farmers to follow certain tips to insulate birds from heat?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has not received any specific information or study/report from States/UTs regarding stunted growth, death of birds and reduced production of eggs and broilers due to high temperature and water shortage in summer season.

(c) Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has prepared and released a Disaster Management plan for protecting animals and preventing and mitigating loss of livestock resources during disasters in consultation with National Disaster Management Authority and various State Governments. Some States like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have also come out with specific action plan during heat wave to prevent losses to livestock and poultry. Generally farmers are educated by various State Governments and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) poultry institutes to manage their heat stressed birds through improved management, rearing system, dietary manipulation and providing frequently cool water through advisories, training, awareness creation during mass contact programs, veterinary camps etc.

Maintenance of register for framing of rules/regulations

*274. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether every Ministry/Department is required to maintain a register regarding framing of rules, regulations, etc., under an Act to be monitored by a Joint Secretary in respective Ministries on monthly basis, if so the list of Ministries/Departments that are doing this; and

(b) the action taken by Government against those not complying with the requirement?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD):

(a) Yes, Sir. All the Ministries/Departments are required to maintain a register as per Paras 11.11 and 11.12 of the Manual of Parliamentary Procedures in the Government of India, which read as under:-

"11.11. A register should be maintained by the concerned section in each department, specifying the various stages of processing the legislation, *e.g.*, name of the enactment, date of its coming into force, sections (with any sub-sections etc.) conferring legislative powers on the government; whether power has been given to an agency other than Central Government for framing the rules and also identify the various stages of processing the rules, namely, framing of the draft rules, notification thereof in the gazette, if necessary, consideration of objections and suggestions, finalisation of rules in consultation with the Ministry of Law and Justice, the translation thereof, and final notification in the gazette. The above register should be put up by the section concerned to the officer in-charge for periodical check with a view to seeing that the process of legislation is not held up at any stage for any reason.

11.12 A monthly return should be put up by the section in-charge regularly to the Joint Secretary deputed for co-ordinating this work who shall monitor the progress and take remedial measures for avoiding any delay in the matter and who shall further submit a return, along with the remedial action taken, to the Additional Secretary/Secretary."

(b) For monitoring of the framing of subordinate legislations under the Acts enacted by Parliament and notifying of the same, a module for updating the status of subordinate legislation has been included in the e-Samiksha portal. The framing of subordinate legislation is being monitored through e-Samiksha portal. Further, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on subordinate legislation is continuously

monitoring whether all the Departments/Ministries have framed the subordinate legislation under the Act administered by them. The Committee is holding periodical meetings with the Secretaries of the Ministries/Departments regarding subordinate legislation.

Central and State share of funds under PMFBY

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

(a) whether it is a fact that under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), the Centre and State share has been kept at 50:50, while in all other Central Sector schemes, the existing fund share pattern is 60:40 respectively; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether the Central Government would provide a contingent fund to the States for programme implementation under the Yojana?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is a Central Sector scheme conceptualized and administered by the Central Government and implemented by concerned State Government/Union Territories. Under this scheme, premium subsidy is shared equally between Centre and the States. The sharing pattern of 60:40 between Centre and States is applicable for Centrally Sponsored schemes. It is the endeavour of the scheme to provide maximum risk coverage to farmers at uniform minimum premium across the country. As such, over and above the minimal farmers share in premium of 1.5% to 5% the balance of premium is subsidised equally by the Centre and States. Financial liability under various crop insurance schemes has been shared equally between Centre and the States since 1999. States that opt for the scheme, have a huge stake in providing optimal risk coverage to farmers and therefore, decide on the crops/areas to be covered and on indemnity levels, cut-off dates within the seasonality discipline as well as provide past/present yield data for determination of actuarial premium rates and claim amounts. Equal share of States in subsidy ensures more rigorous implementation and better financial discipline.

There is no provision for contingent funds to the States under PMFBY.

Dues of sugarcane growers in Uttar Pradesh

276. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the outstanding dues of sugarcane growers against the sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh, as on date, together with the dues pertaining to the previous year;

(b) the number of private, co-operative and Government sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh, together with the number of mills which are in operation;

(c) the rate at which sugarcane is being procured from farmers and the facilities provided by Government to sugar mills; and

(d) whether Government has received complaints regarding non-purchasing of entire sugarcane by mill owners, if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) As per the information received from Government of Uttar Pradesh, outstanding dues of sugarcane growers against the sugar mills in the State for current sugar season 2016-17 and previous sugar season 2015-16 as on 31.07.2017, are as under:—

(₹ in crores)

Sugar season	Total Dues payable	Dues Paid	Outstanding Dues
2016-17	25387	23044	2343
2015-16	18003	17950	53

(b) Sector-wise installed and operational Sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh during sugar season 2016-17 are as under:—

Sector	No. of sugar mills	No. of sugar mills in Operation (during current sugar season 2016-17).
State Owned Corporation	14	01
Co-operative	28	24
Private	116	91
TOTAL	158	116

(c) The sugar mills in the state of Uttar Pradesh procure sugarcane from farmers at State Advised Price (SAP) of ₹ 315 per quintal, ₹ 305 per quintal and ₹ 300 per quintal respectively for early, general and rejected variety for current sugar season 2016-17 as announced by Government of Uttar Pradesh. The Central Government fixes Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for every sugar season on the basis of recommendation of Commission for Agriculture Cost and Prices (CACP) and after consultation with State Governments and other Stake holders which is a benchmark price below which no sugar mill can purchase cane from cane growers. In the sugar season 2016-17, FRP has been fixed at ₹ 230 per quintal linked to

the basic recovery rate of 9.5% and with premium of ₹ 2.42 per quintal for every 0.1% increase in recovery above basic recovery.

Government of Uttar Pradesh has provided rebate on cane development commission of ₹ 2.40 per quintal to sugar mills for 2016-17 sugar season. Further, in order to liquidate outstanding cane dues of farmers the Central Government had provided financial assistance through Soft Loan scheme, Scheme for Extending Financial Assistance to Sugar Undertakings (SEFASU), facilitated supply of ethanol under Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) by fixing remunerative price and provided production subsidy @ ₹ 4.50 per quintal on cane crushed, to the sugar mills including those of Uttar Pradesh.

(d) No such complaint has come to the notice of the Government.

Payment of rent to owners of private godowns

*277. SHRI SHANKARBHAI N. VEGAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any data about the private godowns kept on rent by the Government; and

(b) if so, the details of the rent paid to the owners during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) The following capacity from private godown owners had been taken on rent by Food Corporation of India (FCI) during the last three years:—

(Fig. in lakh MT)

Scheme	31.03.2015	31.03.2016	31.03.2017
Private Entrepreneur Guarantee (PEG) scheme	86.32	98.01	101.53
Private Warehousing Scheme (PWS) 2010 and Private Parties	13.43	12.35	9.04
TOTAL	99.75	110.36	110.57

(b) The State-wise details of capacity hired and rent paid to the private godown owners by FCI during the last 3 years are given in the Statement.

Statement*State-wise details of capacity hired and rent paid to private parties by FCI*

Sl. No.	Region	2014-15			2015-16			2016-17	
		Capacity of Hired Godowns as on 31.03.15 (Fig. in LMT)	Rent paid (₹ in lakhs)	Hired as on 31.03.16 (Fig. in LMT)	Capacity of Godowns (₹ in lakhs)	Rent paid (₹ in lakhs)	Capacity of Hired Godowns as on 31.03.17 (Fig. in LMT)	Rent paid (₹ in lakhs)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
1.	Delhi	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.	Haryana	26.35	16277.09	30.54	21852.60	30.48	30.48	21992.57	
3.	Himachal Pradesh	0.17	20.32	0.17	185.59	0.22	0.22	211.03	
4.	Jammu and Kashmir	1.14	894.86	1.29	1390.16	1.35	1.35	1518.94	
5.	Punjab (including Chandigarh)	40.94	30993.65	44.00	38150.80	44.91	44.91	43036.47	
6.	Rajasthan	3.15	1238.62	2.94	1104.72	2.01	2.01	886.38	
7.	Uttar Pradesh	10.22	134.81	10.92	2649.47	11.22	11.22	3638.87	
8.	Uttarakhand	0.00	1.01	0.00	1.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	
9.	Bihar	0.84	114.47	0.85	88.05	1.68	1.68	79.53	
10.	Jharkhand	1.05	508.98	1.24	901.42	1.43	1.43	1084.73	
11.	Odisha	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.45	0.45	0.00	
12.	West Bengal (including Sikkim)	1.17	436.70	1.10	461.65	1.15	1.15	463.41	

13.	Andhra Pradesh (including Andaman and Nicobar and Telangana)	4.29	3387.96	3.65	1488.12	2.90	627.10
14.	Karnataka (Including Lakshadweep)	1.75	516.31	2.33	559.57	1.37	493.88
15.	Kerala	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16.	Tamil Nadu (Including Puducherry)	0.95	691.48	1.10	877.28	1.30	889.17
17.	Chhattisgarh	0.05	22.20	0.05	8.72	0.00	6.75
18.	Gujarat	0.45	83.33	0.50	23.04	0.45	72.64
19.	Madhya Pradesh	3.62	82.63	5.54	0.00	6.02	2.91
20.	Maharashtra (including Goa)	3.07	877.60	3.28	2164.06	3.19	4924.85
21.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.03	7.95	0.02	22.47	0.03	8.89
22.	Assam	0.47	249.96	0.45	219.91	0.41	192.46
23.	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
24.	Manipur	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
25.	Meghalaya	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
26.	Tripura	0.04	85.23	0.04	123.66	0.00	0.00
27.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
GRAND TOTAL		99.75	56625.16	110.36	72272.30	110.57	80130.58

Grant-in-aid for cold storage infrastructure

†*278. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a grant-in-aid of 35 per cent of the total cost is provided for installation of cold storage infrastructure, including transport, plant, machinery and technical civil works in general areas, to interested farmers in the country, including Maharashtra, particularly to small and marginal farmers and farmers' self-help groups; and

(b) if so, the total number of farmers and farmers' self-help groups benefited from this scheme in Maharashtra during the last three years, the details thereof, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) which includes assistance for establishment of cold storage in the country including Maharashtra.

Under MIDH, credit-linked back ended subsidy @ 35% of the capital cost of the project in general areas (and 50% in case of hilly and schedule areas) is available for various components of post-harvest infrastructure, including cold storage infrastructure. The component is demand/entrepreneur-driven. Assistance is available to individual, group of farmers/growers/consumers, partnership/proprietary firms, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs), companies, corporations, cooperatives, Cooperative Marketing Federations, Local bodies, Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) and Marketing Boards and State Government. Under MIDH 57 cold storage projects have been sanctioned in Maharashtra during last three years. The District-wise details of cold storage projects sanctioned under the scheme in Maharashtra are given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

Ministry of Food Processing Industries is implementing a Central Sector Scheme of Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure (now subsumed under Kisan SAMPADA Yojana) to provide integrated cold chain and preservation infrastructure facilities from the farm gate to the consumer or from the production site to the market. Under this scheme, Ministry provides financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid @ 35% for general area and @ 50% for North East States, Himalayan States, ITDP areas and Island for storage and transport infrastructure and @ 50% to 75% for value addition and processing infrastructure subject to a maximum grant-in-aid of ₹ 10.00 crore for setting up integrated cold chain projects. The scheme

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

is primarily private sector driven and proposal under this scheme are invited through Expression of Interest (EoI). Such infrastructure can be set up by individuals, group of entrepreneurs, cooperative societies, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer's Organizations (FPOs), NGOs, Central/State PSUs, etc. The District-wise details are given in the Statement-II.

Statement-I

District-wise Cold Storage projects sanctioned in Maharashtra under MIDH (NHM and NHB) from 2014-15 to 2016-2017

(₹ in lakh)

District Name	NHM		NHB		Total	
	Cold Storage					
	Phy.	Fin.	Phy.	Fin.	Phy.	Fin.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Thane	1	67.52	1	547.00	2	614.52
Palghar	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Raigad	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ratnagiri	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Sindhudurg	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
KONKAN DIVISION	1	67.52	1	547.00	2	614.52
Nashik	1	121.33	1	65.32	2	186.65
Dhule	1	44.42	0	0.00	1	44.42
Jalgaon	1	60.00	1	37.20	2	97.20
Nandurbar	0	0.00	2	240.00	2	240.00
NASHIK DIVISION	3	225.75	4	342.52	7	568.27
Pune	9	336.51	1	138.83	10	475.34
Ahmednagar	3	207.54	0	0.00	3	207.54
Solapur	4	208.97	0	0.00	4	208.97
PUNE DIVISION	16	753.02	1	138.83	17	891.85
Kolhapur	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Sangali	3	282.99	0	0.00	3	282.99
Satara	15	707.19	0	0.00	15	707.19
KOLHAPUR DIVISION	18	990.18	0	0.00	18	990.18

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Aurangabad	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Jalna	1	64.24	0	0.00	1	64.24
Beed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
AURANGABAD DIVISION	1	64.24	0	0.00	1	64.24
Latur	6	620.43	0	0.00	6	620.43
Osmanabad	1	146.66	0	0.00	1	146.66
Parbhani	1	120.00	0	0.00	1	120.00
Hingoli	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Nanded	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
LATUR DIVISION	8	887.09	0	0.00	8	887.09
Amravati	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Akola	0	0.00	2	261.83	2	261.83
Buldhana	1	13.69	0	0.00	1	13.69
Washim	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Yeotmal	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
AMRAVATI DIVISION	1	13.69	2	261.83	3	275.52
Nagpur	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Wardha	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Bhandara	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Gondia	0	0.00	1	139.65	1	139.65
Chandrapur	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Gadchiroli	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
NAGPUR DIVISION	0	0.00	1	139.65	1	139.65
TOTAL	48	3001.49	9	1429.83	57	4431.32

Statement-II

District-wise Cold chain projects sanctioned in Maharashtra under MoFPI scheme from 2014-15 to 2017 (upto June 2017)

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	District	Number	Assistance
1.	Ahmednagar	1	942.00
2.	Beed	1	207.00

Sl. No.	District	Number	Assistance
3.	Chandrapur	1	255.00
4.	Latur	1	400.00
5.	Mumbai	1	1000.00
6.	Nagpur	1	783.00
7.	Nashik	3	2692.00
8.	Navi Mumbai	1	829.00
9.	Osmanabad	1	1000.00
10.	Pune	5	3846.00
11.	Raigad	3	2592.00
12.	Satara	1	526.00
13.	Solapur	3	1675.00
14.	Srirampur	1	1000.00
15.	Thane	1	865.00
TOTAL		25	18612.00

Source: MoFPI Website.

Income and expenditure of East Coast Railway

*279. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the East Coast Railway has been running in losses over the years, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the income and expenditure details of the East Coast Railway for the last three years, division-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Railways earnings and expenditure and shortfall/surplus are accounted for on Zonal Railways basis only, duly adjusting for apportionment of both earnings/expenditure between Zonal Railways. Accordingly, the details of Income, Expenditure and Surplus generated by East Coast Railway for last three years *i.e.* 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 is as under:—

(₹ in crore)

Year	Total Income	Total Expenditure	Surplus
2014-15	12881.97	6930.02	5951.95
2015-16	13904.98	7457.75	6447.23
2016-17	14890.82	7965.27	6925.55

Implementation of BharatNet in Gram Panchayats of Odisha

*280. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government will expedite the implementation of BharatNet project in all Gram Panchayats of Odisha for effective rollout of various initiatives under the Digital India programme; and

(b) whether a National Task Force will be constituted on immediate basis to ensure mobile and broadband connectivity to deficient areas in Odisha and other similarly placed States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) BharatNet is being implemented to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs), approximately 2,50,000, in the country, including Odisha. Under the Phase-I, as against the targeted coverage of 1 lakh Gram Panchayats, a total of 1,00,443 GPs have been connected by underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC). In Odisha, 3,388 Gram Panchayats were taken for providing connectivity by laying 8,443 Km OFC in Phase-I of BharatNet. As on 06.08.2017, a total of 3,108 GPs have been covered by laying 7,970 km OFC and broadband has been provided in 569 GPs.

(i) To expedite the implementation of BharatNet project, a modified implementation strategy to provide broadband connectivity in the remaining GPs has been approved by the Government on 19.07.2017, which is as follows:—

- (a) Implementation through States and private sector in addition to Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs).
- (b) Connectivity through an optimal mix of underground/ aerial OFC, radio and satellite media.
- (c) Last mile connectivity architecture such as Wi-Fi or any other broadband technology for all the GPs.
- (d) Fibre to be laid from Block to Gram Panchayats.

(ii) For conducting survey and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping under

phase-II of BharatNet, advance funding of ₹ 2.38 crore has been provided to Odisha. Formal proposal for State model is awaited from the State.

- (iii) BSNL is setting up Public Wi-Fi hotspots in 25,985 Telephone Exchanges of BSNL in rural areas, including 811 in Odisha. Further, Common Service Centre-Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC-SPV), under the Ministry of Electronics and IT, is setting up “Wi-Fi Choupals” in 5,089 GPs in the country, including 111 in Odisha.

- (b) No such proposal is under consideration.

Sowing of pulses

†*281. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the acres on which pulses were sown during the Kharif season 2017-18 is smaller compared to corresponding period 2016-17, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether one of the reasons is that the farmers are apprehensive that they would not get remunerative prices for their produce owing to the fall in prices of pulses; and

(c) the mechanism to find out the crop which has been cultivated and the quantity thereof so that the farmers could strike a balance in terms of cultivation of their crops?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) to (c) As per the reports received from the State Governments the total area under Pulses during kharif, 2017 is more than that of corresponding period of last year. The total area during this year under pulses is reported to be 121.28 lakh ha. as on 04.08.2017 compared to 116.95 lakh ha of corresponding period of last year. The Government of India, monitors the sowing position of crops every week in the Crop Weather Watch Group Meeting constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and prices of various commodities are also monitored. Besides, Inter Ministerial Committee constituted in the Department of Consumer Affairs also review prices of essential commodities including its import and export.

The crop-wise data on area, production and yield received from the State Governments are thoroughly scrutinized on the basis of information obtained from alternative sources on area, production and yield, rainfall conditions, previous trend of crop-wise area, production and yield in the respective States, commodity-wise trend in price and procurement etc.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Special Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam

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

(a) whether the Ministry has decided to announce a Special Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has once again requested the Central Government for establishment of Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam as promised by the Centre;

(c) the bottlenecks being faced by Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government for early establishment of the same in view of the long pendency thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (d) 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 stakeholders, including the Members of Parliament, State Governments, etc. before a final decision is taken.

Request for setting up a new Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam has been received from Chief Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh *vide* his letter dated 17.5.2016.

Constitution of Handloom Textiles Export Promotion Board

*283. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Handloom Textiles are quite popular in the international market; and

(b) whether the Ministry would consider constituting a Handloom Textiles Export Promotion Board to specifically focus on the promotion, development and export of handlooms and if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No Sir, as all the handloom export related concerns are being taken care of by the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) having about 1450 member exporters spread across the country.

Poor quality of food served in trains

*284. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH DULLO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in its recent report has observed that poor quality of food is being served in trains and railway authorities are not paying due attention to the regular complaints in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that food served is often recycled and is easily accessible to rats, insects, etc., if so, the steps taken by Government to rectify the situation?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir. Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India's report on "Catering Services on Indian Railways" for the period of 2013-2014 to 2015-2016 was presented to Parliament on 21.07.2017. In CAG Report No. 13 of 2017, some of the deficiencies pointed out were:—

- (i) Due to frequent policy changes, Indian Railway could not take effective steps to bridge the gap so as to provide necessary infrastructure in terms of base kitchens, Static Catering Units, Trains Side Vending arrangements etc.
- (ii) Gas burners were to be progressively switched over to electric power equipment in pantry cars in trains as per policy.
- (iii) Zonal Railways did not ensure provision of pantry cars in all long distance trains.
- (iv) Base kitchens were to be set up in railway premises to monitor and control the quality and hygiene of food served in trains.
- (v) Railway Board instructed Zonal Railways to make efforts to improve the sale/availability of Janta meals so as to provide good quality food at affordable price to railway passengers but this was not fully complied.
- (vi) During joint inspections of selected trains, audit observed a number of unauthorized vendors.
- (vii) During the joint inspection in selected 74 stations and 80 trains over Zonal Railways, Audit noticed that in some trains and static units cleanliness and hygiene were not being maintained, bills were not given and printed menu card was not available.

Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its Report No. 13 of 2017 has also recommended the following:—

- (A) ICF (Integral Coach Factory) may be directed to keep in view the policy of switch over from gas burners to electric power equipment in pantry cars, while manufacturing pantry cars.
- (B) Provision of pantry cars may be considered in case of long distance trains as per policy.
- (C) Railways may facilitate smooth transfer of catering units including base kitchens to IRCTC by ensuring that the obligations on part of the Zonal Railways are fulfilled and accountability of Zonal Railways to carry forward the new Catering Policy of 2017 is clearly demarcated.
- (D) IRCTC may be obligated to provide low cost Janta meals on stations and these should be effectively advertised amongst the passengers.
- (E) The prescribed monitoring mechanism may be effectively exercised to ensure hygiene, cleanliness and quality of the catering services by IRCTC/licensees.
- (F) Railway Board may frame guidelines for assessing the workability of rates in catering contracts so that the quality of the services is not compromised.
- (G) Railways may ensure effective checks and controls to stop unfair practices such as, overcharging, serving food stuff less than the prescribed quantity, selling non-authorised food items on stations and in trains, non-exhibition of price card and not issuing receipts for the food stuff sold, by catering service providers.

With respect to Audit's observations and recommendations as mentioned above, Railways has already taken corrective action; New Catering Policy 2017, makes a major shift in handing over all mobile and major static catering to IRCTC by unbundling catering services. Complete switch over to electrical cooking in pantry cars will be firmly in place as only LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) pantry cars will be manufactured in future. IRCTC has been mandated to develop state of art, modern mechanized base kitchens under the new policy. All out efforts will be made to increase the sale of Janta meals under the new policy. Joint and integrated drives against unauthorized hawkers and vendors by RPF, along with commercial staff are being undertaken. Comprehensive and all inclusive complaint redressal system involving social media, IVRS feedback and SMS/web feedback interface is being utilized. Strict punitive action from fines to terminations has been put in place so as to ensure effective checks and controls to stop unfair practices.

(b) No, Sir. It is not a fact that food served is often recycled and is easily accessible to rats, insects, etc. since catering services is constantly monitored by Ministry of Railways. Large number of major reformative actions have been undertaken

by Ministry of Railways in last three years so as to actualize this radical change. These are as under:—

I. Extant of existing Railway Catering business

On Indian Railways, 2.3 crore passengers travel daily. Indian Railways provide approximately 11 lakh meals to passengers every day on board. In addition, more than 1.5 lakh meals are sold through various units in stations. Catering services on Railways can be classified into two broad categories viz. mobile and static. At present, there are 360 pairs of trains with pantry cars, which include 22 pairs of Rajdhani, 25 pairs of Shatabdi, 18 pairs of Duronto trains and 295 pairs of mail/express trains. There are about 9696 Major and Minor Static Units on Indian Railways. There are also eight base kitchens, 29 cell kitchens, 155 Refreshment rooms and 50 Jan Ahaars outlets, in addition to 210 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units. Provision of catering services to passengers with diverse tastes and choices, on such a large scale, are indeed an onerous task.

Bringing about tangible improvement in catering services of this size and scale is challenging and in the last few years, Railways has not only undertaken an in-depth analysis of catering services but also initiated structural reforms to bring in a paradigm shift in catering business. Various committees have been constituted to usher a radical shift in railway businesses. A one man committee headed by Sri E. Sreedharan was constituted in Nov., 2014 to suggest a proper system and procedures in order to ensure accountability and transparency in commercial contracts including handing over catering services to IRCTC. The committee suggested tangible changes in catering business. Also, Bibek Debroy committee was constituted in Sept., 2014 for “Mobilization of Resources for Major Railway Projects and Restructuring of Railway Ministry and Railway Board” and submitted its report in June, 2015. The Committee also *inter alia* introduction of e-catering and leveraging existing players. In-house group of CCMs was constituted in October, 2015 for working out the modalities of transfer of catering services. The in-house group took an in-depth and inclusive look at the whole gamut of catering services over Indian Railways.

The various Committees’ reports revealed that unless the existing catering policy itself was changed and contract frameworks completely overhauled, things would not change. It was also realised that unless the quality of food at source is not controlled, onboard quality would not change. Thus, with a comprehensive view of the existing catering services, through various insights

and inputs received, a New Catering Policy was announced in the Railway Budget in 2016. The draft of the New Policy was kept in the public domain for taking feedback from multiple stakeholders viz. customers, zonal railways, service providers etc. After much debate and discussion, the New Catering Policy was notified on 27 February, 2017, with the objective of providing quality food to rail passengers, by unbundling catering services on trains, and creating a primary distinction between food preparation and food distribution.

The salient features of the New Catering Policy 2017 are as under:—

- IRCTC shall manage catering service on all mobile units and meals will be picked from nominated kitchens.
- The setting up/development/refurbishment of new or existing Base Kitchens/Kitchen units will be undertaken by IRCTC. These modern, state of the art kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC.
- IRCTC shall engage service providers from hospitality industry for service of food in trains.
- IRCTC to involve/empanel Self Help Groups for providing catering related services.
- Zonal railways shall manage minor static unit (catering stall/milk stalls/trolleys etc).
- Allotments of General Minor Units at all category stations will be done through competitive open tendering system by divisions.
- 33% sub quota for women in allotment of each category of minor catering units at all category of station to be provided.

II. **Major Initiative undertaken during the last 3 years**

- (i) **E-Catering:** Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice. Initially, e-catering service was train specific and available in 1350 trains without Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative, in Sept. 2015, this scheme was reoriented to make it Station based and a pilot project was undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' and 'A' category stations. E-catering service is now available at 306 stations with an average supply of 6000 meals per day as against 400 meals per day in October, 2015. Call centre for E-Catering: IRCTC has established a state of the art call centre for operationalizing E-catering services where passengers can pre-order the

meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations.

- (ii) **Water Vending Machines (WVMs):** With the objective to provide potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, conforming to BIS specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI and other regulations made by the government from time to time, WVMs policy was notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015. These WVMs provide water to passengers at a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water. 1300 WVMs are already installed at stations and another 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly. Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is under finalization.
- (iii) **Introduction of Ready to Eat meals or precooked food providing a wider range of options available to passengers:** In order to provide more options to passengers in trains, IRCTC carried out a pilot project for serving RTE meals like Veg biryani, Masala Upma, Poha, Idli Samber etc. During the trial period, IRCTC produced various types of Retort food products in Retort pouches such as Veg Biryani, Rajma Rice, Lemon rice, Tamarind Rice etc. These RTE meals have a longer shelf life and are very useful in meeting exigencies like late running of trains due to fog etc. IRCTC is also trying other RTE options including Dehydrated RTE products, which cost less than usual RTE that is being used in Airlines. This technology will ensure provision of hot food to passengers by adding hot water. The scheme of ready to eat meals will be implemented shortly in train no. 12565/66 Bihar Sampark Kranti Express.
- (iv) **Optional catering service in premium prepaid trains:** The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on two trains, Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani and Train No. 12025-26, Pune – SC Shatabdi Exp. w.e.f. 09.06.2016 onwards for 45 days. Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option. Further, instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01/08/2017 onwards for the journeys to commence on 01/08/2017. This scheme is introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto/Gatiman trains under the management of IRCTC for an initial period of 180 days.
- (v) **Janani Sewa and Children's menu:** Hon'ble MR in Rail Budget Speech 2016-17 announced as under:- "We would like to mitigate the hardships that mothers undergo while travelling with their infants and,

for this purpose, we will pilot availability of children's menu items on trains. Further baby foods, hot milk and hot water would be made available on stations and changing boards for babies would be provided in train toilets". In compliance with the above Budget Announcement, to mitigate the hardships faced by travelling mothers, Janani Sewa has been introduced on 27.4.2016 to ensure provision of baby food, milk and hot water from nominated catering stalls. Further, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been advised on 20.05.2016 to ensure availability of children menu through e-catering.

(vi) **Self Help Groups (SHGs):** Empanelment of Self Help Groups (SHGs) to provide healthy, wholesome regional cuisine at an affordable cost to the travelling public through e-catering has been initiated and 9 SHGs have been empanelled at 10 stations. The groups empanelled are as follows:

- Four in Andhra Pradesh: Shri Vani (Vijayawada), Sri Srinivasa (Vishakhapatnam, Anakapalle and Tuni)
- One in Karnataka-Spoorthy Janaabhivrudhi Samsthe (Mysore)
- Two in Kerala Café Kudumbashree (Ernakulam and Ernakulam Town)
- Three in Madhya Pradesh: Laxmi Mahila Mandal (Saugor), Sanskar Mahila Mandal (Saugor) and Prayas Swa Sahayata Sangatham (Saugor)
- One in Maharashtra: Maher Lok Sanchalit Sadham Kendra (Savantwadi)
- One in West Bengal: Manorma Pariseba Sambay Samity (Adra)
- One at Savantwadi-Maher Loksanchalit Sadhan Kendra

(vii) **Automatic Vending Machines on trains:** Humsafar trains have been introduced with the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed.

(viii) Tejas Train has been introduced on 22/05/2017 with optional catering Service and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking; catering charges are not included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, meal is provided with an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service, in addition to the cost of catering charges

III. Plan of Action for implementation of New Catering Policy 2017

In compliance of Catering Policy 2017, the process of handing over of mobile catering units along with associated kitchen units has already been started. The details of takeover plan are as under:

- (a) **Taken over by IRCTC till 31.7.17:** Trains: 155 pairs and Static units: 39 (Base kitchen-5, Cell kitchen-9, Refreshment Rooms-13, Jan Aahar-12)
- (b) **Planned Takeover by IRCTC by 31.8.17:** Trains: 07 pairs and Static units: 47.
- (c) **Takeover by IRCTC by 30.9.17:** Trains: 88 pairs and Static units: 83.
- (d) **Takeover by IRCTC by 31.10.17:** Trains: 87 pairs and Static units: 82.

Takeover Plan by IRCTC: Base Kitchen/Cell Kitchen/RR/Jan Aahar

- (i) **With IRCTC as on 27.2.17 (Date of Issue of Policy):** 17 (4 Base kitchens, 9 Jan Aahar, 2 Cell Kitchens and 2 RRs)
- (ii) **Taken over between 27.2.17 and upto 31.7.17:** 22 (2 Base Kitchen, 3 Jan Aahar, 7 Cell Kitchens and 10 RRs)
- (iii) **Proposed Timeline for Take Over:**
 - By 31.08.17:- 47.
 - By 30.09.17: - 83.
 - By 30.10.17:- 82.

(iv) **Proposed Upgradation Plan of Base Kitchens:**

- By 31.08.17: 04 (Balasore, Kharagpur Base Kitchens and Jan Aahar at Chennai and Jammu Tawi).
- By 31.01.18: 20 (6 Base Kitchens, 14 Refreshment Rooms/Jan Aahar and Cell Kitchens)

IV. Compliance and Monitoring of Catering Services

On Indian Railways, catering services is monitored 24x7, very closely through the following mechanisms:-

- (1) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities and providing real time assistance to travelling public.
- (2) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services.
- (3) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.
- (4) CPGRAMS (Central Passenger Grievance Monitoring System), COMS, SMS, Email, Facebook etc. are also used to register public complaints and monitor feedback on catering services.

- (5) Complaint books are provided at all major, minor static and mobile catering units.

V. Inspections and special drives

To ensure that systems work, IR has a system of schedules for inspections in place. Commercial department officers conduct around 40,000 catering inspections all over railways every year. Further, joint inspections of Commercial, Railway Protection Force and Medical departments are also carried out from time to time. Food samples are collected and sent for testing in reputed laboratories by medical department. Special drives are launched to ensure lapses are rectified. Recently, from 25.07.2017 a three week drive of officers from all departments to inspect each and every train and static unit has been launched. Till date 2810 inspections have been carried out and fine of ₹ 61 lakh levied.

VI. Third party audit

A third-party audit to examine quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in pantry car and base kitchen, has been mandated which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit as prescribed in the New Catering Policy 2017. Food safety and Hygiene audits are now being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors. Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway. IRCTC has already awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

VII. Punitive Action taken for various lapses in catering services

A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers, including overcharging and other deficiencies in executing catering contracts is in place and following punitive action has been taken:—

- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crore has been imposed during January to June' 2017 as compared to ₹ 4.05 crore imposed during calendar year January to December, 2016.
- 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the period of January to July 2017.
- 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in January to December, 2016.
- Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the period January to December, 2016.

Introduction of degree course at IIHT, Bargarh

*285. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to introduce a degree course on Handloom Technology in the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT), Bargarh in Odisha, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and which are the IIHTs where the degree course on Handloom Technology has been introduced?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) As on date, there is no proposal under the consideration of the Government for introduction of degree course in Handloom and Textile Technology at Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT), Bargarh, Odisha.

(b) The infrastructural facilities at IIHT, Bargarh have been developed in accordance with All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) norms for conduct of diploma course and are inadequate for introduction of degree course at IIHT, Bargarh. B.Tech in Handloom and Textile Technology has been introduced at IIHT, Salem from the academic session 2015-16.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**Settlement of claims by insurance companies**

2881. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large amount of funds are being paid as premium to crop insurance companies, whereas they have hardly settled any claims so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith number of insurance cases and amount of premium paid to companies during last two years, State-wise;

(c) the number of claims submitted for settlement with claimed amount;

(d) the number of cases settled and actual amount paid so far to farmers, State-wise; and

(e) whether it is also a fact that this scheme has broadly benefited the companies rather than the farmers?

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

to the insurance companies under crop insurance schemes is paid for coverage against non-preventable natural risks to crops, whereas claims under the scheme are dependent on the actual occurrence of the risk. The past experience of implementing crop insurance schemes on actuarial basis shows that payout depends on the quantum of crop loss which could be high in bad years whereas in good monsoon year, claims are bound to be on the lower side. As an insurance principle, insurance companies could make savings in a good year which is utilised for payouts in bad seasons. For instance, of the two consecutive drought years *i.e.* 2014 and 2015, a total of ₹ 3548.22 crore was collected as gross premium in 2014 and the total claims payout was ₹ 3562.46 crore (100.40% of gross premium collected). Similarly in 2015 ₹ 3076.92 crore were collected as premium and total claim payout was ₹ 4115.40 crore (133.75% of gross premium collected). In 2016-17, which was a good monsoon year, against the gross premium of ₹ 22,236 crore, total claims have been estimated at about ₹ 15188 crore (68%), of which, claims of ₹ 9188.18 crore have been approved and claims of ₹ 6576.83 crore have already been settled/paid by Insurance companies. These payouts pertain mostly to Kharif 2016 and for Rabi 2016 also the claims settlement has been initiated.

As the crop insurance schemes are being implemented on area approach basis, farmers do not need to lodge the claims individually, except in case of localised calamities *viz.* hailstorm, landslide and inundation and in case of post harvest losses due to unseasonal rains etc.

State-wise details of gross premium, claims reported and claims paid/settled under various crop insurance schemes during last two years are given in the Statement.

Statement

State-wise details of gross premium, claims reported, claims paid and number of farmers benefitted during last three years under various crop insurance schemes combined

(₹ in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State/UT	Gross Premium	Claims Reported	Claims Paid	No. of Farmers benefitted
1	2	3	4	5	6
Year 2014-15					
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	16.28	5.86	5.86	184
2.	Andhra Pradesh	17084.62	7854.15	6846.18	115390

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Assam	1024.74	1340.25	560.09	22203
4.	Bihar	58097.01	112472.86	88195.13	2500014
5.	Chhattisgarh	34039.21	18502.44	18502.44	596577.00
6.	Goa	0.65	0.00	0.00	0
7.	Gujarat	18000.90	50424.15	50409.48	191722
8.	Haryana	3.41	0.79	0.79	7
9.	Himachal Pradesh	4030.36	3293.78	3285.89	89448
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	46.13	54.18	23.93	1364
11.	Jharkhand	5191.89	2912.52	2912.46	166037
12.	Karnataka	32083.46	22263.69	22262.25	444079
13.	Kerala	1146.58	719.96	715.56	24315
14.	Madhya Pradesh	52836.47	74150.64	74150.64	798850
15.	Maharashtra	49864.03	222821.76	222581.70	5466006
16.	Manipur	43.02	185.13	185.13	3472
17.	Meghalaya	24.09	16.28	0.00	838
18.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
19.	Odisha	14348.34	26331.23	26331.23	186255
20.	Puducherry	13.22	1.76	0.00	72
21.	Rajasthan	104931.14	119085.68	119084.58	6668478
22.	Sikkim	0.50	0.00	0.00	0
23.	Tamil Nadu	7912.26	3599.58	3599.58	45823
24.	Telangana	19413.28	16907.77	8736.12	214306
25.	Tripura	1.63	0.00	0.00	0
26.	Uttar Pradesh	42372.90	78079.99	77953.13	1175288
27.	Uttarakhand	1635.29	4164.41	4164.41	52133
28.	West Bengal	30470.48	17836.36	12315.45	299918
TOTAL		494631.90	783025.24	742822.05	19062779
Year 2015-16					
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	20.08	1.19	0.00	158
2.	Andhra Pradesh	64407.75	31453.82	22878.59	415588

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Assam	1640.81	552.18	201.54	24425
4.	Bihar	23798.53	97332.12	18039.81	1123440
5.	Chhattisgarh	8206.09	69863.15	69863.15	677382.00
6.	Goa	1.29	14.49	14.49	82
7.	Gujarat	20482.27	179612.54	179612.54	363027
8.	Haryana	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
9.	Himachal Pradesh	4328.29	3718.86	2110.65	92096
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
11.	Jharkhand	2376.92	22572.88	21253.26	394593
12.	Karnataka	9539.09	87881.27	87727.97	876286
13.	Kerala	1468.42	1411.35	1307.81	35765
14.	Madhya Pradesh	65499.58	480089.02	473466.22	2451643
15.	Maharashtra	81619.24	552631.81	552631.81	10623771
16.	Manipur	112.65	269.70	269.70	7514
17.	Meghalaya	11.53	0.00	0.00	0
18.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
19.	Odisha	19051.78	178264.07	178264.07	1175138
20.	Puducherry	17.91	0.00	0.00	0
21.	Rajasthan	101242.85	178713.37	147195.81	7749694
22.	Sikkim	3.41	0.00	0.00	0
23.	Tamil Nadu	13361.01	51015.56	42846.93	337773
24.	Telangana	23415.56	10397.02	6736.53	162033
25.	Tripura	7.77	0.24	0.00	18
26.	Uttar Pradesh	90915.20	144356.97	143643.60	2168369
27.	Uttarakhand	1938.10	1800.73	1799.93	41616
28.	West Bengal	29158.73	25307.91	8.77	445698
TOTAL		562624.88	2117260.24	1949873.18	29166109
Year 2016-17					
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1.62	0.00	0.00	0
2.	Andhra Pradesh	88114.74	64969.78	57272.64	787671

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Assam	864.63	501.69	501.69	23370
4.	Bihar	142398.50	22307.74	0.00	182545
5.	Chhattisgarh	32735.49	14982.31	13851.26	121483
6.	Goa	7.39	2.68	2.68	111
7.	Gujarat	236045.35	32459.68	16170.44	125753
8.	Haryana	36017.04	23963.76	22058.02	150181
9.	Himachal Pradesh	7116.69	804.62	232.82	27410
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
11.	Jharkhand	27152.56	2509.60	7.54	56513
12.	Karnataka	153441.39	84069.20	72609.52	490077
13.	Kerala	3256.05	1690.41	1588.66	20329
14.	Madhya Pradesh	407260.33	149086.71	9990.24	510747
15.	Maharashtra	476671.39	205819.99	207750.20	2776279
16.	Manipur	359.26	195.91	127.25	8358
17.	Meghalaya	4.05	0.00	0.00	0
18.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
19.	Odisha	53853.30	42301.39	40043.23	157939
20.	Puducherry	277.82	0.00	0.00	0
21.	Rajasthan	249024.53	39847.33	33400.11	560527
22.	Sikkim	9.96	0.00	0.00	0
23.	Tamil Nadu	100599.76	164784.00	137405.75	444701
24.	Telangana	31136.01	12872.00	0.00	136728
25.	Tripura	32.10	8.34	8.34	502
26.	Uttar Pradesh	100975.45	43856.57	43380.57	895857
27.	Uttarakhand	4158.40	1720.47	1281.96	54755
28.	West Bengal	72112.60	10064.03	0.93	234483
TOTAL		2223626.42	918818.22	657683.85	7766319

Deep sea fishing in Tamil Nadu

2882. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plans to provide financial and logistic support for welfare of fishermen in the country;

(b) if so, details thereof and funds provided in last three years, State-wise;

(c) effective steps taken by Government to curb menace of harassment and attacks against Indian fishermen in coastal regions, particularly in Tamil Nadu;

(d) whether Government has any special plans to motivate persons engaged in deep sea fishing and provide incentives for keeping them commercially alive in this field; and

(e) if so, details thereof and incentive schemes provided to support deep sea fishing in country, particularly in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DADF), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare under the component of '*National Scheme of Welfare of Fishermen*' of Central Plan Scheme '*Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries*' provides financial assistance and logistic support to the State Governments and Union Territories (UTs) for welfare of fishermen in the country. Details of the funds provided in last three years, State-wise are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) The DADF has issued advisories to all Coastal States including Tamil Nadu and Union Territories (UTs) to sensitize their fishermen for not to cross the international marine boundary line (IMBL), which may sometimes result into harassment, attacks and imprisonment of Indian fishermen and confiscation of their boats by security agencies of neighboring countries. The Coastal State Governments/UTs and Indian Coast Guard have organized awareness programme from time to time, to sensitize the fishermen on the consequent hardship involved in crossing over the IMBL for fishing activities. The Government of India has established a bilateral mechanism by way of Joint Working Group (JWG) with the Government of Sri Lanka especially to address and resolve the fishermen related issues between both the countries.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The DADF on 09.3.2017 has introduced a sub-component under Blue Revolution Scheme, namely, "Assistance for Deep Sea Fishing" which aims to promote the traditional fishers in Deep Sea Fishing. Under the said scheme, the Central Government is providing 50% financial assistance with a ceiling of ₹ 40 lakh per vessel for procurement of Deep Sea Fishing Vessels by traditional fishers/ their Self Help Groups/Associations, etc. An amount of ₹ 200 crore has already been sanctioned and released by the Government of India to the State Government of Tamil Nadu for 2017-18 towards implementation of the sub-component of 'Assistance for Deep Sea Fishing' under Blue Revolution Scheme, especially in the Palk Bay area of Tamil Nadu.

Statement

Details of Central funds released to States under the 'National scheme of welfare of fishermen' during the last three financial years

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	State	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1.	Andhra Pradesh	--	487.50	--
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	--	52.00	--
3.	Assam	--	--	81.20
4.	Bihar	152.65	90.00	--
5.	Chhattisgarh	137.58	228.24	100.00
6.	Daman and Diu	--	--	--
7.	Goa	35.20	45.82	48.74
8.	Gujarat	1.12	36.37	60.00
9.	Haryana	5.71	12.50	--
10.	Himachal Pradesh	25.34	77.73	81.47
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	--	49.88	--
12.	Jharkhand	181.79	375.00	250.20
13.	Karnataka	233.08	390.45	--
14.	Kerala	348.95	1206.71	100.20
15.	Lakshadweep	--	--	--
16.	Maharashtra	--	--	69.00
17.	Madhya Pradesh	153.99	195.35	200.00
18.	Manipur	70.15	--	--
19.	Meghalaya	--	--	--
20.	Mizoram	101.72	121.00	120.50
21.	Nagaland	485.00	187.46	--
22.	Odisha	15.00	200.35	--
23.	Puducherry	100.00	332.29	361.00
24.	Punjab	--	--	--
25.	Rajasthan	15.20	14.21	30.12
26.	Sikkim	--	--	--

Sl. No.	State	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
27.	Tamil Nadu	1850.44	647.07	--
28.	Telangana	282.87	9.69	--
29.	Tripura	43.13	139.54	--
30.	Uttar Pradesh	120.00	122.63	399.60
31.	Uttarakhand	31.35		--
32.	West Bengal	22.40	160.49	--
33.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	5.00	74.00	--
34.	FISHCOPFED	736.57	619.75	495.57
	TOTAL	5154.24	5876.02	2397.60

Industry status to agriculture

2883. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU:

SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS:

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

(a) whether Government has taken note of the importance of the agriculture sector which is the backbone of the progress of the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has any plan of giving the industry status to the agriculture, so that it can avail the benefits under this status and strive for further development to prosper into a robust economy; and

(c) whether any requests have been received in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) Agriculture plays a vital role in the country's economy and given the importance of agriculture sector, the Government has substantially enhanced the budget allocation for the agriculture sector from ₹ 35,983.69 crore BE during 2016-17 to ₹ 52,655.00 crore BE during 2017-18.

Government has been receiving suggestions from various quarters to accord status of industry to agriculture. However, the Government seeks to bestow on the agriculture sector as many benefits as available to those in the manufacturing sector, such as, easy availability of credit and other inputs and infrastructure facilities for

development of agriculture sector including marketing and post harvest management. Further, Government has launched a comprehensive crop insurance scheme called 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana' (PMFBY) which covers the risks and uncertainties that the farm sector is exposed to.

Encouragement for domestication of desi cows

2884. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether scientific studies have revealed that domestication of desi cows is economically and environmentally more beneficial to the villagers than the hybrid types, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether there is any scheme under which financial assistance, in form of subsidy, could be availed by the villagers as an incentive for domestication of desi cows in preference to hybrid types, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) As informed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research no study on effect of climate change on milk production in Indian cows has been conducted by ICAR. However, under Chapter 24 of ICAR published book entitled "Global Climate Change and Indian Agriculture—case studies from the ICAR Network Project" the following has been mentioned:

"Increased heat stress associated with global climate change may, however, cause distress to dairy animals and possibly impact milk production. Temperature-Humidity Index was used to relate animal stress with productivity of milk of buffaloes, crossbred and local cows. These studies indicated that India loses 1.8 million tonnes of milk production at present due to climatic stresses in different parts of the country. Global warming will further negatively impact milk production by 1.6 million tonnes by 2020 and more than 15 million tonnes by 2050. High producing crossbred cows and buffaloes will be impacted more than indigenous cattle. Northern India is likely to experience greater impact of global warming on milk production of both cattle and buffaloes in future".

(b) Yes, Sir. The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has been implementing following schemes under which assistance is released to the States for development and conservation of indigenous breeds:—

- (i) Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)
- (ii) National Mission on Bovine Productivity
- (iii) National Dairy Plan-I

In addition to this the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries is also implementing Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) throughout the country under which back ended capital subsidy (25% of the total sanctioned project cost for General Category and 33.33% for Schedule Tribe and Schedule Caste beneficiaries) is provided through eligible financial institutions, subject to the norms of the scheme. Under the scheme induction of high yielding animals of indigenous breeds is also permitted.

Storage of agricultural produces

2885. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP:

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA:

SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

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

(a) whether post-harvest storage of agricultural produces is a big problem of the farmers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the effective steps taken by Government to prevent damage to foodgrains due to natural calamities such as floods, droughts and frost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) On the basis of peak stock requirement during procurement season for Public Distribution System (PDS), the overall storage capacity required in the country is about 600 Lakh MT. Against this, the total capacity available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Agencies for storage of foodgrains as on 30.06.2017 was 794.48 Lakh MT, hence, is sufficient. Storage capacity of 577.6 Lakh MT has also been created under the scheme Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) (erstwhile Grameen Bhandaran Yojana) and 194.64 Lakh MT capacity under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) implemented by Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW). 159 Lakh MT storage capacities has been created by Cooperative Sector.

(b) and (c) The DAC&FW is implementing various schemes to strengthen the marketing infrastructure including post-harvest storage of agricultural produce in scientific manner in order to reduce post-harvest losses.

- (i) Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) for reduction of post-harvest losses in the country which includes assistance for development of Post-harvest Management (PHM) and Marketing infrastructure. Post-harvest management component includes establishment of cold storages, staging cold room, pack house, pre-cooling units, controlled atmosphere (CA) storage, reefer vans, primary/mobile processing units, integrated pack house and setting up of ripening chambers etc.
- (ii) Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI), a sub-scheme of Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM) to develop agricultural marketing infrastructure including storage infrastructure for effectively managing marketable surplus of agricultural produce.

Interest subsidy to farmers for short-term loan

2886. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

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

(a) whether Government has brought Interest Subvention Scheme for the farmers in view of agrarian unrest and increased number of suicides, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the percentage of interest subsidy which would be given for short-term loan to farmers;

(c) whether loans for post-harvest storage of their produces would be given to farmers at a subsidized interest rate, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of other relief measures that are being offered to farmers who are in distress?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) The Government of India has been implementing Interest Subvention Scheme since 2006-07, under which, interest subvention is provided to Public Sector Banks, Private Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks so as to enable these financial institutions to provide short term crop loans upto ₹ 3.00 lakh to farmers at subvented interested rate of 7% per annum. In 2017-18, keeping in view farmers' interest, the Government decided to continue with the scheme and to provide interest subvention @ 2% per annum to lending institutions so as to enable them to further disburse short term crop loan up to ₹ 3 lakh at a subvented interest rate of 7% per annum. In addition, a prompt repayment incentive of 3% is also being provided to such of the farmers who repay their crop loans within

a maximum period of one year from the date of disbursement of short term crop loans. Thus, effectively the farmers are getting the short term crop @4% per annum.

(c) In order to discourage distress sale by farmers and to encourage them instead to store their produce in warehouses accredited with Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA), the benefit of interest subvention has been extended to small and marginal farmers having Kisan Credit Card (KCC) for a further period of upto six months post harvest at the same rate as available to crop loan against negotiable warehouse receipts issued against the stored produce.

(d) The Government has undertaken various measures for managing the debt burden of farmers as well as to provide relief in distress. These include the following measures:—

- (i) As per extant guidelines on Priority Sector Lending, domestic Scheduled Commercial Banks have been prescribed a target of 18 per cent of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) or Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure (CEOB), whichever is higher, for lending to Agriculture. Within the 18 per cent target for Agriculture, a sub-target of 8 per cent of ANBC or CEOB, whichever is higher, has been prescribed for lending to Small and Marginal Farmers.
- (ii) In order to ensure that all eligible farmers are provided with hassle-free and timely credit for their agricultural operations, the Government has introduced the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme, which enables them to draw cash to purchase agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides as well as meet other agricultural and consumption needs. The KCC Scheme has since been simplified by providing the farmers with Automated Teller Machine (ATM) enabled debit card based on one-time documentation and built in cost escalation in the limit, etc.
- (iii) During natural calamities relief measures provided by respective lending institutions include restructuring/rescheduling of existing crop loans and term loans, extending fresh loans, relaxed security and margin norms, moratorium, etc. The moment calamity is declared by the concerned District Authorities, the guidelines for relief measures automatically set in motion without any intervention, thus saving precious time.
- (iv) To bring small, marginal, tenant farmers, oral lessees, etc. into the fold of institutional credit, Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) have been promoted by banks.
- (v) Banks have been advised by Reserve Bank of India to waive margin/security requirements of agricultural loans upto ₹ 1,00,000/-.

- (vi) Financial assistance from State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) in the wake of notified natural calamities is provided for immediate relief for the loss suffered by way of assistance towards input subsidy for crop loss of 33% and above, which was earlier admissible for crop loss of 50% and above. The scale of assistance towards input subsidy for crop loss has been enhanced by about 50%, which is now ₹ 6800/- per ha for rainfed areas, ₹ 13500/- per ha for assured irrigated areas and ₹ 18000/- per ha for all types of perennial crops. The financial assistance is being provided at the new rates with effect from 08.04.2015.

Demand for remunerative MSP and loan waiver for farmers

2887. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the farmers' organizations across the country have been demanding remunerative MSP for their produces as well as complete loan waiver, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has formulated any action plan to redress the grievances of the farmers in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Suggestions from State Governments and various farmer organizations are received from time to time for increasing the MSP of crops as well as seeking agricultural loan waiver.

Government fixes Minimum Support Price (MSP) for twenty two (22) major crops and Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for Sugarcane based on the recommendations of 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 cultivation, trends in market prices, demand and supply situation, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living etc. Government had increased the MSP of both Rabi and Kharif crops for 2016-17 season and it has been further increased for Kharif crops for 2017-18 season. The MSP fixed by the Government provide adequate returns over all India weighted average all paid out costs including family labour (A2+FL) as estimated by the CACP. The Government offers to procure crops at MSP. However, farmers are free to sell their produce to the Government procurement agencies at MSP or in the open market as is advantageous to them.

On the issue of waiver of farmers' loan, Reserve Bank of India is of the view that such waivers negatively impact credit and recovery climate and has severe systemic consequences. However, Government has taken several measures to provide institutional loans to the farmers at interest subvention and in a hassle-free manner in order to reduce the debt burden of farmers. The following major initiatives have been taken:—

- (i) With a view to ensuring availability of agriculture credit at a reduced interest rate of 7% p.a. to farmers, the Government of India in the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare implements an interest subvention scheme for short term crop loans up to ₹ 3.00 lakh. Under the said scheme, additional subvention of 3% is given to those farmers who repay their short term crop loan in time, thereby reducing the effective rate of interest to 4% p.a. for such farmers.
- (ii) In order to ensure that all eligible farmers are provided with hassle-free and timely credit for their agricultural operations, the Government has introduced the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme, which enables them to draw cash to purchase agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides as well as meet other agricultural and consumption needs. The KCC Scheme has since been simplified by providing the farmers with ATM enabled debit card based on one-time documentation and built-in cost escalation in the limit, etc.
- (iii) To bring small, marginal, tenant farmers, oral lessees, etc. into the fold on institutional credit, Joint Liability Group (JLGs) have been promoted by banks.
- (iv) Bank have been advised by RBI to waive margin/security requirements of agricultural loans upto ₹ 1,00,000/-, *vide* RBI's circular dated 18th June, 2010.
- (v) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued directions for Relief Measures to be provided by respective lending institutions in areas affected by natural calamities which, *inter alia*, include, restructuring/rescheduling of existing crop loans and term loans, extending fresh loan, relaxed security and margin norms, moratorium, etc. These directions have been so designed that the moment calamity is declared by the concerned District Authorities, they are automatically set in motion without any intervention, thus saving precious time. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

Decline in area of sugarcane cultivation

2888. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of decline in area of sugarcane cultivation during the last five years in all those States where sugarcane is cultivated in large scale;

(b) the number of review meetings held by Government during the last five years to improve the situation of continuous decline in sugarcane cultivation area and the details of the result of these meetings; and

(c) whether Government is considering about any futuristic policy change with regard to encouraging the farmers or spreading awareness among them to increase cultivation of sugarcane, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) The States where sugarcane is cultivated in large scale are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Details of area coverage under sugarcane in these States during 2012-13 to 2016-17 are given in the Statement (*See below*).

The area under sugarcane cultivation depends on farmers' preference, shift of area to other competing crops, agro-climatic conditions, inter-crop profitability, irrigation facilities, resource availability with farmers and timely payment of cane dues to farmers by the mills etc.

(b) and (c) The review and assessment for increasing the area coverage and production of different agricultural crops including sugarcane in the country is a continuous process. To enhance area coverage and production of Sugarcane in the country, from 2014-15 the Government has been implementing Sugarcane Development Programme under National Food Security Mission - Commercial Crops (NFSM-CC) in 13 major sugarcane growing states of the country *viz.* Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

The states can also support Sugarcane Development Programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) with the approval of State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLCC).

The Central Government also fixes Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane, well in advance of sowing season, to induce farmers to sow sugarcane. FRP is a minimum benchmark price below which sugar mills cannot purchase cane

from the cane growers. The FRP for 2016-17 was fixed at ₹ 230/- per quintal and for 2017-18 at ₹ 255/- per quintal.

The technologies developed for sugarcane by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions and other similar organizations for increasing its cultivation are disseminated among farmers through frontline demonstrations, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, organizing training programmes, Kisan Mela, awareness campaigns etc.

Statement

Area under sugarcane of 13 major sugarcane growing States during 2012-13 to 2016-17

States/UT	Area (' 000 Hectares)				
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17*
Uttar Pradesh	2212.0	2228.0	2140.8	2169.0	2160.0
Maharashtra	933.0	937.0	1030.0	987.0	633.0
Karnataka	425.0	420.0	480.0	450.0	440.0
Tamil Nadu	347.2	313.3	263.1	252.3	215.3
Bihar	250.3	258.1	254.3	244.0	242.2
Gujarat	176.0	174.0	208.0	157.0	175.0
Andhra Pradesh	155.0	153.0	139.0	122.0	103.0
Uttarakhand	109.9	104.3	101.7	96.9	93.0
Haryana	101.0	102.0	97.0	93.0	111.0
Punjab	83.0	89.0	94.0	90.0	88.0
Madhya Pradesh	59.5	73.1	111.0	103.0	92.0
Telangana	41.0	39.0	38.0	35.0	31.0
Odisha	14.5	14.2	10.1	9.0	12.5
TOTAL	4907.5	4904.9	4967.0	4808.1	4383.6

*As per 3rd Advance Estimates.

Agricultural production in Jammu and Kashmir

2889. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH MANHAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has prepared any comprehensive plan for the growth in agriculture production in view of increasing population against fast decreasing agriculture land in Jammu and Kashmir; 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) State Government has informed that the agro-climatic diversity and micro-zonation of Jammu and Kashmir offers the unique opportunity to synergize all the efforts, albeit within the Special Programs on Agriculture of Hon'ble Chief Minister (SPAHCM) and the ongoing Central Sector Schemes (CSS) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW).

In order to enhance agricultural production and productivity, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) is implementing Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET), National Mission for Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP), National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) during 2017-18.

Administrative approval for fishing harbour at Anantwadi, Maharashtra

2890. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Maharashtra has requested to accord revised administrative approval to the work of fishing harbour at Anantwadi, Tal Deogad, District Sindhudurg in the State of Maharashtra to the estimate of ₹ 92.50 crore, if so, Government's response thereto; and

(b) by when it will be approved for the benefit of fishermen community?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Maharashtra has submitted a Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) proposal with cost escalation from the original approved cost of ₹ 35.89 crore to ₹ 92.50 crore for construction of a fishing harbour at Anantwadi, Tal. Deogad, Maharashtra. After scrutiny, the revised cost estimate has been arrived at ₹ 88.44 crore and the Government of Maharashtra has been requested in April, 2017 to confirm the (i) arrangement for contribution of their financial share of ₹ 63.44 crore for construction of this fishing harbour and (ii) consensus of the local stakeholders including fishermen on revised layout of the fishing harbour.

Development of hybrid mangoes

2891. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has developed 6,000 varieties of hybrid mangoes during the last 33 years, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that hybrid mangoes take more than two decades to reach the market because tonnes of fruits are required for developing a variety that is feasible, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir. However, it is a fact that more than 6000 experimental hybrid seedlings have been developed during the last 33 years. To develop these hybrid seedlings, lakhs of crosses were made during the past three decades. Due to very low percentage of fruit set in the process of hybridization (as low as 0.5%), crosses made on thousands of flowers yielded only a few hundred of hybrid seedlings. Out of these seedlings, only a few hybrids displaying desirable traits were identified, multiplied and evaluated at the Institute level itself. Following this process of evaluation at Institute, selected promising types were multiplied for further evaluation of their performance under different agro ecological zones.

(b) Yes, after hybridization it takes more than 2 decades to reach the market. Large quantum of fruits are required for quality evaluation in terms of visibility of variety on commercial scale. It is possible only after its cultivation over a large area across commercial cultivation zones. Since, mango hybrids are multiplied through grafting and during initial years of multiplication, limited number of scion material/mother plants are available which restricts the multiplication at very high rate as compared to the crops grown through seeds.

Further, due to limited availability of grafted material it takes several years to cover large area under new hybrids of mango as compared to field crops multiplied through seeds. Newly planted orchards take about 8-10 years to come to commercial bearing.

Internet-based interface for farmers

2892. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has launched an internet-based interface to enable farmers and other stakeholders to upload information and photographs

related to diseases affecting crops, animals or fishes and get remedial measures from specialists through the web or SMS, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the suggestions and complaints received through the said interface would be taken up on priority basis, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) Government had launched a mobile app “Kisan Suvidha” in March 2016. This app enables the farmers and other stakeholders to click and upload the photographs of affected crops. These photographs and other information entered by the farmer is sent to Agriculture experts and after analyzing the picture along with other parameters, experts give remedial measures. These remedial measures are made available to the farmer through SMS as well as Kisan Suvidha mobile app. This app is available at Google Play Store, iTunes and on *mkisan.gov.in*.

(b) The crop photographs received through Kisan Suvidha mobile app are sent to domain experts and they give the remedial measures at priority. More than 10,000 queries have already been responded to and remedial measures have been given to farmers.

Subsidies in Agriculture Sector

2893. SHRI M. P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total expenditure towards subsidies on credit, seeds, pesticides, farm machinery and other agriculture related inputs in the last three years;

(b) whether Government has conducted any studies to examine the percentage of these subsidies actually reaching to the poor farmers;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government will examine alternative methods of delivering these subsidies to poor farmers, including through Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) Agriculture is a State subject. However, the Government of India supports the State Government through various Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, for which financial assistance is provided. Under the schemes, funds are released to the State Governments who in turn provide subsidy to the beneficiaries as per approved norms. The expenditure under various schemes of the Department is given in the Statement.

(b) to (d) Sub-Mission for Seed and Planting Material (SMSP):- SMSP is implemented under National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET) w.e.f. 01.04.2014 on all India basis through State/UT Departments of Agriculture, State Seed Corporations, State Seed Certification Agencies, State Agricultural universities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, National Seeds Corporation etc.

Seed Village Programme is in operation to upgrade the quality of farmers saved seeds. Under this programme, the financial assistance for distribution of foundation/certified seeds at 50% cost of the seeds for cereal crops and 60% for pulses, oilseeds, fodder and green manure crops for production of quality seeds is now available for one acre per farmer. Under the component Certified Seed Production of pulses, oilseeds through seed Village financial assistance for distribution of foundation/certified seeds at 75% cost of the seeds for pulses, oilseeds crops for production of certified seeds is now available. The schemes/components are demand driven.

The Government of India regularly monitors/reviews progress of the schemes through meetings with concerned officers of State Governments. Besides Zonal conferences, review meetings, video conferences are regularly held with the State Governments and officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare visit the States to keep a close watch on the implementation of various agricultural schemes. A three tier monitoring mechanism has been built in National Food Security Mission (NFSM) at national, state and district level to review the action plan and progress of the programme/activities. Further under the scheme of NFSM monitoring has been conducted regularly. A study on the implementation of Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization for monitoring, concurrent evaluation and impact assessment has already been awarded. Likewise, Sub-mission Monitoring Committee has been constituted to monitor the implementation of various activities undertaken under Sub Mission for Seeds and Planting Material (SMSP) of National Mission on Agriculture Extension and Technology (NMAET). A National level, monitoring team has been constituted for monitoring of various activities under National Mission on Oilseeds, Oil Palm (NMOOP). The impact Evaluation study of NMOOP has already been awarded to NABARD consultancy Services PVT. Ltd. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) has been evaluated in 2016-17 by an independent agency-Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore. Based on the impact and findings on the ground, baseline survey, ISEC has recommended continuation of the MIDH scheme. Further, review of Soil Health Management and Soil Health Card scheme has already been assigned to MANAGE, Hyderabad.

Government of India has identified 11 schemes (both Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored) for onboarding on the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) platform. The schemes

identified for on boarding of DBT for its beneficiaries, amongst other are on seed distribution by the dealers to farmers, Machinery and Tools, capacity building, interest subsidy for short term credit to farmers, crop insurance and Agriculture cooperation. Notifications in respect of most of the schemes identified have already been completed. The States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha, Bihar etc. have already implemented DBT Scheme for transferring subsidy/benefits on seeds to the beneficiaries/farmers bank accounts. Interest subsidy on short term crop loans up to ₹ 3.00 lakh is provided to the extent that crop loans become available to farmers at 7%. Presently in 2017-18, interest subsidy is provided at 2%. It has already been communicated to States implementing National Food Security Mission to implement of Direct Benefit Transfer programme from the year 2017-18.

Statement

*Expenditure under various schemes of the Department of Agriculture,
Cooperation and Farmers Welfare*

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of Mission/Scheme	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
		Actual Exp.	Actual Exp.	Actual Exp.
1	2	3	4	5
1.	National Food Security Mission	1872.74	1162.34	1286.03
2.	Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)	1956.45	1696.80	1493.07
3.	National Mission On Oilseeds and Oil Palm	319.07	305.81	327.50
4.	National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture	1391.77	701.38	658.35
5.	National Mission on Agriculture Extension and Technology	1241.86	1033.10	1215.27
6.	Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Census and Statistics	216.56	218.58	172.18
7.	National Crop Insurance Programme	2598.35	2983.04	14650.83
8.	Debentures of land Development Banks	10.89	12.30	18.18
9.	Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Marketing	979.80	570.30	782.49

1	2	3	4	5
10.	Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Cooperation	99.41	121.70	129.81
11.	Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)	8443.20	3940.01	3891.86
12.	Price Stabilisation Fund	50.00	660.00	0.00
13.	National Agri-Tech Infrastructure	0.00	51.19	0.00
14.	Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana	0.00	1555.94	1991.25
15.	National Rainfed Area Authority	0.00	3.08	0.00
16.	National Agriculture Market	0.00	0.00	44.90

Sale of agricultural produces to Government

2894. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has details of the number of farmers who had applied/ tried to sell their agriculture produces to Government on Minimum Support Price, State-wise;

(b) if so, the number of farmers who sold their agriculture produces to Government at MSP in last five years, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) the details of the number of farmers who applied/tried to sell their agriculture produces to the Government on MSP but were denied during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(d) if there is no such data, the reasons for same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) to (d) The farmers are not required to apply to Government to sell their agricultural produce. As per the Uniform Policy for procurement by Government, designated agencies across the country offer to procure crops at Minimum Support Price (MSP) conforming to the specifications prescribed by the Government. However, farmers are free to sell their produce to Government procurement agencies at MSP or in the open market as is advantageous to them.

Food Corporation of India (FCI) under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution is central nodal agency for undertaking price support

operations for cereals. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED), FCI, National Cooperative Consumers' Federation (NCCF), Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and Small Farmers Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) undertake price support operations for pulses and oilseeds.

Number of farmers who has sold their crops at MSP is available only since 2015-16. Number of farmers benefitted from price support operations for major agricultural produce viz. Rice, Wheat and Pulses (as per data available) are given in the Statement.

Statement

*(A) Number of farmers benefitted from Price Support Operations
for Rice and Wheat*

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Rice		Wheat	
		KMS 2015-16	KMS 2016-17*	RMS 2016-17	RMS 2017-18
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	276699	544124	-	-
2.	Telangana	535007	1086196	-	-
3.	Assam	7288	6615	-	-
4.	Bihar	275484	287830	-	-
5.	Chandigarh	3468	2235	1025	935
6.	Chhattisgarh	1110163	1327944	-	-
7.	Delhi	0	0	-	-
8.	Gujarat	335	1316	14	1700
9.	Haryana	212351	556654	472313	690448
10.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	127	167
11.	Jharkhand	53945	39480	-	-
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	2812	2693	-	-
13.	Karnataka	14587	0	-	-
14.	Kerala	162737	125530	-	-
15.	Madhya Pradesh	199984	287759	532907	738895
16.	Maharashtra	111503	148073	-	-
17.	Odisha	1078596	1101193	-	-
18.	Puducherry	0	0	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	Punjab	1206216	940560	834655	843446
20.	Rajasthan	0	0	38942	110338
21.	Tamil Nadu	850640	73367	-	-
22.	Uttar Pradesh	433556	435320	166073	800646
23.	Uttarakhand	51772	79470	710	654
24.	West Bengal	1244256	373310	-	-
TOTAL		7831399	7419669	2046766	3187229

KMS: Kharif Marketing Season

RMS: Rabi Marketing Season

*KMS 2016-17 is under progress. Data reported as on 08.08.2017

(B) Number of farmers benefitted from Price Support Operations for Pulses

State	KMS 2016-17
Karnataka	130105
Gujarat	60997
Rajasthan	79927
Madhya Pradesh	61066
Andhra Pradesh	2612
Telangana	202987
Maharashtra	273024
Uttar Pradesh	801
Haryana	415
TOTAL	811934

KMS: Kharif Marketing Season

**Coverage of perishable agricultural produces under
Price Support Scheme**

2895. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether only ₹ 5.5 crore have been spent by the Central Government during 2015-16 under Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of perishable horticulture and agricultural commodities not covered under Price Support System;

(b) if so, the details thereof during 2016-17 and 2017-18, so far, Year-wise and State-wise;

(c) the name of States under MIS;

(d) whether Government would implement Swaminathan Commission report regarding covering all crops under MSP as promised by Prime Minister in view of failure of MIS and unprecedented suicide by farmers; 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 PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Under Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), 50% of losses (75% in case of North-Eastern States), if any, incurred on its implementation is released by the Central Government as Central Share of loss to the concerned State Government/State agency on vetting the audited accounts submitted by them. During 2015-16 an amount of ₹ 522.62 lakh had been released as Central share of loss towards procurement of ginger in the State of Nagaland during 2014-15 and an amount of ₹ 31.50 lakh towards procurement of iskut (chayote) in the State of Mizoram during 2012-13. During 2016-17 and 2017-18, so far, no claim with complete documentation has been received against proposals sanctioned in earlier years as well as 2016-17 and 2017-18.

(c) All the States and Union Territories (UTs) are covered under MIS.

(d) and (e) In its report, Swaminathan Commission has suggested to announce the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for a wide range of crops, taking into account the recommendations of CACP in view of assuring income security to farmers through MSP. Government fixes MSP for those crops which are mostly items of mass consumption of all India nature with fairly long shelf life and/or necessary for food/nutrition security. MSPs are fixed based on the recommendations of 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 cultivation, trends in market prices, demand and supply situation, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living etc. Government had increased the MSP of both Rabi and Kharif crops for 2016-17 season and it has been further increased for Kharif crops for 2017-18 season. The MSP fixed by the Government provide adequate returns over all India weighted average all paid out costs including family labour (A2+FL) as estimated by the CACP. The Government offers to procure crops at MSP. However, farmers are free to sell their produce to the Government procurement agencies at MSP or in the open market as is advantageous to them.

Recommendations of National Commission on Farmers

†2896. SHRI RAM NARAIN DUDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has constituted National Commission on Farmers to address the problems of farmers across the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of the actions taken by Government on the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The Government had constituted a National Commission on Farmers (NCF) under the Chairmanship of Shri Sompal in the year 2004, which was subsequently reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan vide Resolution No. 8-2/2003-Policy (ES) dated 18.11.2004 with the following composition.

Chairman

Prof. M.S. Swaminathan

Full-time Members

Dr. Ram Badan Singh

Shri Y.C. Nanda

Part-time Members

Dr. (Ms.) Chanda Nimbkar

Shri Atul Kumar Anjan

Dr. R.L. Pitale

Shri Jagdish Pradhan,

Member Secretary

Shri Atul Sinha

IAS (Retd.)

(b) The Commission submitted five reports to the Government. The major recommendations of the Commission contained in the five reports were included in the 'Draft National Policy for Farmers' submitted by the Commission itself in 2006. Based on the 'Draft National Policy for Farmers', the Government approved the National Policy for Farmers (NPF)-2007, which aims to improve economic viability of farming and increase net income of farmers.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) was set up under the Chairmanship of the Principal Adviser in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for preparation of a Plan of Action for Operationalisation of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007. IMC identified 201 Action Points, where necessary action has to be taken. The Plan of Action (PoA) for operationalisation of policy provisions was circulated in October, 2008 to different Ministries/Departments and State/UTs Governments for taking necessary follow up action. Of the 201 number of action points identified, 192 numbers have already been implemented as on date.

The various schemes/programmes/missions adopted by the Ministry are based on the National Policy for Farmers-2007.

Burden of loan on farmers

†2897. SHRI RAM NARAIN DUDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the farmers who have left farming during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the amount of loan burden on each farmer doing agricultural work; and

(c) the details of action plan to waive off/reduce the burden of loan on farmers by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The information with regard to farmers who left farming is not centrally maintained.

(b) As per the 70th Round, 2013 (January-December, 2013) of National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) Report on 'Key Indicators of Debt and Investment in India', the average Amount of Debt (AOD) burden per Rural Cultivator Household was ₹ 70,580/-.

(c) As regards loan waiver, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is not in favour of loan waivers as it vitiates the credit culture and recovery climate and also impacts the financial soundness of the Banks besides affecting fiscal position.

To manage the debt issues of farmers, the Government has undertaken the following centralized mechanisms:—

- (1) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) *vide* its Master Circular dated 1st July 2015 on "Priority Sector Lending—Target and Classification" have fixed 40 per cent of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) under priority sector lending for all

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

scheduled Commercial Banks operating in India, of which, 18% target is for agriculture sector. 18 percent of ANBC/ Credit Equivalent Of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure (CEOBE), whichever is higher within the 18 percent target for agriculture, a target of 8 percent of ANBC/CEOBE, whichever is higher is prescribed for Small and Marginal Farmers, to be achieved in a phased manner *i.e.*, 7 per cent by March 2016 and 8 per cent by March 2017. Foreign banks with 20 branches and above have to achieve the Agriculture Target within a maximum period of five years starting from April 1, 2013 and ending on March 31, 2018 as per the action plans submitted by them and approved by RBI. The sub-target for Small and Marginal farmers would be made applicable post 2018 after a review in 2017. Scheduled commercial banks having any shortfall in lending to priority sector shall be allocated amounts for contribution to Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) established with NABARD and other funds with NABARD/National Savings Bank (NSB)/ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)/ Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Ltd., as decided by RBI from time to time. The interest on banks' for contribution to RIDF or any other Funds, tenure of deposit etc shall be fixed by RBI from time to time.

- (2) Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme an innovative credit delivery mechanism to meet production credit requirement of farmers in a timely and hassle-free manner, has since been simplified by providing the farmers with Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) enabled debit card based on one-time documentation, multiple drawals within the limit and built-in cost escalation in the limit, etc. The credit limit/loan amount under KCC is fixed by Banks as per guidelines issued by RBI. The short term credit limit under KCC for the first year is determined based on Scale of Finance for the crop (as decided by District Level Technical Committee) x Extent of area cultivated + 10% of limit towards post-harvest/household/consumption requirements + 20% of limit towards repairs and maintenance expenses of farm assets + crop insurance and/or accident insurance including personal accidental insurance scheme (PAIS), health insurance and asset insurance. The limit for second and subsequent years (3rd, 4th and 5th year) is arrived based on first year limit for crop cultivation purpose plus 10% of the limit towards cost escalation/increase in scale of finance and estimated term loan component for the tenure of KCC, *i.e.*, five years. The short term loan limit arrived for the 5th year plus the estimated long term loan requirement will be the Maximum Permissible Limit (MPL) and is to be treated as the KCC limit.
- (3) To ensure credit to the agricultural sector, the Government sets annual targets for flow of credit to agricultural sector taking, *inter alia*, into account the

overall banking credit growth. Target for flow of agricultural credit has increased from ₹ 3,25,000 crore in 2009-10 to ₹ 9,00,000 crore in 2016-17. The achievement *vis-à-vis* the targets was ₹ 3,84,514 crore and ₹ 10,65,755.67 (Provisional as on 31.03.2017) in these years respectively. The target for 2017-18 has been fixed at ₹ 10,00,000 crore.

- (4) The Government also provides interest subvention on short-term crop loans upto ₹ 3 lakh which is available to farmers at the interest rate of 7% per annum. In case of timely repayment, additional incentive of 3% interest subvention is allowed, thereby reducing the effective interest rate to 4% per annum.
- (5) To provide relief to farmers affected by natural calamities, an interest subvention of 2% per annum is made available to banks for the first year on the restructured loan amount. Such restructured loans will attract normal rate of interest from the second year onwards as per the policy laid down by the RBI.
- (6) In order to discourage distress sale of produce by Small And Marginal Farmers (SMFs), post-harvest loans against Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (NWRs) are being provided by banks to SMFs having Kisan Credit Card (KCC), at the interest rate of 7% per annum for a period of upto six months.
- (7) To bring small, marginal, tenant farmers, oral lessees, etc. into the fold of institutional credit, Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) are being promoted by Banks.
- (8) Banks have been advised by Reserve Bank of India to waive margin/security requirements of agricultural loans upto ₹ 1,00,000/-.

Drought in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

2898. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have been affected by drought during last three years and in the current year, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have requested the Central Government for financial assistance to tackle the drought situation during these years;

(c) if so, the amount sought by the States and amount released by the Central Government, year-wise;

(d) whether these States have submitted Utilization Certificates for funds released during last three years; and

(e) the amount of funds utilised and number of farmers benefited during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) The Government of Andhra Pradesh had declared drought in 7 districts (230 mandals) in 2014-15; 10 districts (359 mandals) in 2015-16 and 8 districts (301 mandals) in 2016-17 and submitted Memorandum to the Central Government for financial assistance. The Government of Telangana declared drought in 07 districts (231 mandals) during 2015-16 and submitted Memorandum to the Central Government for financial assistance. However, these States have not reported any drought in 2017-18 so far.

(b) to (e) Details of the amount sought by the Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) in the wake of drought in the last three years, assistance approved by the Central Government, expenditure incurred by the States and the number of farmers benefited, as reported by these State Governments, are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of the amount sought by Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from NDRF in the wake of drought in the last three years, Assistance approved by Central Government, expenditure incurred by the States and the number of farmers benefited.

State	Year	Assistance sought by State (₹ in crore)	Assistance approved by Central Government (₹ in crore)	Expenditure incurred by the State (₹ in crore)	Number of farmers benefitted
Andhra Pradesh	2014-15	1532.00	237.51	765.92	879502
	2015-16	2000.56	433.37	605.69	702153
	2016-17	2513.97	518.93	1699.41	1373279
Telangana	2015-16	2601.17	791.21	702.21	2177819

Implementation of PMFBY in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

2899. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has got good response in the States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the area covered under PMFBY during the last three years in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana; and

(c) whether any claims have been made and settled under this scheme in these States during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have opted for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) from its inception *i.e.* Kharif 2016 season. Details of area covered, claims, reported and claims settled in these States under PMFBY during first year of its implementation *i.e.* 2016-17 are as under:

State	Farmers covered (in lakhs)	Claims Reported (₹ in lakhs)	Claims Paid (₹ in lakhs)*
Telangana	8.94	12871.99	**
Andhra Pradesh	16.52	64969.78	57272.64

*Part claims of Rabi 2016-17 are not reported.

**Pending for want of complete State Government share in premium subsidy provided to insurance companies.

Development of International Standard Seeds at low cost

2900. SHRI SHANKARBHAI N. VEGAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to develop international quality seeds at low cost in the country; 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) Yes, Sir. India is a Member to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Seed Certification Scheme, a global framework for the varietal certification of internationally-traded seeds. The overarching objectives of the scheme is to increase market access and facilitate trade by simplifying certification procedures, reducing technical barriers to trade and harmonization of international standards through the consistent enforcement of quality standards and inspection procedures. The scheme is being implemented by 10 Certification Agencies identified as Designated Authorities.

Integration of mandis with e-NAM

2901. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the mandis in every State of the country have been integrated with e-NAM Scheme, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether all the mandis of Tamil Nadu/Karnataka have been integrated, if so, the benefits of such integration for the farmers of the country; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) 455 regulated markets across 13 States have been integrated to e-NAM as per the proposals received from States. The details are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) and (c) 15 mandis of Tamil Nadu have been approved for integration with e-NAM. Karnataka has a State level online trading platform Rashtriya e-Market Services (ReMS) on which mandis of Karnataka have been integrated. e-NAM is designed to benefit the farmers through enhanced market access by way of allowing remote online bidding for their produce, removal of information asymmetry between buyers and sellers and improved price discovery through transparent and competitive online bidding.

Statement***List of Markets integrated with e-NAM***

Sl. No.	State	Total number of markets integrated
1.	Andhra Pradesh	22
2.	Chhattisgarh	14
3.	Gujarat	40
4.	Haryana	54
5.	Himachal Pradesh	19
6.	Jharkhand	19
7.	Madhya Pradesh	58
8.	Maharashtra	45
9.	Odisha	10
10.	Rajasthan	25

Sl. No.	State	Total number of markets integrated
11.	Telangana	44
12.	Uttar Pradesh	100
13.	Uttarakhand	05
TOTAL		455

Overuse of antibiotic in Poultry Sector

2902. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that overuse of antibiotics for growth promotion in poultry is posing serious health hazards for humans, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the proposal of Government to stop use of high level of antibiotics-resistant pathogens in the poultry farms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) There are no data or information available establishing the overuse of antibiotics for growth promotion in poultry on posing serious health hazards for humans. Antibiotics are being used for the treatment of various bacterial diseases in poultry. However, the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has issued advisories regarding judicious use of antibiotics in food producing animals. The department has also issued advisories for the poultry farmers for improving bio security in poultry farms. The Drug Control General of India (DCGI) has also issued guidelines making it mandatory that the container of a medicine for treatment of food producing animals shall be labelled with the withdrawal period of the drug for the species on which it is intended to be used so as to reduce the use of antibiotics.

(b) The use of high level of antibiotic-resistant pathogens in poultry farms is not practiced in India.

Drip irrigation in water scarce areas

2903. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has put in place a roadmap to provide drip irrigation in water scarce areas of Maharashtra and other parts of the country; 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) Government of India has approved Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for a period of 5 years *i.e.* from 2015-16 to 2019-20. The PMKSY has been made operational in the country from 1st July, 2015. Micro Irrigation systems like Drip and Sprinkler irrigation are being promoted under PMKSY. Target of 10 Million ha for Micro Irrigation has been set under PMKSY for the period 2015-16 to 2019-20. This target includes water scarce areas of Maharashtra and other parts of the country.

Since 2015-16, an area of about 9.7 lakh ha. and 6.34 lakh ha. has been covered under Drip irrigation and Sprinkler irrigation respectively.

Besides, micro irrigation is also being promoted under Command Area Development and Water Management Programme (CADWM) Scheme of 'Har Khet Ko Pani' component of PMKSY. Under PMKSY- Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP), 99 prioritized projects along with Command Area Development (CAD) works have been taken up from 2016-17 for completion in Mission mode. Minimum 10% of the total Culturable Command Area (CCA) of these projects are targeted for coverage under Micro Irrigation.

Production of cow milk in Maharashtra

2904. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Maharashtra is one of the States in the country which produces healthiest cow milk, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government to substantially increase production of cow milk in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Maharashtra is one of the 18 major dairy States indentified by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries for participation in National Dairy Plan-I. As per Animal Husbandry Statistics 101.53 lakh tonnes of milk is produced in the State during 2015-16. Out of this 60.61 lakh tonnes was cow milk.

(b) In order to complement and supplement the efforts made by the States to enhance milk production and productivity of bovines including cattle Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries is implementing following schemes in the country including Maharashtra.

- (i) Rashtriya Gokul Mission
- (ii) National Mission on Bovine Productivity
- (iii) National Dairy Plan

Setting up of e-market platform

†2905. DR. CHANDRAPAL SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Agriculture Market Scheme has been launched by Government with an objective to establish e-market platforms in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the total number of the e-trading platforms developed so far and the total number of the mandis that have been connected with the e-trading portal and by when the set target will be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has launched National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) on 14.04.2016 for enhanced price discovery through transparent and competitive online bidding and farmers' reach to alternate markets to sell their produce to buyers of their choice at their convenience. The scheme aims to create a unified National Agriculture Market for inter market and inter-state trading of agri-produce.

(b) As per approved scheme, 455 mandis across 13 States have been integrated against the target of 585 markets by March, 2018.

Use of 'Happy Seeder' Machine

†2906. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of amount allocated and disbursed to farmers by Government to provide 'Happy Seeder' machine and 'Paul Baler' since 2014-15 to 2017-18;

(b) whether there has been delay in providing subsidy to farmers, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the area of land in hectare on which paddy has been sown with the help of 'Happy Seeder' machine and the number of machines required therefor, State-wise; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) the efforts being made by the States to utilise the 'Happy Seeder' machines during last three years, including the details of its sale?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The State-wise details of amount allocated and disbursed to farmers by Government to provide 'Happy Seeder' machine and 'Baler' since 2014-15 to 2017-18 in various schemes is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Happy Seeder Technology can be used to sow wheat directly in a combine harvested paddy field without removal of straw. The Happy Seeder machine is mostly used in the wheat growing States, such as, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Hence, the question of area of land in hectare on which paddy has been sown with the help of 'Happy Seeder' machine and the number of machines required therefore, State-wise does not arise and the information may be treated as Nil.

(d) To promote and popularize the various mechanization technology including Happy Seeder Technology, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) is providing ₹ 4000/- per hectare assistance to State Governments for demonstrations of technology under Sub Mission of Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM). The State Governments have conducted front line demonstrations, training and awareness programmes are broadcasted on All India Radio and Doordarshan.

Total 600 and 226 numbers of Happy Seeder machines are sold in Punjab and Haryana States respectively upto 2016-17.

Statement

Details of the funds allocated and released for Happy Seeder and Baler year wise, State-wise under various schemes of DAC&FW.

(₹ in lakhs)

State	Funds allocated/released for happy seeder				Funds allocated/released for baler			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Andhra Pradesh	-	-	-	-	69.3	567.90	357.76	-
Gujarat	-	-	-	-	-	6.64	5.14	-
Haryana	9.17	18.47	33.36	1340	0.63	-	1.0	402
Karnataka	-	-	-	-	-	28.90	53.55	150

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Punjab	21.60	25.92	30.36	-	-	-	-	437.50
Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	-	1.62	157.69	340.84	-
Telangana	-	-	-	-	-	50.75	3.5	-
Uttarakhand	-	-	-	2.58	-	-	-	-

Integrated Horticulture Mission in Chhattisgarh

†2907. DR. BHUSHAN LAL JANGDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Chhattisgarh has sent any proposal to the Central Government for approval of new Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs);

(b) whether approval of the Central Government is required for additional grants for the equipments useful for crop residue management in Chhattisgarh; and

(c) whether Central Government's approval is also required for implementing Integrated Horticulture Mission in all the districts of Chhattisgarh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The proposals have been received from Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya for setting up of new KVKs in Balod, Sukma and Kondagaon districts of Chhattisgarh. The Site Selection Committee has identified sites proposed for setting up of KVKs in Balod and Kondagaon. For Sukma district, the Visit of Site Selection Committee is scheduled in September 2017.

(b) No, Sir. However, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has formulated the "National Policy for Management of Crop Residues (NPMCR), 2014" and circulated to all States/UTs, to ensure prevention of burning of crop residues, by incentivizing purchase of modern machineries to minimize left-over crop residue in the field, in-situ conservation and mixing of residue in soil to increase soil fertility, multiple uses of crop residue, formulation of fodder pellets and briquettes.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a centrally sponsored scheme, is being implemented through States/UTs including Chhattisgarh w.e.f. 2014-15 for holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew and cocoa in the districts covered under the mission.

Inclusion of sugarcane under NFSM

†2908. DR. BHUSHAN LAL JANGDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugarcane has been included in the National Food Security Mission (NFSM) as a commercial crop;

(b) whether assistance is being provided to the crops of rice, wheat, pulses and small-grained paddy under centrally-sponsored NFSM being implemented in Chhattisgarh from the year 2007; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there are four sugar mills in Chhattisgarh and sugarcane is grown on 33807 hectare of land in Chhattisgarh, if so, whether Government would consider to bring sugarcane under the NFSM?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) Yes, Sir. Sugarcane has been included under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) as a commercial crop with cropping system approach to meet the demand for both food and cash crop, from 2014-15.

(b) Assistance is being provided for rice and pulses since 2007-08 and coarse cereals since 2014-15 under NFSM to Chhattisgarh State.

(c) At present four sugar mills are under operation in Chhattisgarh. The Normal area (average from 2011-12 to 2015-16) under sugarcane in Chhattisgarh is 17 thousand hectares. Presently, Chhattisgarh is not included under NFSM. The States have been given flexibility for crop development programme including sugarcane crop, States can undertake sugarcane development programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) with the approval of SLSC under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of the States.

Fertility of soil

2909. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has evaluated the fertility of soil/arable land across the country; and

(b) if so, the norms adopted for the purpose and the extent of deficiency of micronutrients noticed, State/UT-wise?

† 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) and (b) Soil Health Card Scheme is being implemented to assist all State Governments to evaluate fertility in all farm holdings across the country and issue soil health cards to farmers regularly in a cycle of 2 years. Soil health cards provide information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendations on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

The basic norms adopted for the purpose are:

- (i) The soil samples collection should be GIS based and
- (ii) In irrigated areas, samples will be drawn in a grid of 2.5 ha. in rainfed areas, sampling will be done in a 10 ha. grid.

The extent of micronutrient deficiency (Zinc, Iron, Manganese, Copper and Boron) in soils assessed under ICAR All India Coordinated Research Project on 'Micro and Secondary Nutrients and Pollutant Elements in Soils and Plants' state-wise is given in the Statement.

Statement

Deficiency of micronutrients in soils in different States of India

State	% samples deficient				
	Zn	Fe	Cu	Mn	B
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh	23.5	17.9	1.4	1.7	4.3
Assam	28.1	0.0	2.8	0.1	10.5
Bihar	45.4	12.4	3.2	9.1	38.9
Chhattisgarh	20.2	6.8	3.2	14.1	-
Gujarat	36.6	25.9	0.4	0.5	18.7
Haryana	15.4	21.7	5.2	6.2	3.2
Himachal Pradesh	8.0	0.5	1.2	7.3	-
Jharkhand	11.3	0.0	0.2	0.3	61.4
Karnataka	43.1	10.9	3.6	0.2	28.5
Kerala	18.3	1.2	0.4	3.6	31.2
Madhya Pradesh	65.9	8.8	0.5	2.4	1.8
Maharashtra	39.3	23.7	0.1	3.1	44.6

1	2	3	4	5	6
Odisha	29.2	8.0	8.3	2.6	45.7
Punjab	21.2	11.1	4.8	25.2	20.1
Rajasthan	56.5	34.4	9.2	28.3	22.0
Tamil Nadu	63.2	12.6	12.1	7.5	20.61
Uttar Pradesh	32.4	10.2	5.0	8.7	21.73
Uttarakhand	9.6	1.4	1.5	4.8	7.5
West Bengal	13.8	0.1	1.76	1.0	40.2

Payment by NAFED to state agencies of Rajasthan

2910. SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agencies of Government of Rajasthan, RAJFED and TILAM SANGH, were working as subsidiary institutions of NAFED during 2013-14;

(b) if so, whether Government has made all payment due to RAJFED and TILAM SANGH by NAFED for groundnut procured at MSP during 2013-14; and

(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) to (c) NAFED had procured Groundnut pods valuing ₹ 748.48 crores (MSP value) of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) specifications during the Kharif Marketing Season 2013-14 in Rajasthan through its State Level Supporters (SLSs), namely, RAJFED and TILAM SANGH. NAFED has released entire MSP value to RAJFED and TILAM SANGH for its onward payment to the farmers. An amount of ₹ 24.16 crores was payable to RAJFED towards incidental expenses, which has been fully paid to RAJFED. An amount of ₹ 41.83 crore was payable to TILAM SANGH towards incidental expenses against which ₹ 40.82 crore has already been paid. An amount of ₹ 1.01 crores is retained by NAFED, as TILAM SANGH has not made payment of handling and transportation charges to the Contractor of Dungargarh and Loonkarnsar centres. An amount of ₹ 3.47 crore (approx.) and ₹ 3.00 crore (approx.) after statutory deductions are payable to RAJFED and TILAM SANGH respectively towards administrative charges. As per the established procedure of NAFED, administrative and incidental charges are paid after satisfactory completion of required formalities and CAG audit of the accounts.

Implementation of Crop Insurance Scheme

2911. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the various crop insurance schemes under implementation in the country and the extent of their coverage;

(b) the number of farmers insured and benefitted under the various crop insurance schemes during the last three years and the current year, scheme and year-wise in the country as a whole and particularly in the States of Jharkhand and Gujarat; and

(c) the funds disbursed by Government/insurance companies under various crop insurance schemes to the States of Jharkhand and Gujarat and in the country as a whole, company-wise during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) At present, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS), Coconut Palm Insurance Scheme (CPIS) and Pilot Unified Package Insurance Scheme (UPIS) are under implementation in the country. As per provisional data available for 2016-17, about 574 lakh farmer applications were received, insuring an area of about 581 lakh hectare in both Kharif and Rabi seasons taken together.

(b) Details of number of farmers insured and benefitted under the various crop insurance schemes during the last three years and the current year are given in the Statement-I (*See* below).

(c) Under crop insurance schemes, Centre/States provide equal share in financial liabilities due to premium subsidy and/or claims as per provisions of specific scheme implemented from time to time. Details of Government of India's releases during 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 are given in the Statement-II.

Statement-I

Details of farmers insured/benefitted under crop insurance schemes during last three years and the current year (provisional)

(Figures in lakhs)

Scheme	All Country		Gujarat		Jharkhand	
	Farmers Insured	Farmers Benefitted	Farmers Insured	Farmers Benefitted	Farmers Insured	Farmers Benefitted
2014-15						
NAIS	167.38	63.81	6.61	1.92	0.65	0.05
MNAIS	90.89	31.99	Not implemented		0.35	0.02
WBCIS	112.52	96.24	Not implemented		1.59	1.59
CPIS	0.04	0.01	Not implemented		Not implemented	
PMFBY			Not Applicable (NA)			
RWBCIS			Not Applicable (NA)			
2015-16						
NAIS	308.8	175.98	5.04	3.64	5.9	3.95
MNAIS	86.16	40.45	Not implemented		Not implemented	
WBCIS	90.3		Not implemented		Not implemented	
CPIS	0.02	0.01	Not implemented		Not implemented	
PMFBY			Not Applicable (NA)			
RWBCIS			Not Applicable (NA)			
2016-17						
NAIS			Not Applicable			
MNAIS			Not Applicable			
WBCIS			Not Applicable			
CPIS	0.02	0	Not implemented		Not implemented	
PMFBY	540.72	67.85	20.68	1.26	8.29	0.4
RWBCIS	21.11	11.65	Not implemented		Not implemented	

NAIS: National Agricultural Insurance Scheme,

MNAIS: Modified NAIS,

WBCIS: Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme,

CPIS: Coconut Palm Insurance Scheme (CPIS),

PMFBY: Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana,

RWBCIS: Restructured WBCIS

Note: No data for current year is available as cut-off date for enrolment for Kharif 2017 under the scheme is 31.07.2017 in most of the States, which was over recently.

Statement-II

*Details of Government of India's releases during
2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18*

(₹ in crore)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
GOI releases for all India	2387.03	8191.12	7938.04	Not Available
GOI release for Gujarat	10.38	685.39	986.11	Not Available
GOI releases for Jharkhand	12.48	102.17	112.99	Not Available

GoI releases includes Premium subsidy and/or Claims as per provisions of the extant scheme.

Implementation of National Livestock Mission

2912. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated to various States by the Central Government during the last three years and the current year under the National Livestock Mission (NLM);

(b) whether Government has received any proposal from the State Governments to increase the sanctioned amount under NLM, the response of the Central Government to the proposal;

(c) whether Government has set up NLM from scheme mode to mission mode;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the objective behind the move; and

(e) the status of implementation of NLM?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) to (e) National Livestock Mission (NLM) was launched in 2014-15 by subsuming seven Centrally Sponsored and seven Central Sector schemes with the objective of sustainable growth and development of livestock sector, pig development in north-eastern region, increasing feed and fodder availability in the country, skill development and livestock extension. As per the design of NLM, projects are received from the States and Union Territories. Further as per budget provided in the beginning of the financial year, a tentative allocation of funds is made to all States and Union Territories. The States and Union Territories are asked to submit the proposals after approval of the State Level Sanctioning Committee headed by the Chief Secretary of the State as per the Guidelines. The proposals are examined within the Department and are further approved

by the Executive Committee headed by the Union Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries. The Mission is continuing during the current year 2017-18 with a budgetary allocation of ₹ 310 crore.

To achieve the objectives, the Mission is organised into the following four Sub-Missions:

- (I) Sub-Mission on Livestock Development
- (II) Sub-Mission on Pig Development in North-Eastern Region
- (III) Sub-Mission on Feed and Fodder Development
- (IV) Sub-Mission on Skill Development, Technology Transfer and Extension

The State-wise details of release of funds under National Livestock Mission during the last three years and current year 2017-18 are given in the Statement.

Statement

*State-wise release of funds under National Livestock Mission during
the last three years and the current year*

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	State/UT	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 as on 07.08.2017
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	-	-	4.30	-
2.	Andhra Pradesh	326.24	-	855.69	-
3.	Bihar	692.75	-	-	-
4.	Chandigarh	-	-	-	-
5.	Chhattisgarh	112.50	1034.63	460.98	-
6.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-	-	-	-
7.	Daman and Diu	-	-	-	-
8.	Goa	-	-	-	-
9.	Gujarat	1500.00	-	1195.80	2520.00
10.	Haryana	704.48	-	-	-
11.	Himachal Pradesh	285.18	-	186.992	-
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	-	-	-	-
13.	Jharkhand	700.00	-	218.00	-

1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Karnataka	-	746.49	873.00	-
15.	Kerala	-	-	104.28	-
16.	Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-
17.	Madhya Pradesh	1664.50	-	1278.96	-
18.	Maharashtra	827.42	500.00	1387.94	1199.83
19.	Odisha	525.69	519.65	715.93	-
20.	Punjab	393.50	-	343.70	-
21.	Rajasthan	-	438.82	872.15	-
22.	Tamil Nadu	1242.90	486.87	1165.00	-
23.	Telangana	276.74	-	602.84	-
24.	Uttar Pradesh	813.44	25.00	3042.00	-
25.	Uttarakhand	-	410.54	185.39	260.15
26.	West Bengal	2067.65	-	1061.36	-
NER States					
27.	Arunachal Pradesh	256.23	206.00	184.69	-
28.	Assam	452.38	-	-	-
29.	Manipur	-	55.24	173.90	-
30.	Meghalaya	143.25	87.14	269.22	-
31.	Mizoram	68.00	-	330.94	-
32.	Nagaland	619.11	454.26	465.24	-
33.	Sikkim	51.03	197.36	155.11	-
34.	Tripura	400.00	-	220.90	-
UTs with legislature					
35.	NCT of Delhi	-	-	-	-
36.	Puducherry	50.00	-	24.55	-
STATES/UT TOTAL		14173	5162	16375	3980
37.	EDEG	13949	4820	8496	8000
GRAND TOTAL		28122	9982	24870	11980

EDEG- Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation

Suicide by farmers in Jharkhand

2913. SHRI SANJIV KUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there has been report of farmers' suicide in Jharkhand in the recent past;
- (b) if so, whether Government has ascertained the reason for the same; and
- (c) the steps being taken to ensure that there is no recurrence of such incidents in Jharkhand in future?

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 on its website. The Report for the year 2016 has not been published yet. As per the ADSI Report for the year 2015, the number of suicides by farmers in the State of Jharkhand is nil.

(c) Presently, the focus of the Government is 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 for their produce and risks associated with farming is mitigated. The Department has been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, *viz.* Soil Health Card Scheme (SHC), Neem Coated Urea, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM) and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

In addition, the Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans of 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, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be made available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount.

Further, the Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes *viz.* National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH); National Mission on Oilseeds and Oilpalm (NMOOP); National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA); National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

The Government also 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 Minimum Support Price 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.

Import duty on wheat

†2914. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether amid projections of a bumper wheat crop this year and considering the fact that the import duty on wheat had been reduced to zero from 10 per cent on the 8th December, 2016, Government is considering to impose import duty on wheat to safeguard the interests of the farmers, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government is planning to procure wheat on large scale in order to ensure MSP for farmers through FCI on new crop arrival, if so, the details of proposal, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) Government has raised import duty on wheat from zero to 10% with effect from 28th March, 2017 to safeguard the interests of the farmers.

(b) During Rabi Marketing Season 2017-18, 308 lakh tons of wheat have been procured for central pool stock at MSP. The details of state-wise procurement of wheat for marketing year 2017-18 are given below:

(Quantity in ton)

State	Procurement
Punjab	11704816
Haryana	7410580
Uttar Pradesh	3699172
Madhya Pradesh	6724286
Rajasthan	1244858
Uttarakhand	2404
Chandigarh	7600

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

State	Procurement
Gujarat	6493
Himachal Pradesh	460
TOTAL INDIA	30800669

Shifting of farmers towards farming of cash crops

2915. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers are shifting from growing oilseeds and pulses to cotton and maize, if so, details thereof, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that this shift towards cash crops is because of lower MSPs of oilseeds and pulses in the mandis, if so, details thereof, if not, reasons therefor;

(c) if so, the plans of Government to control this migration which may result in scarcity of oilseeds and pulses; and

(d) the details regarding rejuvenation of National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The status of area of oilseeds and pulses during last three years indicates increasing trend, and as such, no area has been shifted from oilseeds and pulses to cotton and maize. The details of area is given below:

(Lakh hectares)

Crops	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17*
Oilseeds	256.0	260.9	264.7
Pulses	235.5	249.1	292.8

*3rd advance estimates of DES.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) Government of India is providing adequate inputs, technical and logistic support to increase area and production of pulses and oilseeds. The major steps under NFSM as well as NMOOP includes age relaxation of varieties/hybrids; enhancement of subsidy on seeds; supply of seed minikits of pulses and oilseeds; water carrying pipes/micro irrigation for improving the water use efficiency; involvement of KVKs in cluster front line demonstrations (FLDs) across the country and setting up of seed hubs for pulses.

Change in land use from agriculture to non-agriculture purposes

2916. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the percentage of land under agriculture farming is far less now than what it was during the Independence;

(b) if so, the reasons for change in land use from agriculture to non-agriculture purposes;

(c) whether the change in land use was done by seeking proper permission from the authorities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, what action has the Government taken against those who have changed the land use without proper permission, thereby affecting the aggregate national crop production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) As per report on Land Use Statistics 2014-15 (latest available), the area under agriculture farming (Agricultural Land) in the country during 1950-51 was 189.6 Million Hectare while in 2014-15 the same is 181.9 Million Hectare showing marginal decline. The reduction in agricultural land has been mainly due to diversion of land for non-agricultural purposes such as urbanization, roads, industries, housing etc.

(c) and (d) As per Seventh Schedule of Constitution of India, land comes under the purview of State Government and, therefore, it is for the State Governments 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 development 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. The IWMP has been converted to the Watershed Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) from the financial year 2015-16.

Further, Government of India is 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 types of land including wastelands/barren land are developed with suitable need based soil and water conservation measures and parts of such degraded lands developed are put to agricultural practices, leading to net sown area remaining largely unchanged around 141 million ha. in last two decades.

Promoting fish production in the country

2917. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) proposes to develop a biosecure brood bank for high value finfish breeding and seed production programme, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to promote open sea cage farming across maritime States to boost fish production in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research—Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (ICAR-CMFRI) has proposed to establish bio-secure brood bank for breeding and seed production programme of cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*) and silver pompano (*Trachinotus blochii*) at its Mandapam Regional Centre and Vizhinjam Research Centre respectively, with financial support from the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DADF), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to promote open sea cage farming are:—

- The ICAR-CMFRI is providing technical know-how and training to the farmers for establishing cage farms. Further, under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) component, the institute is providing cages, seed and feed as inputs to the farmers.
- The DADF is providing 50% subsidy to the maritime states for open sea cage farming under their Central Sector Scheme on Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries having a component on 'Open sea cage culture'.
- The National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Ministry of Earth Sciences has designed 9m. diameter cages with multi-point mooring system, customized to withstand the Indian high sea conditions.

- The Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Aquaculture (RGCA) under the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has established sea cage farming facilities for demonstration and dissemination of cage aquaculture technology to the farmers and for broodstock development of high value marine finfish species.

Admission in Anand Agricultural University

2918. MAHANT SHAMBHUPRASADJI TUNDIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state whether Government allows the students of Gujarat Technological University to take admission in Anand Agricultural University and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): No, Sir. The matter comes under the purview of the State Government.

Free of cost medicines for poor people

†2919. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the date from which there has been decline in the prices of drugs after the efforts made by Government, the details thereof;

(b) the number of life-saving drugs and the extent to which their prices have been reduced;

(c) by when the target of providing free drugs to the poor people will be achieved; and

(d) whether Government has identified areas for this purpose, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) and (b) Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013) came into effect from 15/05/2013. National List of Essential Medicines 2011 (NLEM-2011) was adopted as the original Schedule I of DPCO, 2013. Subsequently, in March 2016, National List of Essential Medicines 2015 (NLEM-2015) was notified as Schedule I of DPCO, 2013. Government fixed the ceiling prices of 530 scheduled medicines under Original Schedule I of the DPCO, 2013 and 761 scheduled formulations/packs under Revised Schedule I.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement showing reduction in price with respect to maximum price under original Schedule I (NLEM-2011)

% reduction with respect to Maximum Price	No. of drugs
0<= 5%	80
5<=10%	50
10<=15%	57
15<=20%	43
20<=25%	65
25<=30%	49
30<=35%	26
35<=40%	34
Above 40%	126
	530

Statement showing reduction in ceiling prices of scheduled formulations with respect to maximum price under NELM 2015

% reduction with respect to Maximum Price	No. of scheduled formulations
0<= 5%	189
5<=10%	122
10<=15%	93
15<=20%	89
20<=25%	82
25<=30%	61
30<=35%	43
35<=40%	24
Above 40%	58
TOTAL	761

(c) and (d) Public Health being a state subject, it is for the States/UTs to draw up such action plans as per their need. Under the National Health Mission (NHM), financial support is provided to the States/UTs for strengthening their healthcare delivery system including support for provision of free drugs to those who access public health facilities based on the requirement posed by the States/UTs in their Programme Implementation Plans. An incentive of upto 5% additional funding (over

and above the normal allocation of the State) under the NHM is provided to those States that introduce free medicines scheme.

Under the NHM-free drug service initiative, substantial funding is available to States for provision of free drugs, subject to States/UTs meeting certain specific conditions. The number of free drugs provided by the States varies from State to State and most States have their own list of essential medicines.

Appointment of Judicial Officers

2920. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking steps for recruiting more judicial officers for speedy trial of pending cases, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps Government is taking to dispose of the pending cases for speedy justice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) Though appointment of Judges and Judicial Officers in the District and Subordinate Courts falls within the domain of the High Courts and State Governments concerned in which the Central Government has no role, in order to facilitate regular filling up of these vacancies in a smooth and time-bound manner, the Department of Justice *vide* its letter dated 28th April, 2017 suggested certain options to the Hon'ble Supreme Court for creation and operation of the Central Selection Mechanism. The Hon'ble Supreme Court *suo motu* converted the Government's letter dated 28th April, 2017 into a writ petition on 09th May, 2017 and directed all State Governments (including Union Territories) to file their responses and suggestions by way of affidavits. The above matter is *subjudice* at present.

(b) 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 court infrastructure including computerisation, increase in the strength of subordinate judiciary and initiating policy and legislative measures in the areas prone to excessive litigation and emphasis on human resource development.

In addition to the above, following steps have also been taken by the Central Government in the matter.

- (i) The sanctioned strength of Judges of High Courts has been increased from 906 judges to 1079 judges. Total 173 posts were sanctioned between June 2014 and May, 2016.

- (ii) The sanctioned strength of the subordinate judiciary has been increased from 20,174 at the end of 2014 to 22,288 in December, 2016.
- (iii) National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) provides mechanisms for access to justice for poor people in India, under the overall supervision of the Chief Justice of India as the Patron-in Chief. It organised the National Lok Adalat in July, 2017. More than 9.97 lakh cases including 5.33 lakh pending cases and 4.64 lakhs pre-litigation cases with the settlement amount of ₹ 2,925 crores were disposed.
- (iv) 1824 redundant Central Acts have been identified for repeal. So far, 1200 Acts have been repealed.
- (v) The Government has launched a nation-wide drive to reduce the number of cases pending in courts by curtailing the Government litigation. The Minister of Law and Justice has written on 10th April, 2017 to all Ministers of Central Ministries and Chief Ministers of States to launch 'special arrears clearance drives' to reduce pending cases and minimize fresh litigations.
- (vi) Based on the proposals received from the High Court Collegium, during the year 2016, 126 fresh appointment of Judges in High Courts and 131 Additional Judges were made permanent, which is the highest number of appointments made in a given year. In addition, the tenure of 22 Additional Judges of High Courts was also extended. Besides, based on the proposal received from the Supreme Court Collegium, 4 judges were appointed in the Supreme Court in 2016. During the current year (2017), 05 Judges have been appointed in the Supreme Court, 75 Judges have been appointed in the High Courts and 28 Additional Judges have been made Permanent. Besides, 08 Chief Justices have been appointed in the High Courts.
- (vii) The 14th Finance Commission has endorsed the proposal to strengthen the judicial system in States which includes, *inter alia*, establishing 1800 Fast Track Courts (FTCs) for a period of five years for cases of heinous crimes; cases involving senior citizens, women, children, disabled and litigants affected with HIV AIDS and other terminal ailments; and civil disputes involving land acquisition and property/rent disputes pending for more than five years at a cost of ₹ 4,144 crores. The 14th Finance Commission has urged State Governments to use the additional fiscal space provided by the Commission in the tax devolution to meet such requirements. The Hon'ble Minister for Law and Justice has written to all Chief Ministers on 2nd May, 2017 to make available the fund recommended by the 14th Finance Commission to judiciary and to furnish the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission.

- (viii) As per the resolution adopted in the Joint Conference held in New Delhi on 24th April, 2016, the Government *vide* its letter dated 26th September, 2016 requested the State Governments to strengthen the institutional mechanism between the State and the Judiciary where the Chief Secretary and his team and 2 or 3 Judges of the High Court to regularly meet and monitor utilisation of plan fund and timely completion of infrastructure and eCourts Mission Mode project. The States have also been requested to assist Judiciary in preparing perspective/annual plan for various activities to be undertaken in the justice sector on account of enhanced devolution of funds to the States under the 14th Finance Commission. In addition, the States were requested to provide technical manpower for ICT upgradation.
- (ix) The Government *vide* a letter dated 3rd February 2017, addressed the Chief Justices of the 24 High Courts requesting them to advise the district judiciary to ensure effective implementation of Section 436A Code of Criminal Procedure and ensure periodic monitoring of the associated Undertrial Review Committee Mechanism.
- (x) Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Court Act, 2015 has been notified on 1st January, 2016 to have a streamlined procedure for the conduct of cases in the Commercial Division and in the Commercial Court by amending the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (CPC) for commercial cases so as to improve the efficiency and reduce delays in disposal of commercial cases.
- (xi) Necessary amendments have been made to Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 to make the award within 12 months, to resolve the dispute through fast track procedure, to ensure neutrality of arbitrators, and to restrict usage of the term 'Public Policy of India' (as a ground for challenging the award).
- (xii) The Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Act 2015 has been notified to clarify the jurisdiction where cases pertaining to dishonour of cheque may be filed and provide for transfer of cases to the appropriate jurisdiction and consolidation of multiple cases filed in different courts.
- (xiii) The Minister of State for Law and Justice *vide* letter dated 7th February 2017, addressed the Chief Justices of all the High Courts requesting them to speed up the process of implementation of e-Court Project for actualising the objectives of the Project.
- (xiv) The Government has approved a scheme of engaging 227 Nyaya Mitras in States where there are large number of pendency of court cases. The Nyaya Mitras are required to assist the litigants who are suffering due to

delay in investigations or trial, by actively identifying such cases through the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG). These Nyaya Mitras are meant to identify the bottlenecks due to which these cases are delayed.

- (xv) The Government has also approved 'two legal aid and empowerment' initiatives: 'Pro bono legal services' and 'Tele Law service'. Under the Pro bono legal services an online database of lawyers and eligible litigants has been created. As on date 140 lawyers have enrolled under the scheme to provide free legal aid to marginalized persons. Under the Tele Law service, legal aid is mainstreamed through 1800 Common Services Centres in selected Panchayats in U.P., Bihar and States of North East and Jammu and Kashmir. As on date a total of 568 cases have been registered in Tele Law portal for legal aid.
- (xvi) In pursuance of resolution passed in the Chief Justices' Conference held in April, 2015, High Courts have set up Arrears Committees to clear the backlog of cases pending for more than five years. The Supreme Court has also constituted an Arrears Committee consisting of two Hon'ble Judges to formulate steps to reduce pendency of cases in High Courts and District Courts.
- (xvii) The Minister of State for Law and Justice has also written to all Chief Ministers on July 19, 2017 to use additional fiscal space provided by 14th Finance Commission to set up Special Courts especially for handing cases pertaining to the crimes against women.

Withdrawal of stents by Abbott

2921. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the multinational pharmaceutical company, Abbott, has decided to withdraw two of its high-end stents as a result of the capping of price of stents by Government in February this year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) and (b) M/s Abbott Healthcare Pvt. Ltd, had submitted discontinuation application to NPPA in respect of 'Absorb GT1-Bioresorbable Vascular Scaffold (BVS) stent on the ground of commercial unviability post fixation of ceiling price. National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority *vide* order dated 21/02/2017 under para 3 of the Drugs Prices Control Order, 2013 rejected the application and directed the company to maintain uninterrupted supply of all coronary stents for six months from the date of the order in public interest.

Controlling the prices of Life Saving Medicines

2922. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any action to control prices of life saving medicines;

(b) whether Government contemplates to open Government medical stores in all cities of the country for providing such medicines to the common man at controlled fair rates and whether some such medical stores have already been opened; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) The Drug (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013), does not contain any word such as life saving medicines. However, the Schedule-I of this Order contains medicines which are appearing in National List of Essential Medicines announced and amended by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare from time to time. The ceiling prices of these medicines are fixed by the Government and no manufacturer can sell their product beyond the ceiling price fixed by the Government.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) In view of reply to (b) above, question does not arise.

Incentivizing domestic production of fertilizers

2923. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that overall domestic output of fertilizers has been going up for the past three years while imports are falling;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government has been very proactive by introducing reforms from time to time to help production pick up pace as in the case of the new urea policy; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is incentivizing production beyond reassessed capacity, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Yes, Sir. The overall

domestic output/ production of fertilizers has risen in the country during the last three years, these are given below:—

(Figure in 'LMT')

Year	Production
2014-15	385.39
2015-16	413.14
2016-17	413.99

Urea is the only fertilizer under statutory price control and its import is restricted and permitted through State Trading Enterprises (STEs), namely Metals and Mineral Trading Corporation of India (MMTC), State Trading Corporation Limited (STC) and Indian Potash Limited (IPL), under the Foreign Trade Policy of the Government. Urea for direct agricultural use is imported on Government account to bridge the gap between assessed demand and indigenous production. Government is also importing approximately 20 lakh Metric Tonnes urea from Oman India Fertilizer Company (OMIFCO) under Long Term Urea Off Take Agreement (UOTA) between GOI and OIMIFCO.

Import of fertilizers (other than Urea) is free, commonly known as Open General License (OGL). Various companies import these fertilizers as per their commercial judgement. Muriate of Potash (MOP) is the only fertilizer, demand for which is fully met through imports as there are no viable sources of MOP in the country. The production and import of fertilizers in comparison to last three years is as below:

(Figures in LMT)

Year	Urea		DAP		NPK		MOP#
	Import	Prod.	Import	Prod.	Import	Prod.	Import
2014-15	87.49	225.85	38.53	34.44	2.91	78.32	41.97
2015-16	84.74	244.75	60.08	37.87	6.29	83.01	32.43
2016-17	54.81	242.01	43.85	43.65	5.21	79.49	37.36

#MOP includes industrial and agriculture uses.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has notified the New Urea Policy (NUP)-2015 on 25th May, 2015 for existing 25 gas based urea units with the objectives of maximizing indigenous urea production; promoting energy efficiency in urea production; and rationalizing subsidy burden on the government. NUP-2015 has led to additional production of approximately 20 LMT as compared to 2014-15, from the existing gas based urea plants and the total production of urea during the year 2015-16 was 244.75 LMT, *i.e.* the highest ever urea production in the country. The indigenous urea production for 2016-17 was 242.01 LMT.

(c) Yes, Sir. As per para 5 of the New Urea Policy-2015 dated, 2015, for production of urea beyond RAC, the units are entitled for their respective variable cost and a uniform per MT incentive equal to the lowest of the per MT fixed costs of all the indigenous urea units subject to import parity price plus weighted average of other incidental charges which the government incurs on the imported urea. A further amendment was incorporated for production of urea beyond RAC during 2016-17 such that units were entitled beyond their respective variable cost and a uniform per MT incentive equal to the lowest of the per MT fixed cost of all indigenous urea units subject to sum of import parity price, other incidental changes which the Government incurs in the import of urea and weighted average of Central Government levies of urea paid by the urea manufacturing units.

Reclaiming of IFFCO by Government

2924. SARDAR BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that jurisdiction of Indian Farmers and Fertilizers Cooperative (IFFCO) is covered under the ambit of Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), if so, the complete details in this regard; and

(b) whether Government is mulling over to reclaim IFFCO by regaining control of shares returned by IFFCO in 2001 and bring back IFFCO under Government umbrella, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) *vide* O.M No. 399/9/2010-AVD-III dated 01.02.2013 had clarified that Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is duly empowered to exercise jurisdiction over National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) and Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd. (KRIBHCO), and similar societies under Section 8(1) of the CVC Act, 2003. However, Hon'ble High Court of Delhi *vide* order dated 16.08.2016 in W.P.(C) No.2070/2013 filed by Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Ltd. (IFFCO) and W.P.(C) No.2616/2013 filed by KRIBHCO, *inter alia*, observed that O.M. No. 399/9/2010-AVD-III dated 01.02.2013 issued by Department of Personnel and Training does not survive. Further action is being taken by DoPT based on legal advice.

(b) The repatriation of Government of India equity by IFFCO is disputed as it was done in violation of the then IFFCO by-laws which was illegally and unlawfully amended by IFFCO.

Status of PMBJP Kendras

2925. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of implementation of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) in the country;
- (b) the details of PMBJP Kendras opened in various States, district-wise;
- (c) the reasons for not achieving the target of setting up of 3000 Kendras by the end of March, 2017;
- (d) whether Ministry realized that there are supply problems; and
- (e) if so, how it is planning to address the same and how many such Kendras have been closed down during the last two years along with the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) As on 09.08.2017, 2163 'Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) Kendras' are functional in 31 States/UTs across the country. At present, the scheme covers more than 600 medicines and 154 surgicals and consumables in its product basket covering all major therapeutic groups like Anti-infectives, Anti-diabetics, Anti-cancers, Cardiovasculars, Gastro-intestinal medicines, etc.

(b) The State-wise and District-wise list of 2163 functional PMBJP Kendras is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) The target of opening of 3,000 PMBJP Kendras upto March, 2017 could not be achieved initially due to lack of awareness about the Scheme among the public at large. However, as on date, 2163 Kendras have been opened and scheme is progressing well.

(d) The supply chain management has been improved and there is no supply problem at present.

(e) BPPI has appointed 55 Distributors and 8 Carrying and Forwarding (C&F) Agents in different States of the country for streamlining the proper supply chain of the scheme. As on 07.08.2017, 2249 PMBJP Kendras have been opened across the country. Out of 2249 PMBJP Kendras, 2156 are functional in 31 States/UTs of the country. The remaining 93 PMBJP Kendras which are not functional, have been closed due to economic reasons.

Statement*State-wise and District-wise list of 2163 functional PMBJP Kendras*

Sl. No.	State	District	Number of PMBJP Kendras
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Anantapur	4
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Chittoor	13
3.	Andhra Pradesh	East Godavari	3
4.	Andhra Pradesh	Guntur	14
5.	Andhra Pradesh	YSR Kadapa	3
6.	Andhra Pradesh	Krishna	5
7.	Andhra Pradesh	Kurnool	4
8.	Andhra Pradesh	Potti sriramulu Nellore	8
9.	Andhra Pradesh	Prakasam	5
10.	Andhra Pradesh	Srikakulam	5
11.	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam	13
12.	Andhra Pradesh	Vizianagaram	5
13.	Andhra Pradesh	West Godavari	21
14.	Arunachal Pradesh	Papumpare	3
15.	Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang	2
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	Lohit	1
17.	Arunachal Pradesh	West Siang	1
18.	Arunachal Pradesh	Tirap	1
19.	Arunachal Pradesh	East Siang	2
20.	Arunachal Pradesh	Kurung Kumey	1
21.	Arunachal Pradesh	Upper Subansiri	1
22.	Arunachal Pradesh	Lower Subansiri	1
23.	Arunachal Pradesh	East Kameng	2
24.	Arunachal Pradesh	Tawang	1
25.	Arunachal Pradesh	Upper Siang	1
26.	Arunachal Pradesh	Anjaw	1
27.	Arunachal Pradesh	Dibang Valley	1

1	2	3	4
28.	Arunachal Pradesh	Namsai	1
29.	Arunachal Pradesh	Siang	1
30.	Assam	Barpeta	12
31.	Assam	Bongaigaon	2
32.	Assam	Cachar	2
33.	Assam	Darrang	2
34.	Assam	Dhemaji	2
35.	Assam	Dhubri	1
36.	Assam	Dibrugarh	1
37.	Assam	Dima Hasao	1
38.	Assam	Goalpara	4
39.	Assam	Hojai	2
40.	Assam	Jorhat	1
41.	Assam	Kamrup	6
42.	Assam	Karbi Anglong	1
43.	Assam	Lakhimpur	2
44.	Assam	Nagaon	2
45.	Assam	Nalbari	2
46.	Bihar	Araria	2
47.	Bihar	Begusarai	1
48.	Bihar	Bhojpur	2
49.	Bihar	Buxar	1
50.	Bihar	East Champaran	4
51.	Bihar	Gaya	3
52.	Bihar	Gopalganj	1
53.	Bihar	Jehanabad	1
54.	Bihar	Kishanganj	1
55.	Bihar	Katihar	1
56.	Bihar	Munger	1
57.	Bihar	Muzaffarpur	3

1	2	3	4
58.	Bihar	Nalanda	1
59.	Bihar	Patna	6
60.	Bihar	Rohtas	1
61.	Bihar	Samastipur	3
62.	Bihar	Saran	1
63.	Bihar	Vaishali	5
64.	Bihar	West Champaran	1
65.	Chhattisgarh	Balod	5
66.	Chhattisgarh	Baloda Bazar	7
67.	Chhattisgarh	Balrampur	6
68.	Chhattisgarh	Bemetara	6
69.	Chhattisgarh	Bijapur	2
70.	Chhattisgarh	Bilaspur	12
71.	Chhattisgarh	Dantewada	1
72.	Chhattisgarh	Dhamtari	5
73.	Chhattisgarh	Durg	5
74.	Chhattisgarh	Gariyaband	8
75.	Chhattisgarh	Jagdalpur (Madhya Bastar)	7
76.	Chhattisgarh	Janjgir-Champa	12
77.	Chhattisgarh	Jashpur	6
78.	Chhattisgarh	Kabirdham	2
79.	Chhattisgarh	Kanker	5
80.	Chhattisgarh	Kondagaon	6
81.	Chhattisgarh	Korba	7
82.	Chhattisgarh	Koriya	10
83.	Chhattisgarh	Mahasamund	6
84.	Chhattisgarh	Mungeli	3
85.	Chhattisgarh	Narayanpur	2
86.	Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	11
87.	Chhattisgarh	Raipur	11

1	2	3	4
88.	Chhattisgarh	Rajnandgaon	10
89.	Chhattisgarh	Sukma	1
90.	Chhattisgarh	Surajpur	8
91.	Chhattisgarh	Surguja	7
92.	Gujarat	Ahmedabad	25
93.	Gujarat	Amreli	2
94.	Gujarat	Anand	6
95.	Gujarat	Aravalli	2
96.	Gujarat	Banaskantha	5
97.	Gujarat	Bharuch	2
98.	Gujarat	Bhavnagar	5
99.	Gujarat	Chhota Udaipur	1
100.	Gujarat	Devbhoomi Dwarka	1
101.	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	13
102.	Gujarat	Gir Somnath	4
103.	Gujarat	Jamnagar	2
104.	Gujarat	Junagadh	14
105.	Gujarat	Kutch	3
106.	Gujarat	Kheda	4
107.	Gujarat	Mahisagar	3
108.	Gujarat	Mehsana	7
109.	Gujarat	Morbi	2
110.	Gujarat	Narmada	1
111.	Gujarat	Navsari	2
112.	Gujarat	Patan	5
113.	Gujarat	Porbandar	1
114.	Gujarat	Rajkot	17
115.	Gujarat	Sabarkantha	9
116.	Gujarat	Surat	30
117.	Gujarat	Surendranagar	4
118.	Gujarat	Tapi	2

1	2	3	4
119.	Gujarat	Vadodara	11
120.	Gujarat	Valsad	5
121.	Haryana	Bhiwani	4
122.	Haryana	Faridabad	1
123.	Haryana	Gurugram	3
124.	Haryana	Hisar	12
125.	Haryana	Jhajjar	1
126.	Haryana	Kaithal	1
127.	Haryana	Karnal	1
128.	Haryana	Kurukshetra	2
129.	Haryana	Nuh	1
130.	Haryana	Palwal	2
131.	Haryana	Panipat	5
132.	Haryana	Rewari	1
133.	Haryana	Sirsa	7
134.	Haryana	Sonipat	4
135.	Haryana	Yamuna Nagar	1
136.	Himachal Pradesh	Bilaspur	5
137.	Himachal Pradesh	Chamba	1
138.	Himachal Pradesh	Hamirpur	1
139.	Himachal Pradesh	Kangra	4
140.	Himachal Pradesh	Kullu	3
141.	Himachal Pradesh	Mandi	2
142.	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	3
143.	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmaur	2
144.	Himachal Pradesh	Solan	1
145.	Himachal Pradesh	Una	1
146.	Jammu and Kashmir	Doda	1
147.	Jammu and Kashmir	Jammu	4
148.	Jammu and Kashmir	Kathua	1
149.	Jammu and Kashmir	Ramban	1

1	2	3	4
150.	Jammu and Kashmir	Reasi	1
151.	Jammu and Kashmir	Udhampur	1
152.	Jammu and Kashmir	Anantnag	1
153.	Jammu and Kashmir	Budgam	2
154.	Jammu and Kashmir	Kulgam	1
155.	Jammu and Kashmir	Kupwara	1
156.	Jammu and Kashmir	Pulwama	1
157.	Jammu and Kashmir	Shopian	1
158.	Jammu and Kashmir	Srinagar	5
159.	Jammu and Kashmir	Kargil	1
160.	Jammu and Kashmir	Leh	1
161.	Jharkhand	Ranchi	9
162.	Jharkhand	Dhanbad	1
163.	Jharkhand	Purbi Singhbhum	1
164.	Jharkhand	Bokaro	4
165.	Jharkhand	Hazaribagh	5
166.	Jharkhand	Pashchimi Singhbhum	2
167.	Jharkhand	Deoghar	3
168.	Jharkhand	Garhwa	2
169.	Jharkhand	Dumka	2
170.	Jharkhand	Sahibganj	1
171.	Jharkhand	Saraikela Kharsawan	1
172.	Jharkhand	Chatra	1
173.	Jharkhand	Gumla	1
174.	Jharkhand	Ramgarh	2
175.	Jharkhand	Jamtara	1
176.	Jharkhand	Latehar	1
177.	Jharkhand	Koderma	1
178.	Jharkhand	Simdega	1
179.	Jharkhand	Lohardaga	1
180.	Karnataka	Bagalkot	5

1	2	3	4
181.	Karnataka	Bengaluru Urban	9
182.	Karnataka	Bengaluru Rural	5
183.	Karnataka	Belagavi	5
184.	Karnataka	Bidar	9
185.	Karnataka	Chamarajanagar	2
186.	Karnataka	Chikballapur	1
187.	Karnataka	Chikkamagaluru	6
188.	Karnataka	Chitradurga	2
189.	Karnataka	Dakshina Kannada	6
190.	Karnataka	Devangere	10
191.	Karnataka	Dharwad	3
192.	Karnataka	Gadag	3
193.	Karnataka	Kalaburagi	6
194.	Karnataka	Hassan	2
195.	Karnataka	Haveri	3
196.	Karnataka	Kodagu	1
197.	Karnataka	Kolar	3
198.	Karnataka	Koppal	2
199.	Karnataka	Mandya	5
200.	Karnataka	Mysore	12
201.	Karnataka	Raichur	5
202.	Karnataka	Ramanagara	2
203.	Karnataka	Shivamogga	4
204.	Karnataka	Tumkur	10
205.	Karnataka	Udupi	5
206.	Karnataka	Yadgir	4
207.	Kerala	Malappuram	12
208.	Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	34
209.	Kerala	Ernakulam	32
210.	Kerala	Thrissur	54
211.	Kerala	Kozhikode	18

1	2	3	4
212.	Kerala	Palakkad	20
213.	Kerala	Kollam	22
214.	Kerala	Kannur	12
215.	Kerala	Alappuzha	16
216.	Kerala	Kottayam	22
217.	Kerala	Kasaragod	1
218.	Kerala	Pathanamthitta	10
219.	Kerala	Idukki	8
220.	Kerala	Wayanad	2
221.	Madhya Pradesh	Ashok Nagar	1
222.	Madhya Pradesh	Balaghat	1
223.	Madhya Pradesh	Bhind	1
224.	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	4
225.	Madhya Pradesh	Chhatarpur	2
226.	Madhya Pradesh	Chhindwara	2
227.	Madhya Pradesh	Damoh	3
228.	Madhya Pradesh	Dewas	2
229.	Madhya Pradesh	Guna	1
230.	Madhya Pradesh	Gwalior	5
231.	Madhya Pradesh	Hoshangabad	1
232.	Madhya Pradesh	Indore	5
233.	Madhya Pradesh	Jabalpur	4
234.	Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	2
235.	Madhya Pradesh	Khandwa	1
236.	Madhya Pradesh	Khargone	1
237.	Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	1
238.	Madhya Pradesh	Narsinghpur	1
239.	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	1
240.	Madhya Pradesh	Raisen	1
241.	Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	3
242.	Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam	2

1	2	3	4
243.	Madhya Pradesh	Rewa	2
244.	Madhya Pradesh	Sagar	3
245.	Madhya Pradesh	Satna	2
246.	Madhya Pradesh	Seoni	2
247.	Madhya Pradesh	Singrauli	1
248.	Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	2
249.	Madhya Pradesh	Sidhi	2
250.	Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh	1
251.	Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain	2
252.	Madhya Pradesh	Vidisha	1
253.	Maharashtra	Ahmednagar	4
254.	Maharashtra	Akola	8
255.	Maharashtra	Amravati	4
256.	Maharashtra	Aurangabad	5
257.	Maharashtra	Beed	10
258.	Maharashtra	Bhandara	1
259.	Maharashtra	Buldhana	4
260.	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	3
261.	Maharashtra	Dhule	8
262.	Maharashtra	Gondia	1
263.	Maharashtra	Hingoli	1
264.	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	6
265.	Maharashtra	Jalna	10
266.	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	7
267.	Maharashtra	Latur	18
268.	Maharashtra	Mumbai City	3
269.	Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	4
270.	Maharashtra	Nagpur	2
271.	Maharashtra	Nanded	5
272.	Maharashtra	Nandurbar	2
273.	Maharashtra	Nashik	6

1	2	3	4
274.	Maharashtra	Osmanabad	3
275.	Maharashtra	Parbhani	5
276.	Maharashtra	Pune	11
277.	Maharashtra	Raigad	2
278.	Maharashtra	Sangli	5
279.	Maharashtra	Satara	5
280.	Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	1
281.	Maharashtra	Solapur	4
282.	Maharashtra	Thane	10
283.	Maharashtra	Wardha	1
284.	Maharashtra	Yavatmal	5
285.	Manipur	Bishnupur	3
286.	Manipur	Thoubal	6
287.	Manipur	Imphal East	3
288.	Manipur	Imphal West	4
289.	Manipur	Senapati	2
290.	Manipur	Ukhrul	1
291.	Manipur	Chandel	3
292.	Manipur	Churachandpur	1
293.	Manipur	Tamenglong	1
294.	Manipur	Jiribam	1
295.	Manipur	Kangpokpi	1
296.	Manipur	Kakching	2
297.	Manipur	Kamjong	1
298.	Manipur	Noney	1
299.	Mizoram	Aizawl	5
300.	Mizoram	Lunglei	1
301.	Nagaland	Dimapur	1
302.	Nagaland	Kohima	1
303.	Nagaland	Mon	1
304.	Nagaland	Tuensang	1

1	2	3	4
305.	Nagaland	Mokokchung	1
306.	Nagaland	Wokha	1
307.	Nagaland	Phek	1
308.	Nagaland	Zunheboto	1
309.	Nagaland	Peren	1
310.	Nagaland	Kiphire	1
311.	Nagaland	Longleng	1
312.	Odisha	Angul	4
313.	Odisha	Boudh	1
314.	Odisha	Bargarh	1
315.	Odisha	Balasore	1
316.	Odisha	Bhadrak	2
317.	Odisha	Cuttack	1
318.	Odisha	Dhenkanal	1
319.	Odisha	Ganjam	8
320.	Odisha	Gajapati	1
321.	Odisha	Jajpur	2
322.	Odisha	Khordha	4
323.	Odisha	Keonjhar	3
324.	Odisha	Kalahandi	1
325.	Odisha	Kandhamal	3
326.	Odisha	Koraput	2
327.	Odisha	Malkangiri	1
328.	Odisha	Mayurbhanj	2
329.	Odisha	Nabarangpur	1
330.	Odisha	Nuapada	2
331.	Odisha	Nayagarh	1
332.	Odisha	Puri	2
333.	Punjab	Amritsar	6
334.	Punjab	Barnala	4
335.	Punjab	Bathinda	5

1	2	3	4
336.	Punjab	Faridkot	1
337.	Punjab	Firozpur	2
338.	Punjab	Fazilka	2
339.	Punjab	Gurdaspur	1
340.	Punjab	Hoshiarpur	1
341.	Punjab	Jalandhar	2
342.	Punjab	Kapurthala	2
343.	Punjab	Ludhiana	8
344.	Punjab	Mansa	4
345.	Punjab	Moga	2
346.	Punjab	Sri Muktsar Sahib	3
347.	Punjab	Pathankot	1
348.	Punjab	Patiala	6
349.	Punjab	Rupnagar	1
350.	Punjab	Sangrur	3
351.	Punjab	Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar	2
352.	Punjab	Tarn Taran	2
353.	Rajasthan	Ajmer	2
354.	Rajasthan	Alwar	4
355.	Rajasthan	Banswara	2
356.	Rajasthan	Barmer	2
357.	Rajasthan	Bharatpur	2
358.	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	5
359.	Rajasthan	Bikaner	1
360.	Rajasthan	Churu	3
361.	Rajasthan	Dausa	1
362.	Rajasthan	Dungarpur	1
363.	Rajasthan	Hanumangarh	2
364.	Rajasthan	Jaipur	15
365.	Rajasthan	Jalore	2
366.	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	1

1	2	3	4
367.	Rajasthan	Jhunjhunu	4
368.	Rajasthan	Jodhpur	5
369.	Rajasthan	Karauli	1
370.	Rajasthan	Kota	4
371.	Rajasthan	Nagaur	2
372.	Rajasthan	Pali	3
373.	Rajasthan	Pratapgarh	1
374.	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	1
375.	Rajasthan	Sikar	3
376.	Rajasthan	Sirohi	2
377.	Rajasthan	Sri Ganganagar	2
378.	Rajasthan	Udaipur	4
379.	Tamil Nadu	Chennai	9
380.	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore	19
381.	Tamil Nadu	Cuddalore	1
382.	Tamil Nadu	Dharmapuri	3
383.	Tamil Nadu	Dindigul	7
384.	Tamil Nadu	Erode	14
385.	Tamil Nadu	Kanchipuram	1
386.	Tamil Nadu	Kanyakumari	4
387.	Tamil Nadu	Krishnagiri	1
388.	Tamil Nadu	Madurai	15
389.	Tamil Nadu	Namakkal	4
390.	Tamil Nadu	The Nilgiris	1
391.	Tamil Nadu	Perambalur	1
392.	Tamil Nadu	Pudukkottai	4
393.	Tamil Nadu	Ramanathapuram	5
394.	Tamil Nadu	Salem	8
395.	Tamil Nadu	Sivaganga	4
396.	Tamil Nadu	Thanjavur	6
397.	Tamil Nadu	Theni	1

1	2	3	4
398.	Tamil Nadu	Thoothukudi	3
399.	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirapalli	9
400.	Tamil Nadu	Tirunelveli	2
401.	Tamil Nadu	Tiruppur	3
402.	Tamil Nadu	Tiruvannamalai	4
403.	Tamil Nadu	Vellore	2
404.	Tamil Nadu	Viluppuram	2
405.	Tamil Nadu	Virudhunagar	4
406.	Tripura	Dhalai	1
407.	Tripura	Sipahijala	3
408.	Tripura	Khowai	2
409.	Tripura	Gomati	1
410.	Tripura	North Tripura	3
411.	Tripura	South Tripura	3
412.	Tripura	West Tripura	7
413.	Uttar Pradesh	Agra	4
414.	Uttar Pradesh	Aligarh	2
415.	Uttar Pradesh	Allahabad	4
416.	Uttar Pradesh	Ambedkar Nagar	4
417.	Uttar Pradesh	Auraiya	1
418.	Uttar Pradesh	Azamgarh	9
419.	Uttar Pradesh	Baghpat	1
420.	Uttar Pradesh	Bahraich	1
421.	Uttar Pradesh	Ballia	5
422.	Uttar Pradesh	Balrampur	2
423.	Uttar Pradesh	Barabanki	2
424.	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly	11
425.	Uttar Pradesh	Basti	5
426.	Uttar Pradesh	Bijnor	2
427.	Uttar Pradesh	Budaun	1
428.	Uttar Pradesh	Bulandshahr	2

1	2	3	4
429.	Uttar Pradesh	Chandauli	6
430.	Uttar Pradesh	Chitrakoot	1
431.	Uttar Pradesh	Deoria	6
432.	Uttar Pradesh	Etawah	3
433.	Uttar Pradesh	Faizabad	13
434.	Uttar Pradesh	Farrukhabad	1
435.	Uttar Pradesh	Fatehpur	4
436.	Uttar Pradesh	Firozabad	2
437.	Uttar Pradesh	Gautam Buddha Nagar	5
438.	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad	10
439.	Uttar Pradesh	Ghazipur	4
440.	Uttar Pradesh	Gonda	6
441.	Uttar Pradesh	Gorakhpur	25
442.	Uttar Pradesh	Jalaun	1
443.	Uttar Pradesh	Jaunpur	4
444.	Uttar Pradesh	Jhansi	6
445.	Uttar Pradesh	Jyotiba Phule Nagar	1
446.	Uttar Pradesh	Kannauj	3
447.	Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur Nagar	10
448.	Uttar Pradesh	Kaushambi	2
449.	Uttar Pradesh	Kushinagar	2
450.	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	11
451.	Uttar Pradesh	Maharajganj	5
452.	Uttar Pradesh	Mathura	3
453.	Uttar Pradesh	Mau	4
454.	Uttar Pradesh	Meerut	14
455.	Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	2
456.	Uttar Pradesh	Moradabad	11
457.	Uttar Pradesh	Muzaffarnagar	1
458.	Uttar Pradesh	Pilibhit	2
459.	Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	1

1	2	3	4
460.	Uttar Pradesh	Rai Bareli	8
461.	Uttar Pradesh	Rampur	4
462.	Uttar Pradesh	Saharanpur	5
463.	Uttar Pradesh	Sant Ravidas Nagar	4
464.	Uttar Pradesh	Shahjahanpur	1
465.	Uttar Pradesh	Siddharthnagar	3
466.	Uttar Pradesh	Sitapur	1
467.	Uttar Pradesh	Sonbhadra	1
468.	Uttar Pradesh	Sultanpur	13
469.	Uttar Pradesh	Unnao	2
470.	Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi	7
471.	Uttar Pradesh	Amroha	8
472.	Uttar Pradesh	Hapur	1
473.	Uttar Pradesh	Sambhal	4
474.	Uttar Pradesh	Amethi	18
475.	Uttarakhand	Almora	3
476.	Uttarakhand	Bageshwar	1
477.	Uttarakhand	Chamoli	1
478.	Uttarakhand	Dehradun	18
479.	Uttarakhand	Haridwar	16
480.	Uttarakhand	Nainital	12
481.	Uttarakhand	Rudraprayag	1
482.	Uttarakhand	Udham Singh Nagar	10
483.	West Bengal	Alipurduar	1
484.	West Bengal	Darjeeling	1
485.	West Bengal	Purba Medinipur	1
486.	West Bengal	Howrah	2
487.	West Bengal	Kolkata	2
488.	West Bengal	North 24 Parganas	1
489.	West Bengal	South 24 Parganas	1
490.	Telangana	Adilabad	4

1	2	3	4
491.	Telangana	Hyderabad	6
492.	Telangana	Jagtial	5
493.	Telangana	Jangaon	1
494.	Telangana	Jayashankar Bhupalapally	3
495.	Telangana	Kamareddy	1
496.	Telangana	Karimnagar	3
497.	Telangana	Khammam	1
498.	Telangana	Mahabubnagar	2
499.	Telangana	Medak	2
500.	Telangana	Nalgonda	4
501.	Telangana	Nizamabad	2
502.	Telangana	Peddapalli	1
503.	Telangana	Rangareddy	5
504.	Telangana	Warangal Rural	1
505.	Telangana	Warangal Urban	7
506.	Chandigarh	Chandigarh	5
507.	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	Silvassa	5
508.	Daman and Diu	Daman	1
509.	Delhi	Central Delhi	3
510.	Delhi	South Delhi	2
511.	Delhi	East Delhi	4
512.	Delhi	North East Delhi	2
513.	Delhi	South West Delhi	3
514.	Delhi	North West Delhi	3
515.	Delhi	West Delhi	7
516.	Delhi	Shahdara	3
517.	Puducherry	Pondicherry	2
518.	Puducherry	Yanam	1
TOTAL			2163

Profit earning *vis-a-vis* loss making Pharma PSUs'

2926. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has ever studied why Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (KAPL) is successfully running in profit while Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited, Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. and Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., are incurring losses and are on the verge of collapse, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the efforts made by the Ministry to emulate success story of KAPL in other pharma PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) and (b) No sir. No such study has been conducted by the Department of Pharmaceuticals. However, the performance of all the five pharma PSUs namely Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL), Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd. (HAL), Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (BCPL), Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (RDPL) and Karnataka Antibiotics and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (KAPL) are reviewed periodically by the Department. The reasons for current status of these PSUs include cut throat competition from the private players, huge overheads, out-dated plant and machinery, production of low margin and price controlled drugs etc. It is pertinent to mention that KAPL is being given preference for purchase of medicine by the Government of Karnataka under the Karnataka Transparency Act, which exempts KAPL from participating in the tender process of the supply of medicine for the Government of Karnataka.

**Production, Consumption and Import of Urea, DAP
and Potassic fertilizers**

2927 SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the annual production, consumption and import of urea, DAP and Potassic fertilizers during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) the total subsidy granted to indigenous urea producing units and subsidy given for import of urea during the last five years, year-wise; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Government is considering withdrawal of the subsidy regime for urea 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 details of production, consumption and import of Urea, DAP and Potassic fertilizers during last five years are as under:—

(in 'LMT')

Year	Urea			DAP			MOP	
	Prod.	Import	Con./ Sale	Prod.	Import	Con./ Sale	Import *	Con./ Sale
2012-13	225.75	80.44	301.61	36.47	57.02	92.30	24.95	21.34
2013-14	227.15	70.88	304.54	36.11	32.61	69.03	31.80	21.92
2014-15	225.85	87.49	308.74	34.44	38.53	75.57	41.97	27.80
2015-16	244.75	84.74	319.68	37.87	60.08	97.47	32.43	24.23
2016-17	242.01	54.81	296.07	43.65	43.85	88.23	37.36	28.21

*MOP includes industrial and agriculture uses.

Note: Prod.: Production and
Con.: Consumption

(b) Total subsidy granted to indigenous urea producing units and subsidy given for import of urea during last five years are as under:

(₹ in crore)

Year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total subsidy paid to indigenous urea producing units	20000.00	26500.00	38200.01	38200.01	40000.00
Total subsidy paid on imported urea	20016.00	15353.30	16200.00	16400.00	11256.59

(c) No, Sir. There is no such proposal.

Allocation, availability and affordability of fertilizers in Manipur

2928. SHRI K. BHABANANDA SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the manner of making the fertilizers available to the farmers at affordable rate in Manipur;

(b) the details of each fertilizer allocated to each district in the State; and

(c) whether Government would look into the possibility of setting up a fertilizer

company as a PSU in the State, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) The Government is implementing Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme w.e.f. 1.4.2010. Under the said scheme, a fixed amount of subsidy decided on annual basis, is provided on each grade of subsidized Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers depending upon its Nutrient content. NBS rates are applicable uniformly all over India. In addition to above, primary freight is also being provided on P&K fertilizers (except SSP) all over India and a special compensation on account of secondary freight for all P&K fertilizers (except SSP) is provided for difficult areas which includes the State of Manipur. In case of Urea, the price is statutorily fixed by the Government at ₹ 5360/- PMT (excluding taxes).

(b) The requirement of all subsidized chemical fertilizers are assessed twice a year by Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) in consultation with States/UTs before start of each season. Department of Fertilizers ensures availability of fertilizers at the State level as per demand of the State and the distribution to the farmers within the State is the responsibility of the respective State Governments. During current season *i.e.* from April' 17 to July' 17, 7.82 Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT) Urea has been made available to the State of Manipur against the sales of 7.81 TMT.

(c) At present, there is no such proposal for setting up a fertilizer company as a PSU in Manipur.

Revival of closed fertilizer plants

2929. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the revival of five closed fertilizer plants is likely to add 75 lakh tonne per year of production; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that all five closed plants will come on stream by 2020-21 and that the work is to start after monsoon, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Five closed fertilizer units namely Talcher, Ramagundam, Gorakhpur and Sindri of Fertilizer Corporation India Limited (FCIL) and Barauni unit of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFCL) are being revived by setting up Ammonia-Urea plants of 12.7 lakh metric tonne per annum (LMTPA) capacity each. Setting up of these five plants is likely to add 63.52 lakh MT per annum of Urea.

(b) Yes, Sir. It is projected that Ramagundam Plant is likely to go on stream within the year 2018-19, Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni Plants in 2020-21 and Talcher Plant in 2021-22. The status of progress is as under:

Talcher

- (i) Talcher Unit is being revived on 'Nomination basis' by a Consortium of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) namely Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited, GAIL (India) Limited, Coal India Limited and FCIL.
- (ii) JV Company named "Talcher Fertilizers Limited (TFL)" has been formed.
- (iii) Coal Gasification Technology has been selected.
- (iv) Tendering for Coal gasification, Urea Ammonia and other offsite projects are under progress.

Ramagundam

- (i) Ramagundam unit is being revived on nomination basis by consortium of PSUs namely Engineers India Limited, National Fertilizers Limited and FCIL.
- (ii) JV Company named "Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited" has been formed.
- (iii) Project construction activities are in progress.

Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni

- (i) Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni unit of HFCL are being revived by means of Special Purpose Vehicle of PSUs namely National Thermal Power Corporation, Coal India Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited and FCIL/HFCL.
- (ii) A Joint Venture (JV) Company, named "Hindustan Urvarak and Rasayan Limited (HURL)" has been formed.
- (iii) The initial project activities have started in all the 3 projects.
- (iv) Environment Clearance has been obtained in respect of all the 3 projects.
- (v) The process of selection of Lump-Sum Turn Key (LSTK) contractors is in progress for all the 3 Projects.

Norms for revision of prices of drugs

2930. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it was decided that the price of a drug should not be revised before five years, except in case of increase in WPI or on an application made by the company itself or on the orders of a competent court, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government has laid down the norms related to price capping powers of the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) Pursuant to the announcement of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Policy, 2012 (NPPP-2012), Government has notified Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013) on 15.05.2013. As per the provisions of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013):—

- (i) The revision of ceiling prices on the basis of moving annual turnover value shall be carried out, *inter alia*, as and when the National List of Essential Medicines is revised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare or five years from the date of fixing the ceiling price under this Order whichever is earlier;
- (ii) The Government shall revise the ceiling prices of scheduled formulations as per the annual wholesale price index (WPI) for preceding calendar year on or before 1st April of every year and notify the same on the 1st day of April every year.

(b) The price of drugs is fixed by NPPA as per provisions laid down in paras 4, 5 and 6 of DPCO, 2013.

Setting up of Centralized Monitoring System

2931. SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA:

SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to set up the Centralized Monitoring System (CMS) to automate the process of lawful interception and monitoring of telecommunications;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government is monitoring all cellular phones, including WhatsApp and messages of all the mobile holders in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Government has decided to set up the Centralized Monitoring System (CMS) to automate the process of Lawful Interception and Monitoring of telecommunications. The CMS is progressively being commissioned in

a phased manner. Technology development and pilot trials have been completed. 20 Regional Monitoring Centers (RMC) out of 21 RMC and a Centralised Monitoring Centre (CMC) have been technically commissioned. The remaining one RMC and Disaster Recovery Center for CMC are scheduled to be commissioned by year end.

(b) and (c) It is not possible to monitor all cellular phones including WhatsApp and messages of all the mobile holders in the country as the Lawful interception can be done only by the authorized designated Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) under the provisions of section 5(2) of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 read with Rule 419A of Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules and Section 69 of the Information Technology (Amendment) Act 2008. Further, to tighten the process of lawful interception, as an elaboration of the provisions of Section 5(2) of Indian Telegraph Act and Rule 419A of Indian Telegraph Rule, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been issued by Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on 24th December 2014 in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for Lawful Interception and Monitoring for Telecom Service Providers. In the Rule 419 (A) and SOP dated 24th December 2014, detailed procedure to be followed by designated LEAs for lawful interception has been mentioned.

The following steps have already been taken to check unauthorized interception of communications:

- (i) The use of passive interception units by individuals and Off-the-Air Interception equipments is not permissible under provisions of the Indian Telegraph Act 1885. Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in August 2010, through notice in Newspapers, has directed all holders of such equipments to deposit them with Local Telecom Enforcement and Resource Monitoring (TERM) Cells. Such equipments are also moved from open general list (OGL) to restricted Import List.
- (ii) To take care of the privacy of citizens, lawful interception and monitoring is governed by the Section 5(2) of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 read with Rule 419A of Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2007 wherein oversight mechanism exists in form of a review committee under chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary at Central Government level and Chief Secretary of the State at the State Government level. The same mechanism is applicable for the interception under the CMS Project also. Additionally, there is an inbuilt mechanism of check and balance as Security Agencies/Law Enforcement Agencies cannot provision the target independently and the provisioning agency cannot access the intercepted content.
- (iii) Unlawful phone tapping is a punishable offense under Section 25 and 26 of the Indian Telegraph Act. The punishment for unlawful interception is

an imprisonment for a term, which may extend to 3 years or with fine or with both.

- (iv) Telecom Service Providers/Internet Service Providers under Unified License (Similar provisions in other Licenses also) have been mandated to protect the interest of the stakeholders/customers and privacy of the individual.

Debt of mobile companies

2932. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any communication from the State Bank of India about the unusual unsustainable levels of debt of mobile companies, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Mobile industry has sought deferred payment for the purchase of spectrum with a moratorium of five years, instead of current payback plan of ten years after a two year moratorium; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Department of Telecom received a letter from Chairman, State Bank of India about the financial stress in the telecom sector. The letter contains recommendations including deferred payment of liabilities for spectrum; rationalization of regulatory charges; easing of mergers and acquisitions regulations etc.

(b) Department of Telecom received a letter from Director General; Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI). The letter contains requests for deferred payment of liabilities for spectrum; reduction in Goods and Services Tax applicable to telecom services; reduction in License Fees and contribution to Universal Service Obligation Fund; reduction in Spectrum Usages Charges etc.

(c) The Government of India has constituted an Inter- ministerial Group on this issue.

Representations received from EDDAs regarding their termination

2933. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) number of representations received from Extra Departmental Delivery Agents (EDDAs) regarding their sudden termination of services on various reasons throughout the country;

(b) details of representations received regarding compulsory retirement of EDDAs on medical ground working with Post Office, Khirsu, Pauri, Uttarakhand during 1999 and appointment of retiree's son as EDDA on compassionate ground and subsequent removal from Post Office after four months;

(c) whether Parliamentary Committee has also forwarded representations several times, but no action has been taken by Pauri Division and the Ministry; and

(d) if so, by when action would be taken on representations and against officials for inaction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) 33 representations have been received from Extra Departmental Delivery Agents (EDDA) throughout the country regarding their sudden termination for various reasons.

(b) An application for retirement on medical grounds was received from Shri Madan Singh, Ex. GDS Packer along with medical certificate declaring him unfit for the duties, on 29.11.1999. This certificate was issued by Chief Medical Officer, Pauri. The request of Shri Madan Singh was accepted and discharge order was issued on 4.12.1999. Shri Vikram Singh son of Shri Madan Singh was engaged provisionally on the Post of GDS Packer Khirsu till the regular engagement was made. His engagement was not on compassionate ground. On regular engagement on the Post of GDS Packer, Khirsu, the services of Shri Vikram Singh were terminated. He worked on this post for 89 days only.

(c) No, Sir. No representation from Parliamentary Committee has been received in this regard.

(d) Question does not arise in view of (c) above.

FDI in Telecom Sector

2934. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether FDI in Telecom sector has been increased recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there have been any complaints against such enhancement of FDI, without proper consultation with the stakeholders;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to protect the domestic players in the sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) No, Sir. The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in telecom services sector is already 100% since August, 2013. While FDI is 100% under automatic route in telecom manufacturing, FDI upto 49% is permitted through automatic route and beyond 49% through Government route in telecom services.

(b) to (e) Question Does not arise in view of the above.

4G services by BSNL

2935. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any decision on the demand for spectrum by BSNL to launch 4G services; and

(b) whether the Centre is aware that the delay in launching 4G services will hamper the growth prospects of BSNL and give undue advantage to private players?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) To improve its customer base and to compete with private Telecom Service Providers, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has initiated process for introduction of 4G services and has requested for allocation of one 5 MHz slot in 700 MHz Band for pan-India (excluding Delhi and Mumbai) through equity fusion route or an allocation for 5 MHz slot in 2100 MHz band temporarily for one year on payment. The request of BSNL is under process.

Internet connections to Gram Panchayats

2936. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has been able to lay optical cable network to 1 lakh Gram Panchayats in the first phase;

(b) whether in spite of that, the Ministry is able to provide internet connection to only 22,000 Gram Panchayats;

(c) whether the target fixed was March, 2015, and even after more than two years, the Ministry has not been able to achieve its target, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the status of providing internet to Gram Panchayats in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, District-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under BharatNet project 27,838 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been provided with Broadband connectivity in the country as on 06.08.2017.

(c) The erstwhile National Optical Fibre Network (now BharatNet) was initially approved by the Government on 25.10.2011. As per original schedule, all GPs were to be connected within a time frame of two years.

The following have affected the implementation of the project:

- (i) Delay in the initial commencement of project due to field survey of GPs to assess the cable route and length, and pilot testing of the technology model.
- (ii) Implementation of the project only through three Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) namely, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL).
- (iii) Connectivity to GPs only by laying underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC).
- (iv) Poor quality of BSNL fibre between Block and Fibre Point of Interconnect (FPOI) being used to connect GPs in some places.
- (v) Centralised procedure of procurement and sourcing of equipment through Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL).
- (vi) Default by the L1 supplier of Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) equipment.
- (vii) Challenges faced in awarding contracts because of various reasons viz. difficult areas (Hilly/Rocky/Left Wing Extremism), limited number of trenching and laying contractors, Schedule of Rates (SoR) of BSNL, high rates quoted by contractors.

(d) The status of BharatNetas on 27.07.2017 in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana District-wise is given in the Statement.

Statement

*District-wise status of BharatNet in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana
as on 27.07.2017*

Sl. No.	State/UT	District Name	Total number of GPs	Total number of GPs in Phase-I	Total number of GPs in Phase-II	GPs Lit
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Chittor	1211	1211	0	0
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Vizag	894	462	432	0
3.	Andhra Pradesh	Anantpur	991	0	991	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Andhra Pradesh	East Godavari	1008	0	1008	0
5.	Andhra Pradesh	Guntur	1011	0	1011	0
6.	Andhra Pradesh	Kurnool	878	0	878	0
7.	Andhra Pradesh	Prakasam	1026	0	1026	0
8.	Andhra Pradesh	Srikakulam	1100	0	1100	0
9.	Andhra Pradesh	Vizianagaram	943	0	943	0
10.	Andhra Pradesh	Nellore	1023	0	1023	0
11.	Andhra Pradesh	Cuddapah	786	0	786	0
12.	Andhra Pradesh	Krishna	974	0	974	0
13.	Andhra Pradesh	West Godavari	882	0	882	0
14.	Telangana	Khammam	668	621	47	57
15.	Telangana	Nizamabad	716	716	0	150
16.	Telangana	Rangareddy	705	680	25	92
17.	Telangana	Medak	1049	0	1049	0
18.	Telangana	Karimnagar	1206	0	1206	0
19.	Telangana	Mehboobnagar	1327	0	1327	0
20.	Telangana	Nalgonda	1176	0	1176	0
21.	Telangana	Warangal	962	0	962	0
22.	Telangana	Adilabad	866	0	866	0

Internet connectivity in villages of Madhya Pradesh

†2937. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the ongoing Digital India Campaign in the country, many villages do not have internet services and in many, the internet speed is extremely slow, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) the State-wise and District-wise details of villages in the country, especially in Madhya Pradesh, that are without internet connectivity; and

(c) by when there is likelihood of high speed internet connectivity reaching every village of the country and the details of the steps taken by Government to improve the slow speed of internet in the villages?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (c) BharatNet Project, which is one of the pillars of Digital India Programme, is planned to establish a network infrastructure by connecting all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) and by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, aerial fibre, radio and satellite media, for providing broadband connectivity by all categories of service providers on non-discriminatory basis.

The project is planned to be implemented in phases. Under Phase I of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are to be connected by laying underground OFC by November 2017. Under Phase II, connectivity will be provided to balance GPs in the country by March, 2019. The State-wise status of BharatNet, Phase I as on 06.08.2017, is given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

State-wise and District-wise details of villages in the country without internet connectivity are not available. Telecom Service Area-wise rural subscriber base of Internet as on March, 2017 as submitted by service providers to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is, however, given in the Statement-II (*See below*).

With the implementation of BharatNet, it is expected that internet speed will improve.

Statement-I

State-wise status of NOFN (BharatNet) Phase-I as on 06.08.2017

Sl. No.	States/UTs	No. of Gram Panchayats (GPs)- Phase I	Pipe laid (kms.)	Cable laid (in kms)	No. of GPs where Pipe laid	No. of GPs where Cable laid	GPs Lit
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Assam	1533	3827	4162	1424	1348	396
2	Bihar	5754	12377	12944	5001	4742	1020
3	Chhattisgarh	4104	10330	7915	3335	3164	1434
4.	Haryana	6020	9820	11005	5947	5803	1443
5.	Jammu and Kashmir	388	441	398	218	200	0
6.	Karnataka	6092	12025	12557	6034	6031	4921
7.	Kerala	977	720	830	1129	1129	1129
8.	Madhya Pradesh	12655	36014	31137	12185	11646	4172

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9.	Maharashtra	15301	26787	25220	12784	11857	2406
10.	Punjab	8049	9965	9176	7107	6750	1194
11.	Rajasthan	8194	21350	20764	7185	7077	2085
12.	Uttar Pradesh	27974	49074	45643	25561	23449	3464
13.	Uttarakhand	1863	2828	2663	1510	1463	570
14.	West Bengal	2637	5320	4906	1840	1794	328
15.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	69	1	0	1	0	0
16.	Chandigarh	12	18	19	12	12	12
17.	Arunachal Pradesh	863	1558	690	612	228	0
18.	Nagaland	994	2635	1530	833	473	0
19.	Manipur	904	334	244	154	125	26
20.	Mizoram	763	750	471	125	76	0
21.	Tripura	1021	1694	1590	836	812	117
22.	Meghalaya	1208	1216	535	437	195	2
23.	Gujarat	6905	10816	9848	5164	4583	1342
24.	Puducherry	98	82	92	98	98	101
25.	Andhra Pradesh	1673	2683	766	571	283	0
26.	Telangana	2017	4539	4462	2038	2038	369
27.	Odisha	3860	8208	7970	3109	3108	569
28.	Jharkhand	2713	5152	4718	1935	1796	652
29.	Himachal Pradesh	252	526	493	166	163	86
30.	Daman and Diu	15	0	0	0	0	0
31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	20	0	0	0	0	0
32.	Sikkim	52	0	0	0	0	0
33.	Lakshadweep	10	0	0	0	0	0
34.	Tamil Nadu	0	0	0	0	0	0
35.	Goa*	-	-	-	-	-	-
GRAND TOTAL		124990	241090	222748	107351	100443	27838

*All the GPs of Goa are already connected with Optical Fibre

Statement-II

*Telecom Service Area wise Rural Internet Subscriber Base
as on 31st March, 2017*

(Subscribers in Millions)

Telecom Service Area	Rural Subscriber Base
Andhra Pradesh	12.10
Assam	4.25
Bihar	11.91
Delhi	0.69
Gujarat	8.26
Haryana	3.65
Himachal Pradesh	2.10
Jammu and Kashmir	1.87
Karnataka	6.37
Kerala	6.72
Kolkata	0.76
Madhya Pradesh	7.70
Maharashtra	11.75
Mumbai	0.50
North East	2.22
Orrisa	4.93
Punjab	4.67
Rajasthan	8.71
Tamil Nadu	8.08
Uttar Pradesh (East)	13.41
Uttar Pradesh (West)	7.10
West Bengal	8.80
TOTAL	136.55

DUES OF TELECOM COMPANIES

2938. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the telecom companies deprived Government of ₹ 12,229 crore during the last five years as per a report by the CAG, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that all these telecom companies were under the scrutiny of Government in the light of the said revelation by the CAG, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) As per report No. 11 of 2017 of Comptroller and Auditor General of India; the under-reporting of revenue led to underpayment of License Fees, Spectrum Usage Charges and interest amounting to ₹ 12229.24 crore. These findings of Comptroller and Auditor General of India pertain to financial years 2010-11 – 2014-15. The operator-wise details are as follows:

(Amount in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of Company	Total
1	Bharti Airtel	3848.15
2	Vodafone	3331.79
3	Reliance	1911.77
4	Idea	1794.17
5	SSTL	116.71
6	Aircel	1226.65
TOTAL		12229.24

(b) The dues of the Government are monitored constantly by the Department of Telecom as per the provisions of the License Agreements with the telecom service providers. Department of Telecom carries out annual assessment of license fees and spectrum usage charges taking into account under reported revenue as per audited financial statements and issues demands for the due license fees and spectrum usage charges. Accordingly such demands have been raised by Department of Telecom in respect of the years covered in the report of Comptroller and Auditor General of India. Besides, Department of Telecom carries out Special Audit of the accounts of telecom service providers to identify under reporting of revenue and additional demands are raised based upon the findings of the special audit.

Department of Telecom ordered Special Audit of accounts of five major telecom service providers in 2009 for financial year 2006-07 and 2007-08. The names of the telecom service providers are:—

- (1) M/s Bharti Airtel Ltd.
- (2) M/s Reliance Communications Ltd.
- (3) M/s Vodafone Essar Ltd.
- (4) M/s Idea Cellular Ltd.
- (5) M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd.

Department again ordered Special Audit of accounts of six major telecom service providers in 2016 for financial year 2008-09; 2009-10 and 2010-11. The name of the telecom service providers are:—

- (1) M/s Reliance Group of Companies.
- (2) M/s Vodafone Group of Companies.
- (3) M/s Tata Group of Companies.
- (4) M/s Bharti Group of Companies.
- (5) M/s Idea Group of Companies.
- (6) M/s Aircel Group of Companies.

Upgradation of Head Post Office, Imphal

2939. SHRI K. BHABANANDA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would upgrade the status and infrastructure of the Head Post Office, Imphal, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the Office of the Post Master General (PMG), Imphal is being planned for shifting to Dimapur, if so, the details along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government would stop the said plan in view of the requirements of the State; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to upgrade the status and infrastructure of the Head Post Office, Imphal.

(b) Dimapur is the rail head for North East Railway Station (NRS) which serves Nagaland and Manipur. Dimapur is also well connected by road and air. All mails,

e-commerce articles etc. for the entire Nagaland and Manipur States is concentrated at Dimapur Railway Mail Service (RMS) Office from where it is further dispatched for onward transmission by road. On the other hand Manipur is not connected by rail. Therefore, for better operational management and in view of difficult conditions of the region, decision was taken for shifting of the Postmaster General (PMG) office from Imphal to Dimapur. Dimapur's geographical location also facilitates better socio-economic welfare, better administrative control and better connectivity of the PMG's office to other offices, by road as well as by rail.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal to stop the order for shifting of the office of PMG, Imphal to Dimapur as the same has been done in the best interest of the public as well as the Department.

Introduction of one year validity data packs

2940. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that TRAI has directed the telcos to bring out one year validity internet data pack schemes, if so, the details thereof ; and

(b) whether the telcos have expressed their acceptance to this scheme, if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued the Telecommunications Consumer Protection Regulations (TCPR) (6 of 2016) on 19th August, 2016 which *inter alia* permitted Special Tariff Vouchers (STVs) with "data only" benefits with validity of 365 days instead of maximum 90 days permitted for other STVs.

A letter was also issued by TRAI on 5th June, 2017 advising all Telecom Service Providers to implement at least one Special Tariff Voucher (STV) with single payment providing exclusive data benefit with validity of 365 days. At present, most of the TSPs have on offer exclusive data STVs with 365 days validity.

Wi-Fi data packs

2941. SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to introduce Wi-Fi data services as small packs to the general public, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) by when these will come into use, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has received recommendations dated 9th March 2017 from Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on “Proliferation of Broadband through Public Wi-Fi Networks”. In these recommendations, TRAI has, *inter alia*, recommended for setting up of Public Data Offices (PDOs) for providing public Wi-Fi services. TRAI in these recommendations has also observed that PDOs will ensure that users can buy the data amount based on their needs. TRAI has further observed that availability of data services for small token values will stimulate the demand for public Wi-Fi services.

These recommendations are presently under examination in DoT and appropriate decision shall be taken subsequently.

Contracts for expansion of National Internet Backbone

2942. SHRI JAVED ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether contracts for expansion of National Internet Backbone, for annual maintenance contract along with purchase of new hardware, have been awarded at inflated rates in 2015; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Contracts for expansion of National Internet Backbone, for annual maintenance contract alongwith purchase of new hardware for Tech refresh have been awarded by BSNL during the years 2015 and 2016. BSNL has intimated that the contracts have been awarded at reasonable rates and also as per the CVC guidelines.

However, reports on allegations regarding the contract have been referred to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for advice. The CVC advice in the matter is awaited.

Competition in communication sector

2943. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether competition occurring in communication sector has reached the stage of cut throat as evidenced by incidents during the last one year;

(b) whether Government has taken steps to control and regulate it, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether weakening of the public sector in this field is being utilized by corporates; and

(d) the steps Government has taken to curb this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) With the entry of any new entrant in the market space, there is always a change in the competitive environment. In the same manner, the entry of a private mobile service provider company in the Telecom sector has created a more competitive environment for all the existing telecom service providers including public sector mobile service Companies. After the opening of telecom service sector for private participation, competition in this sector has resulted in world class telecom services at affordable rates. In the month of September 2016, the new entrant *i.e.* M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited offered attractive promotional plans to acquire the subscribers. Accordingly, other existing Telecom Service Providers offered the reduced tariff plans/supplementary tariff plans to retain their customer base. Therefore, there is no proposal before the Government to control and regulate the competition in the telecom sector.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of above

Problem of call drops in BSNL

2944. SHRI SANJIV KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that call drop problem has reached serious proportions in the case of the service provider, BSNL;

(b) how does the performance of BSNL compare in this respect with other service providers like Airtel, Vodafone, etc.;

(c) whether any study by TRAI, etc., has been instituted in the recent past in this regard; and

(d) whether any roadmap has been set out by Government to improve the services of BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has informed that for assessing the performance of service providers on call drop, both for 2G and 3G services, TRAI has laid down two parameters *viz.* “call drop rate /Circuit Switch Voice drop rate (benchmark $\leq 2\%$)” and “worst affected cells having

more than 3% TCH drop/Circuit Switched Voice drop rate: CBBH (benchmark \leq 3%).” The performance on these parameters is assessed quarterly through Performance Monitoring Reports (PMR) submitted by service providers for the service area as a whole. As per the performance monitoring report for the quarter ending March, 2017 for 2G, 3G and 4G voice services, all the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) including BSNL, are meeting the benchmark for the parameter “call drop rate/Circuit Switch Voice drop rate (benchmark \leq 2%)” in all of their service areas.

In the case of the parameter “worst affected cells having more than 3% TCH drop/Circuit Switched Voice drop rate: CBBH (benchmark \leq 3%)”, it is seen that though most of the service providers are meeting the benchmark in most of the service areas, non-compliance is observed for 2G service in 11 service areas of M/s Aircel and one service area each of M/s BSNL, Telenor and Vodafone. Also for 3G services, M/s Aircel is not meeting the benchmark in 9 services areas and BSNL in one service area. Further, it is observed that the instances of non-compliance are decreasing every quarter and the performance of service providers shows that the call drop in mobile network is mostly within the quality of service standards.

(c) TRAI had issued a Consultation Paper on “Review of the network related Quality of Service Standards for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service” on 5th August, 2016. Comments were invited from stakeholders on the various issues raised in the Consultation Paper by 2nd September, 2016 and Open House Discussions were held at Chennai on 21st December, 2016. TRAI is in the process of finalization of its Regulation in this regard.

(d) In order to facilitate improvement and expansion of telecommunication services, the Government has initiated a series of measures which *inter alia* includes:

- DoT has launched Interactive Voice Response Service (IVRS) using short code 1955 from 23rd December, 2016 onwards to get direct feedback from the subscribers on call drops. Over 56.41 lakh IVRS calls have been made till 30th June, 2017, out of which 7.63 lakh subscribers participated in the survey and 4.51 lakh have reported call drops, mostly indoors. The feedback is shared with TSPs who in turn contact each subscriber by phone/SMS (Short Messaging Service) to get further details for resolution of specific complaints. So far, 29,490 individual complaints of call drop reported through IVRS system have been resolved. The feedback has proved very useful.
- Making available sufficient spectrum for mobile services including auction of 965 MHz in 2016.

- Allowing Spectrum Sharing, Trading and liberalisation of administratively allocated spectrum as per the guidelines to facilitate efficient utilisation.
- Permitting sharing of active as well as passive infrastructure by the (Telecom Service Providers(TSPs) for achieving higher utilisation efficiency.
- Notification of Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016 for regulating underground infrastructure (optical fibre) and over-ground infrastructure (mobile towers).
- Facilitating use of Government estate for installation of mobile towers on multiple sharing basis.

TRAI has taken following steps towards improving of mobile services:

- Close monitoring of performance of service providers, against the benchmarks for various Quality of Service parameters laid down by TRAI, through periodic reports from service providers.
- Follow up action with service providers and action plan for improving quality of service, including for Call Drop parameters.
- Audit and Assessment of Quality of Service through independent agencies.
- Assessment of customer perception of service through surveys by independent agencies.
- Publication of results of Audit and Assessment of Quality of Service, including for Call Drop parameters and Surveys on TRAI website namely www.trai.gov.in for information of stakeholders, forcing the service providers to improve its service.
- Imposition of financial disincentives for non-compliance with the benchmarks for Quality of Service parameters.
- For identifying areas where there are insufficient coverage leading to call drop, TRAI regularly undertakes the drive tests of mobile networks in select cities, highways and railway routes and 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.

As a result of various initiatives undertaken, TSPs have added 3.16 lakh Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) for 2G/3G/4G services during the period from 15.06.2016 to 31.05.2017 which includes over Ten Thousand 2G/3G BTS added by BSNL.

Implementation of BharatNet Project

2945. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that implementation of the BharatNet is behind schedule, if so, the Panchayat-wise details thereof along with the reasons therefor;

(b) the details of connected Panchayats at present, State/UT-wise;

(c) the timeline of Government for this project; and

(d) the details of the funds allocated and utilized till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The erstwhile National Optical Fibre Network (now BharatNet) was initially approved by the Government on 25.10.2011. As per original schedule, all GPs were to be connected within a time frame of two years. Government has approved revised implementation strategy of BharatNet on 19.7.2017 where all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) are targeted to be connected by March, 2019 under BharatNet Project.

The project has been delayed because of following reasons:

- (i) Delay in the initial commencement of project due to field survey of GPs to assess the cable route and length, and pilot testing of the technology model.
- (ii) Implementation of the project only through three Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) namely, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL).
- (iii) Connectivity to GPs only by laying underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC).
- (iv) Poor quality of BSNL fibre between Block and Fibre Point of Interconnect (FPOI) being used to connect GPs.
- (v) Centralised procurement and sourcing of equipment through Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL).
- (vi) Default by the L1 supplier of Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) equipment.
- (vii) Challenges faced in awarding contractors because of various reasons viz. difficult areas (Hilly/Rocky/Left Wing Extremism), limited no of Trenching and laying contractors, Schedule of Rates (SoR) of BSNL, High rates quoted by contractors.

The State-wise status of BharatNet, as on 06.08.2017 is given in the Statement (See below).

(d) The status of funds Allocated/Utilized is as under:

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Year	Funds allotted and utilized
1.	2012-13	405.00
2.	2013-14	514.00
3.	2014-15	1351.87
4.	2015-16	2415.10
5.	2016-17	5600.00
	TOTAL	10285.97

Statement

State-wise status of BharatNet as on 06.08.2017

Sl. No.	States/UTs	No. of Gram Panchayats (GPs)- Phase I	Pipe laid (kms.)	Cable laid (in kms)	No. of GPs where Pipe laid	No. of GPs where Cable laid	GPs Lit
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Assam	1533	3827	4162	1424	1348	396
2.	Bihar	5754	12377	12944	5001	4742	1020
3.	Chhattisgarh	4104	10330	7915	3335	3164	1434
4.	Haryana	6020	9820	11005	5947	5803	1443
5.	Jammu and Kashmir	388	441	398	218	200	0
6.	Karnataka	6092	12025	12557	6034	6031	4921
7.	Kerala	977	720	830	1129	1129	1129
8.	Madhya Pradesh	12655	36014	31137	12185	11646	4172
9.	Maharashtra	15301	26787	25220	12784	11857	2406
10.	Punjab	8049	9965	9176	7107	6750	1194
11.	Rajasthan	8194	21350	20764	7185	7077	2085
12.	Uttar Pradesh	27974	49074	45643	25561	23449	3464
13.	Uttarakhand	1863	2828	2663	1510	1463	570
14.	West Bengal	2637	5320	4906	1840	1794	328

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	69	1	0	1	0	0
16.	Chandigarh	12	18	19	12	12	12
17.	Arunachal Pradesh	863	1558	690	612	228	0
18.	Nagaland	994	2635	1530	833	473	0
19.	Manipur	904	334	244	154	125	26
20.	Mizoram	763	750	471	125	76	0
21.	Tripura	1021	1694	1590	836	812	117
22.	Meghalaya	1208	1216	535	437	195	2
23.	Gujarat	6905	10816	9848	5164	4583	1342
24.	Puducherry	98	82	92	98	98	101
25.	Andhra Pradesh	1673	2683	766	571	283	0
26.	Telangana	2017	4539	4462	2038	2038	369
27.	Odisha	3860	8208	7970	3109	3108	569
28.	Jharkhand	2713	5152	4718	1935	1796	652
29.	Himachal Pradesh	252	526	493	166	163	86
30.	Daman and Diu	15	0	0	0	0	0
31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	20	0	0	0	0	0
32.	Sikkim	52	0	0	0	0	0
33.	Lakshadweep	10	0	0	0	0	0
34.	Tamil Nadu	0	0	0	0	0	0
35.	Goa*	-	-	-	-	-	-
GRAND TOTAL		124990	241090	222748	107351	100443	27838

*All the GPs of Goa are already connected with Optical Fibre

Review of Interconnection Usage Charges by TRAI

2946. SARDAR BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is reviewing the reduction of Interconnection Usage Charges (IUC), which is at present advantageous to a few top telecom operators;

(b) if so, the complete details in this regard with the amount of share cornered by telecom operators during the last three financial years, operator-wise;

(c) whether IUC in many advanced countries is negligible or zero and if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) the step TRAI proposes to take to bring down the IUC charges to zero-level so that subscribers are benefited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (d) As per the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Act, 1997, the matter of interconnection between two telecom networks is under the purview of TRAI. The Interconnection Usage Charge (IUC) is an essential requirement to enable subscribers of one service provider to communicate with subscribers of another service provider. Providing interconnection entails costs for which service providers need to be fairly compensated. The IUC not only determines the revenue accruable to the service providers but also how this revenue is to be distributed among them. An efficient interconnection and charging regime is central to efficient and seamless connectivity between various networks. The IUC, which mainly comprises of (i) origination charges, (ii) carriage/transit charges, (iii) domestic/international termination charges, (iv) international settlement rates etc., is a charge applicable for use of point of interconnection between the operators and is governed by the Interconnection Usage Charge Regulation issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) from time to time. On 5th August, 2016, TRAI has initiated a consultation process by issuing a consultation paper on "Review of Interconnection Usage Charges" with a focus on review of domestic termination charges, international settlement rates and international termination charges in the country.

The IUC is a whole sale pricing, which is decided by TRAI based on sound economic and costing principles i.e. cost based and work done principles. Thus, the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) get their due share on account of IUC on the basis of cost and work done; as such, it may not be appropriate to say that TSPs have cornered any amount on account of IUC.

The details of mobile termination charges in various countries are given in the Statement (*See below*).

TRAI has received comments/counter comments from the stakeholders in the consultation process and held Open House Discussions on the issues on 20th July 2017. The TRAI is seized of the matter.

Statement*Details of mobile termination charge in various countries*

Country	Mobile Termination Charges (MTC) as on 05.11.2014 in OECD Countries	
	(in United States Dollar)	(in Indian Rupees)*
1	2	3
Switzerland	0.0724	4.61
Japan	0.0473	3.01
Finland	0.0368	2.35
Ireland	0.0341	2.17
Australia	0.0336	2.14
New Zealand	0.0298	1.90
Hungary	0.0295	1.88
Chile	0.0293	1.87
Korea	0.026	1.66
Norway	0.0258	1.64
Netherlands	0.0244	1.56
Germany	0.0235	1.50
Portugal	0.0167	1.06
Israel	0.0155	0.99
Belgium	0.0155	0.99
Greece	0.0153	0.98
Slovenia	0.015	0.96
Estonia	0.0144	0.92
Spain	0.0143	0.91
Iceland	0.0141	0.90
United Kingdom	0.014	0.89
Poland	0.0134	0.85
Sweden	0.0129	0.82
Italy	0.0129	0.82
Luxembourg	0.0129	0.82

1	2	3
Czech Republic	0.0128	0.82
Slovak Republic	0.0123	0.78
Denmark	0.0121	0.77
Turkey	0.0116	0.74
Austria	0.0106	0.68
France	0.0105	0.67
United States	0.0007	0.04
OECD (average)	0.0197	1.26

*Dollar–Rupee conversion factor @ RBI Rate of 08-August 2017 : \$1 = Rupees 63.7382

Source: OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) Digital Economy Outlook 2015-© OECD 2015

Increase in allotment of foodgrains to BPL category people

†2947. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the quantity of foodgrains being provided to the people living below poverty line (BPL) under social schemes is being increased every year by correlating it with inflation;

(b) if so, the quantum of increase in the foodgrains being provided to such people in the last three years; and

(c) whether Government would consider to increase the quantity of foodgrains being provided to the poor by making a policy in line with the increase of dearness allowance of Government employees every year?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) Government is implementing the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), which provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural and 50% of the 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

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

and the remaining households as priority households. There is no BPL category under NFSA.

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, and priority households are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month at the above prices. There is no proposal to revise foodgrains entitlements under NFSA.

Compulsory display of guidelines in Hindi on food packaging

2948. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to bring in compulsory display of guidelines in Hindi on consumer goods, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) the details of present guidelines regarding language to be used on food packaging and consumer products; and

(c) whether cases have been filed against manufacturers regarding non-compliance of these guidelines, if so, the details thereof over the past three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Rule 9(4) of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 prescribes the manner of declaration on the pre-packaged commodities as below:

“(4) The particulars of the declarations required to be specified under this rule on a package shall either be in Hindi in Devnagri script or in English:

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-rule shall prevent the use of any other language in addition to Hindi or English language.”

There is no proposal to make it compulsory to bring in display of guidelines in Hindi Language.

(c) No case has been filed for not giving the declaration in Hindi or in English language over the last three years.

Investment in Agriculture Sector

†2949. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of average annual estimated demand of pulses in the country during the last three years, year-wise and variety-wise;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether India has asked for assistance from some BRICS countries during the BRICS Summit, if so, the details of assistance asked for and the reaction thereon; and

(c) whether any BRICS country is looking for opportunities to invest in agriculture sector in India, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The Report of Working Group of erstwhile Planning Commission on 'Food grains-Balancing Demand & Supply' had projected annual demand of pulses at 22.68 million tonnes in 2014-15, 23.62 million tonnes in 2015-16 and 24.61 million tonnes in 2016-17. At present, there are no official estimates available for variety-wise annual demand of pulses.

(b) to (c) The Goa Declaration of the 8th BRICS Summit, October 15-16, 2016 emphasizes the importance of BRICS cooperation in agriculture. Also, the Declaration adopted by BRICS Ministers of Agriculture in their meeting held on 23 September, 2016 agrees to promoting production of pulses in the BRICS countries and raise awareness among the people about their importance in dietary nutrition.

Unused foodgrains in the godowns

2950. SHRI SHANKARBHAI N. VEGAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any data about the unused foodgrains in the godowns in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Government doesn't consider any stock lying in its godowns as unused stock because it is placed there to be used for allocation under National Food Security Act and Other Welfare Schemes, as per the Foodgrain Stocking Norms.

Procurement and consumption of pulses

†2951. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of MSP and bonus provided by Government on various types of pulses during the last three years, year-wise and variety-wise;

(b) the details of Government agencies that procure pulses from farmers and the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

details of the quantity of pulses procured by these agencies during the said period, year-wise, State-wise and variety-wise;

(c) the details of the consumption of pulses at domestic level during the said period, year-wise and variety-wise; and

(d) whether any private agencies/persons procure pulses from farmers, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The requisite details are given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

(b) Under the Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) scheme, the designated agencies for procurement of pulses from farmers are National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) while under the Price Support Scheme, nodal agencies undertaking procurement are NAFED and SFAC. The requisite details of procurement are given in the Statement-II (*See below*).

(c) The Report of Working Group of erstwhile Planning Commission on 'Food grains-Balancing Demand and Supply' had projected annual demand of pulses at 22.68 million tonnes in 2014-15, 23.62 million tonnes in 2015-16 and 24.61 million tonnes in 2016-17. At present, there are no official estimates available for variety-wise annual demand of pulses.

(d) All transactions except those undertaken under Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) scheme, Price Support Scheme (PSS) or any other Government System of procurement linked to Minimum Support Prices are by the private agencies/persons.

Statement-I

MSP and Bonus provided by Government on various types of pulses during the last three years, year-wise and variety-wise in P/ql.

Pulses	2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	MSP	Bonus	MSP	Bonus	MSP	Bonus
Tur	4350	-	4425	200	4625	425
Moong	4600	-	4650	200	4800	425
Urad	4350	-	4425	200	4575	425
Gram	3175	-	3425	75	3800	200
Masur	3075	-	3325	75	3800	150

Source: Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Statement-II

Details of Government agencies which procure pulse from farmers along with quantity of pulses procured by them during last three years year-wise, State-wise and Variety-wise

(A) Procurement of pulses by Government agencies under Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) Scheme during the last three years, year-wise, State-wise and variety-wise

Procurement of Pulses under PSF in Metric Tonne (MT)							
State	KMS 2015-16		RMS 2016-17		KMS 2016-17		
	Tur	Urad	Masur	Chana	Moong	Urad	Tur
Telangana	10917.03				3381.41	72.60	216480.69
Maharastra	22257.21	54.43		4918.87	7275.31	15591.69	401329.08
Andhra Pradesh	314.75			1047.15	3665.48	702.30	584.15
Gujarat	509.51				77.44	1422.45	127035.55
Madhya Pradesh	9964.21	3235.40	7902.76	17540.17	9233.46	27268.76	102771.52
Karnataka	1569.71			284.85	5050.65	2113.10	314409.76
Rajasthan		486.13	254.50	36348.36	190094.95	18970.34	
Uttar Pradesh		1115.71	382.30	353.95		22322.60	370.80
Bihar			16.20				
Tamil Nadu						118.54	
Haryana					1069.35		
TOTAL	45532.42	4891.67	8555.76	60493.35	219848.05	88582.38	1162981.55

Source: Procuring Agencies (NAFED, FCI and SFAC)

(B) Procurement of pulses by Government agencies under Price Support Scheme (PSS) Scheme during the last three years, year-wise, State-wise and variety-wise

Procurement of Pulses under PSS in Metric Tonne (MT)		
State	2014-15	2016-17
	Chana	Moong
1	2	3
Maharastra	31012.19	6977.80
Gujarat	3730.56	
Madhya Pradesh	37760.39	
Uttar Pradesh	2297.15	

1	2	3
Rajasthan	179351.61	
Andhra Pradesh	45666.85	
Karnataka	14098.60	2517.20
TOTAL	313917.34	9495.00

Source: Procuring Agencies (NAFED and SFAC).

Revised print of MRP on unsold items after introduction of GST

2952. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has instructed vendors and manufacturers to print revised MRPs on unsold stocks to be sold under GST, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether any violations have been brought to the notice of Government in this regard; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government against defaulting vendors and manufacturers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) On account of implementation of GST there may be instances where the retail sale price printed on a pre-packaged commodity is required to be changed. The Department has therefore issued an order according to which, manufacturers/packers/importers of pre-packaged commodities are to declare the revised retail sale price (MRP), by way of stamping or putting sticker or online printing, as the case may be, on the unsold stock manufactured/packed/imported prior to 1st July, 2017, if any, in addition to the existing retail sale price (MRP), for three months *i.e.* upto 30th September, 2017. Use of un-exhausted packaging material/wrapper has also been allowed upto 30th September, 2017 after making the necessary corrections.

The said information has already been disseminated to all the stakeholders and Controllers of Legal Metrology of all States/UTs for immediate necessary action. The Department's website contains FAQs for explaining the manner in which MRP can be undertaken. A copy of the said advisory is given in the Statement (*See* below).

The matter is being monitored on a continuous basis, and the complaints received so far for not selling the pre-packaged commodities at revised prices where the rate has been decreased on National Consumer Helpline have been forwarded to the Controllers of Legal Metrology of all States/ UTs for immediate necessary action, as the enforcement of weights and measures Laws is done by the State Governments.

The Department has already issued an advertisement in the Newspaper regarding MRP aspects and the final price to protect consumer interests. The Department is also doing the outdoor publicity through creatives on MRP after implementation of GST.

Statement

*Advisary regarding Revised print of MRP on unsold stock of after
introduction of GST*

WM-10(31)/2017

Government of India

Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

Department of Consumer Affairs

Legal Metrology Division

Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi,

Dated 04.07.2017

To,

The Controllers of Legal Metrology,

All States/UTs

Subject: Impact of GST on unsold stock of pre-packaged commodities—reg.

Sir,

The undersigned is directed to refer to the above mentioned subject and to state that in exercise of the power conferred by rule 33(1) of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, the Central Government hereby permits the manufacturers or packers or importers of pre-packaged commodities to declare the changed retail sale price (MRP) on the unsold stock manufactured/packed/imported prior to 1st July, 2017 after inclusion of the increased amount of tax due to GST if any, in addition to the existing retail sale price (MRP), for three months *w.e.f.* 1st July, 2017 to 30th September, 2017. Declaration of the changed retail sale price (MRP) shall be made by way of stamping or putting sticker or online printing, as the case may be, after complying with the following conditions:

- (I) The difference between the retail sale price originally printed on the package and the revised price shall not, in any case, be higher than the extent of increase in the tax if any, or in the case of imposition of fresh tax, such fresh tax, on account of implementation of GST Act and Rules.
- (II) The original MRP shall continue to be displayed and the revised price shall not overwrite on it.

- (III) Manufacturers or packers or importers shall make atleast two advertisements in one or more newspapers in this regard and also by circulation of notices to the dealers and to the Director of Legal Metrology in the Central Government and Controllers of Legal Metrology in the States and Union Territories, indicating the change in the price of such packages.

Further, it is clarified that under sub-rule (3) of rule 6 of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 “for reducing the Maximum Retail Price (MRP), a sticker with the revised lower MRP (inclusive of all taxes) may be affixed and the same shall not cover the MRP declaration made by the manufacturer or the packer or importer, as the case may be, on the label of the package”.

It is also clarified that any packaging material or wrapper which could not be exhausted by the manufacturer or packer or importer prior to 1st July, 2017, may be used for packing of material upto 30th September, 2017 or till such date the packing material or wrapper is exhausted, whichever is earlier, after making corrections required in retail sale price (MRP) on account of implementation of G.S.T. by way of stamping or putting sticker or online printing.

Yours faithfully

Sd/

(B.N.Dixit)

Director of Legal Metrology

Tel: 011-23389489/Fax.011-23385322

Email:dirwm-ca@nic.in

Copy to: All Industries/Industry Associations/Stake Holders.

Service charge levied by hotels and restaurants

2953. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the service charges levied by the hotelsrestaurants is about 5 to 20 per cent of the total bill of the edible products purchased by the consumer;

(b) the nature of the rule under which the service tax is levied by the hotels/restaurants on the edible products ordered by their customers; and

(c) the present status of the service tax levied by the hotels and restaurants?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) It had come to the notice of

this Ministry through a number of complaints from consumers received at the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) that hotels and restaurants are following the practice of charging service tax in the range of 5-20% in lieu of tips. To regulate the practice, advisory was issued to State Governments on 21st April, 2017 on fair trade practices related to charging of service charge from consumers by hotels/restaurants.

(b) and (C) Service tax is different from service charge which is charged in lieu of tips by hotels/restaurants from customers. Following implementation of the Goods and services Tax (GST) with effect from 1st July, 2017, service tax has been subsumed in the GST.

Genuineness of organic products

2954. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether organic farming is gaining ground in the country and has become very popular among the consumers, particularly in urban areas, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether some unscrupulous shopkeepers are cheating innocent consumers by selling non-organic pulses, spices, etc. as organic;

(c) whether there is any laboratory in the country to check the genuineness of organic products;

(d) if so, details thereof and if not, whether there is any proposal to set up such laboratory; and

(e) the quantum of organic pulses produced by farmers during the last three years, State/UT-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) Yes, Sir. Organic farming is gaining popularity in rural and urban areas. Realising the potential of organic farming Government of India has implemented two National level programmes on organic farming-Parmaparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development Programme for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER), a sub scheme National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) for promoting organic farming .The details of the scheme are given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

(b) No such report is available with Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare.

(c) and (d) Government has developed Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) portal for registration and traceability of organic produce. Under PKVY scheme organic farming produce is certified under PGS which is a quality assurance where farmers are registered under free/low cost domestic certification. Under the scheme provision is made for the residual analysis through National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL). For export of organic products under National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), may be tested at the laboratories which are approved by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). The list of authorized laboratories is given in the Statement-II (See below).

(e) As per the information available on tracenet of APEDA, the details of the organic pulses certified under National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) for the last 3 years is as follows:

Year	Quantity (MT)
2014-15	34717.45
2015-16	39248.63
2016-17	62676.32

Statement-I

Details of schemes for promoting organic farming in the country

(A) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is a sub-scheme under National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) through which assistance is provided for Organic Farming clusters. Assistance will be provided @ Rs.50, 000 per hectare per farmer in cluster for a period of 3 years to develop organic clusters of 20 hectare each and to cover certified area by 2 lakh hectare during 2015-16 and 2017-18.

Under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana PKVY Scheme, financial assistance is provided under the following components:

(in lakh)

Sl. No.	Components	Total Financial Assistance per cluster in 3 years	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Mobilization of farmers/Local People to form cluster.	₹ 0.80000	0.80000	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	PGS-India Certification and Quality Control	₹ 2.63670	0.36740	1.14840	1.12090
3.	Adoption of Organic Villages: Organic seeds, Organic inputs, Biological nitrogen, etc.	₹ 4.50000	2.50000	1.00000	1.00000
4.	Integrated Manure Management	₹ 3.75000	3.25000	0.50000	0
5.	Custom Hiring Centre Charges	₹ 0.45000	0.15000	0.15000	0.15000
6.	Labeling, Branding and Transportation	₹ 2.81330	0	2.18830	0.62500
TOTAL		₹ 14.95	7.0674	4.9867	2.8959

Status of Scheme: The Annual Action Plan of 29 States and 1 Union Territory was approved with total outlay for ₹ 496.62 crore during 2015-16 and total 7208 clusters developed in 2015-16. The scheme is implemented with a 90:10 (GoI: State Govt.) funding pattern in 8 NE states and 3 hilly states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, 100% in Union Territory and 60:40 funding pattern in remaining states of the country.

(₹ in crore)

	No. of clusters	Allocation	Release
2015-16	7208	300.00	226.19
2016-17		297.00	152.19
2017-18		350.00	-

(B) Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region

Realizing the potential of organic farming in the North Eastern Region of the country, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has launched a Central Sector Scheme entitled “**Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region**” for implementation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, during 2015-16 to 2017-18. 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, creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative. The scheme was approved with an outlay of ₹ 400 crore for three years.

The assistance is provided for cluster development, on/off farm input production, supply of seeds/planting materials, setting up of functional infrastructure, establishment of integrated processing unit, refrigerated transportation, pre-cooling/cold stores chamber, branding labeling and packaging, hiring of space, hand holdings, organic certification through third party, mobilization of farmers/processors etc. Under this scheme, an area of 50,000 ha. have been targeted to be covered under organic farming in North Eastern Region of the country during the period of three years *i.e.* from year 2015-16 to 2017-18.

Physical and Financial Progress report of MOVCDNER scheme

Physical Progress

Under the scheme "Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region" there is a target to form 100 Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs) that would cover 2500 Farmers Interest Groups (FIGs), 50000 ha. area and 50000 farmers. Against this target, 2376 FIGs have been formed covering an area of 48146 ha. and 46842 farmers in eight NE States. Till date 23 Farmer producer Companies have been registered. Agencies like NERAMAC are working with FPCs to provide market linkages to the produce of FPOs.

Financial Progress

The scheme was approved with an outlay of ₹ 400 crore for three years. The allocation pattern is 100% to North East States. Under the scheme an amount of ₹ 125 crore during 2015-16, ₹ 100 crore during the 2016-17 and ₹ 100 crore was allocated during 2017-18. Against the allocation an amount of ₹ 112.11 crore during 2015-16, ₹ 48.68 crore during the 2016-17 and ₹ 18.58 crore was released during 2017-18.

Statement-II

**List of Authorized Laboratories for Sampling and analysis of Organic Products as on 12.07.2017*

Sl. No.	Details of the laboratory	Status
1.	First Source Laboratory Solutions LLP (Analytical services) 1st Floor Plot No. A1/B, IDA Nacharam Cross Road Hyderabad 500076 Tel: 040-27177036, Fax: 040-27174037 crm@firstsourcels.com ; sudhakar@firstsourcels.com ;	ISO-17025 accredited. Recognized by APEDA for sampling and analysis for residues of agrochemicals/ pesticides and GMO.
2.	Envirocare Labs Pvt. Ltd. A-7 MIDC Wagle Industrial Estate Main Road Thane 400604 Tel: 022-25838286-88 Fax: 25838289 priti.a@envirocare.co.in ; nilesh.a@envirocare.co.in ;	-do-

Sl. No.	Details of the laboratory	Status
3.	Arbro Pharmaceuticals Limited, Analytical Division 4/9 Kirti Nagar Industrial Area New Delhi 110 015 Tel : 011-45754575, 9871700488, Fax: 45754545 arbrolab@arbropharma.com; saurabharora@arbropharma.com;	-do-
4.	Geo Chem Laboratories Pvt. Ltd. Pragati, Adjacent to Crompton Greaves Kanjur Marg(E) Mumbai 400 042 Phone: 022-61915100, Fax: 022-61915101 neel@geochemgroup.com; sureshbabu.p@geochem.net.in;	-do-
5.	Reliable Analytical Laboratories Pvt. Ltd. 125/139 Indian Corporation Mankoli Gundavli Bhiwandi Thane 421 302 Tel: 02522-398100 harshal@reliablelabs.org; rashmi@reliablelabs.org	-do-
6.	National Collateral Management Services Limited (NCML) Team Towers, 4th Floor, Plot No. A-1/2/A Industrial Park IDA-Uppal Hyderabad 500 039 Tel: 040 6637 4700 ganesh.r@ncml.com;quality@ncml.com;	ISO-17025 accredited. Recognized by APEDA for sampling and analysis for residues of agrochemicals/ pesticides.
7.	TUV Sud South Asia Pvt. Ltd. No. 151, 2nd C Main, 2nd Stage Peenya Industrial Estate Bangalore 560058 Tel: 080-67458000 Fax: 080-67458058 suresh.kumar@tuv-sud.in; meena.mariappan@tuv-sud.in;	-do-
8.	Interfield Laboratories, XIII/1208, Interprint House Kochi 682 005 Tel: 0484-2217865, 2210915, 221838 qm@ifl.in; gm@ifl.in; jp@ifl.in;	-do-
9.	MicroChem Silliker Pvt. Ltd. MicroChem House A-513 TTC Industrial Area MIDC Mahape Navi Mumbai 400 701 Tel: 022-27787800 vidhya.gangar@mxns.com; jeetendra.patil@mxns.com;	-do-
10.	TUV India Pvt. Ltd. Survey No: 423/1 and 3/2 Near Pashankar Auto (Baner) Sus-Pashan Road Pune 411021 Tel: 020-67900000 foodlab@tuv-nord.com; mumbai@tuv-nord.com;	-do-
11.	SGS India Pvt. Ltd. Opposite to State Bank of India 28 B/1 (SP), 28 B/2 (SP) 2nd Main Road Ambattur Industrial Estate Chennai 600 058 Tel: 044-66693109 Fax: 24963075 av.abraham@sgs.com; v.nirmala@sgs.com;	-do-

Sl. No.	Details of the laboratory	Status
12.	Vimta Labs Ltd., Plot No. 5 SP Biotech Park Genome Valley, Shameerpet Mandal, RR District, Hyderabad 500 078 Tel: 040-39848484 Fax: 27263657 quality@vimta.com;	-do-
13.	Edward Food Research and Analysis Centre Ltd. (EFRAC) Subhas Nagar PO Nilgunj Bazar Barasat Kolkata 700 121 Tel: 033-71122800 Fax: 71122801 efraclab@efrac.org; balwinderbajwa@efrac.org;	-do-
14.	Eurofins Analytical Services India Pvt. Ltd. #540/1, Doddanakundi Industrial Area2, Hoodi, Whitefield, Bangalore 560 048 Tel: 080-30982500 Fax: 41680405 SanjeevKhatri@eurofins.com; GouriSatpathy@eurofins.com;	-do-
15.	Chennai Mettlex Lab Private Limited Jothi Complex No. 83 MKN Road Guindy Chennai 600032 Tel: 044-22323163, 42179490/91 Fax: 044-22311034 vks@mettlexlab.com; drbala@mettlexlab.com;	-do-
16.	Nawal Analytical Laboratories Plot No. 100 New SIDCO Industrial Estate Srinagar, Hosur 635109 Tel: 04344-329718, 09894785841 green_balu74@yahoo.com; ecogreen.labs@gmail.com;	-do-

*Authorization of laboratories is dynamic process, updated list could be uploaded from APEDA website.

Employment in IT Sector

2955. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after demonetisation of currency notes and implementation of GST, there is slow digitisation and job losses in the IT sector;

(b) if so, the corrective steps being taken by Government to provide jobs in the IT sector;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the IT sector has made a plan for providing employment to 40 lakh persons on an average annually; and

(d) if so, the facts in this regard and the current status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (d) There is no indication of job losses due to demonetization of currency notes and implementation of GST (Goods and Services Tax). On the contrary, GST is expected to create more IT jobs as it is digital by default *i.e.* it requires digital return filing, maintaining digital records etc. According to National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), the IT-ITeS industry is estimated to directly employ around 39 lakh people, an addition of around 175,000 people over the year 2016. In addition, indirect employment is 1-1.2 crore (~2.5-3 times of direct employment). Employment of around 6 lakh professionals has been made in the IT sector in the last three years. It is estimated that the industry will remain a net hirer in FY 2017-18. The trend over last 3 years is as follows:

Year	Number of Total employees	Net addition during the year
FY 2014-15	3,485,000	217,000
FY 2015-16	3,688,000	203,000
FY 2016-17	3,863,000	175,000

Source: NASSCOM

According to NASSCOM, the skills profile is set to undergo a rapid change as demand for skills around new and emerging digital technologies grows exponentially. Technologies such as advanced robotics and automation are changing the job roles significantly across industries.

Electronic applications launched by Government

2956. SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of electronic applications (apps) launched by the different Ministries of the Central Government in the last three years;

(b) the details of the total number of downloads for the above mentioned apps since their launch in the last three years; and

(c) the details of the total expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) With the vision of accelerating delivery of e-services as envisaged under Digital India Programme and optimising the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) spending of

the Government, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has implemented the e-Gov AppStore and m-AppStore. The details of the projects initiated by MeitY are as follows:

- (i) **e-Gov App Store:** The e-Gov App Store is a national level common repository of customizable and configurable applications, components and web services that can be re-used by various government Ministries/departments/agencies at Centre and States/UTs, which include the setting up of a common platform to host and run applications at National Clouds. The total approved outlay of the project is ₹ 81.18 Crores. Currently, 58 Applications across 24 Sectors are hosted on e-Gov AppStore. 1042 downloads of these applications by Government Ministries/departments/agencies have taken place.

Mobile Seva: Mobile governance (m-governance) aims to leverage wireless and new media technology platforms, mobile devices and applications for delivery of public information and services to all citizens and businesses. It also leverages the innovative potential of mobile applications in providing public services. The total approved outlay of the project is Rs. 21.50 crore. Under Mobile Seva project, 723 services have been operationalized. 3699 Central, State and local government departments across the country have been integrated. Currently, 1003 Live mobile applications (m-Apps) with 45,20,280 downloads are hosted on the m-App Store.

Apart from above, each Ministry/Department has its own budgetary provisions for the development and deployment of Electronic/Mobile Applications.

Increase in Cyber Crimes

2957. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of cyber crime are increasing year by year, if so, the details thereof, year-wise for last five years;

(b) the concrete steps being taken or proposed to be taken to place critical infrastructure to predict and prevent cyber crimes like phishing, site intrusions, defacements, virus or malicious code, ransomware, etc.;

(c) whether the present IT laws are adequate to deal with the growing cyber and virus attacks; and

(d) if not, the measures to be taken by Government to ensure safety and security of software programmes and networking in the country?

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. As per the data maintained by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 4356, 7201, 9622, 11592 and 12317 cyber crime cases were registered during the years 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively. This includes cases registered under the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 and related sections of Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws involving computer as medium/target.

(b) Government has taken a number of legal, technical and administrative measures for addressing cyber security. These *inter alia*, include the following:

- (i) Enactment of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 which has adequate provisions for dealing with prevalent cyber crimes.
- (ii) Government has established National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC) as per the provisions of Section 70A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 for protection of Critical Information Infrastructure in the country.
- (iii) The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats and countermeasures on regular basis. CERT-In has published guidelines for securing IT infrastructure, which are available on its website (www.certin.org.in).
- (iv) Government has initiated setting up of 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. Phase-I of NCCC has been made operational.
- (v) Cyber Crime Cells have been set up in all States and Union Territories for reporting and investigation of Cyber Crime cases.
- (vi) 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 personnel and Judiciary in these States.
- (vii) A number of Cyber forensics tools for collection, analysis and presentation of the digital evidence have been developed indigenously

and such tools are being used by law enforcement agencies.

- (viii) 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.
- (ix) All banks have been mandated to report cyber security incidents to CERT-In expeditiously.
- (x) All authorised entities/banks issuing Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) in the country have been advised to carry out audit by the empanelled auditors of 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. Government has empanelled 54 security auditing organisations to support and audit implementation of Information Security Best Practices.
- (xi) Government has formulated Cyber Crisis Management Plan for countering cyber attacks for implementation by all Ministries/ Departments of Central Government, State Governments and their organizations and critical sectors. Regular workshops are conducted for Ministries, Departments, States and UTs and critical organizations to sensitize them about the cyber security threat landscape and enabling them to prepare and implement the Cyber Crisis Management Plan.
- (xii) Government has launched the Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre). The centre is providing detection of malicious programs and free tools to remove the same for banks as well as common users.
- (xiii) Ministry of Home Affairs has issued National Information Security Policy and Guidelines (NISPG) to Government organizations to ensure safety of data and minimize cyber threats.
- (xiv) Cyber security mock drills are being conducted regularly to enable assessment of cyber security posture and preparedness of organizations in Government and critical sectors. 15 such drills have so far been conducted by CERT-In where 148 organisations from different states and sectors such as Finance, Defence, Power, Telecom, Transport, Energy, Space, IT/ITeS, etc have participated.

(c) and (d) The Information Technology Act, 2000 provides adequate legal framework to deal with the prevalent cyber security breaches.

Issuance of Aadhaar Cards on fake documents

†2958. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there is a rampant practice of issuing Aadhaar cards on the basis of fake documents in the country;
- (b) if so, whether Government proposes to take any steps to check it; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and by when, and if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) No, Madam. There are well defined processes and guidelines that are followed for carrying out enrolment of Aadhaar. The same are mentioned in Chapter II (Resident Enrolment Process) in Aadhaar (Enrolment and Update) Regulations, 2016. Corrective actions, wherever required, are taken as per relevant provisions of Aadhaar Act, 2016 and Regulations framed thereunder.

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) conducts workshops from time-to-time for the enrolment agencies/operators sensitizing them on various issues relating to enrolment processes.

Demand for Cyber Security Graduates

2959. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a new breed of cyber security graduates are in great demand, after a spate of ransomware attacks such as WannaCry and Petya;
- (b) whether large companies in the country are scrambling to hire graduates specialising in cyber security, whose demand has shot up to an all-time high; and
- (c) whether universities are introducing new courses, such as, cyber security and incident response to teach advanced malware analysis and post-breach restoration of data systems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Data Security Council of India (DSCI) setup by NASSCOM, to promote data protection, develop security and privacy codes and standards and encourage the IT/BPO industry to implement the same, has indicated that attacks such as wannacry and Petya are

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

indeed a reinforcement of the fact that the Cyber Security fraternity needs to augment its competencies to not only defend but anticipate the threats while safeguarding their critical infrastructure. There is a growing demand for Cyber Security Professionals who are being hired at various levels of educational qualifications and experience. Demand for specialists and professionals with niche skill sets are constantly rising.

DSCI has further indicated that Global Information Security Workforce Study (GISWS) conducted by International Information System Security Certification Consortium (ISC)² has revealed that the world will face a shortfall of 1.8 million cyber security workers by 2022, a 20% increase over the forecast made in the year 2015. Rapidly evolving security threat landscape is shaping up workforce skilling agenda. Several Indian and global security service providers are serving security operations of their global clients from India. Global Security Services provider firms are setting up their Global Security Centres in India to cater to global challenges of Cyber Security. Lot of Global Security Product Companies have also setup their R and D centres in India. All such developments are spurring demand for more Cyber Security professionals. Also, a lot of companies including the major IT Services providers and consulting firms have been aggressively expanding their Cyber Security teams and are on the lookout for professionals.

(c) Cyber Security is increasingly getting introduced in curriculum of schools and colleges every year. Several Universities and Institutions are offering PhDs and Master's degree specializing in Cyber Security/ Information Security and teaching Cyber Security at graduate level. Vocational training program on cyber security have been introduced by Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship, and also universities like IGNOU.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is also implementing a project titled, 'Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) Project Phase-II' with an objective of capacity building in the area of Information Security, training of Government personnel and creation of mass Information Security awareness targeted towards various user segments. The academic activities are implemented through 52 Institutions/Technical Universities. So far, four thematic labs have been set up at IISc. Bangalore, IIT Guwahati, IIT Madras and IIT Bombay and TIFR, Mumbai, functioning as Information Security Research and Development Centres (ISRDCs) and lab infrastructure of other Institutes/Technical Universities functioning as Resource Centres/Participating Institutes have been upgraded, to facilitate launch of specialized programs in Information Security at both formal & non-formal levels. Further, a model course structure/syllabus has been designed by experts to act as a benchmark for various formal and non-formal courses viz. M.Tech (Information

Security), M.Tech. (Computer Science with specialisation in Information Security), M.Tech./B. Tech (Retrofit) and 6 month/1 year PG Diploma programmes offered under the project. The model course structure/syllabus comprises of 55 core/specialized courses catering to 6 streams *i.e.* Cryptography, Infrastructure and Communication, Secure Programming, Database applications, Information Security Management and Cybercrime Investigation and Forensics.

In addition, DSCI and NASSCOM Sector Skills Council (SSC), under the aegis of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) have developed Career Map, Standardised Curricula (Qualification Packs) and courseware for upcoming job roles like Application Security, Network Security, Industrial Control Systems Security etc. Ten such course wares have already been released till date. The content is being rolled out in colleges and universities. Also, the content is being used for creating Master Trainers for different domains of Cyber Security. NASSCOM-SSC and DSCI envisage certifying the candidates on the Qualification Packs. Areas like Identity and Access Management, Threat Intelligence, Security Analytics, Internet of Things (IoT)/ Machine to Machine (M2M) Security, Penetration Testing, Cyber Forensics etc. are being taken up by academic institutions.

Surge in mobile frauds

2960. SHRI. SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that mobile frauds is an area of great concern for companies as 40-45 per cent of financial transactions are done via mobile devices and this threat is expected to grow to 60-65 per cent, if so, the details in this regard and Government's response thereto; and

(b) the details of the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government for implementing robust cyber security law to prevent the surge in mobile frauds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) There have been some media reports based on the joint study by 'The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India' (ASSOCHAM) and research firm 'Ernst and Young' (EY), titled "Strategic National Measures to Combat Cybercrime" indicating mobile frauds is an area of great concern for companies, as 40-45 per cent of financial transactions are done via mobile devices and this threat is expected to grow to 60-65 per cent.

(b) Government has taken a number of legal, technical and administrative measures for addressing cyber security. These include the following, namely:—

- (i) Enactment of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 which has adequate provisions for dealing with prevalent cyber crimes including frauds.
- (ii) The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) created under section 70B of IT Act, 2000, issues alerts and advisories regarding latest cyber threats and countermeasures on regular basis. CERT-In has published guidelines for securing IT infrastructure, which are available on its website (www.certin.org.in).
- (iii) Government has initiated setting up of 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. Phase-I of NCCC has been made operational.
- (iv) Cyber Crime Cells have been set up in all States and Union Territories for reporting and investigation of Cyber Crime cases.
- (v) 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 & Kashmir for training of law enforcement personnel and Judiciary in these States.
- (vi) A number of Cyber forensics tools for collection, analysis and presentation of the digital evidence have been developed indigenously and such tools are being used by law enforcement Agencies.
- (vii) 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.
- (viii) All banks have been mandated to report cyber security incidents to CERT-In expeditiously.
- (ix) All authorised entities/banks issuing Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) in the country have been advised to carry out audit by the empanelled auditors of 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. Government has empanelled 54 security auditing organisations to support and audit implementation of Information Security Best Practices.

- (x) Government has launched the Cyber Swachhta Kendra (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre). The centre is providing detection of malicious programs and provides free tools to remove the same.

Online tools used for digital transactions

2961. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any month-wise reports about the number of currency-less transactions during the last one year; and

(b) whether segregated information of the last twelve months, about various online tools used for transactions, is available, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of month-wise currency-less transactions and online tools used for transactions during last one year are as under:

Digital Transactions

Digital Modes	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17
	(in lakhs)											
UPI (including BHIM)	Service not launched	0.93	0.85	1.03	2.85	19.67	41.54	41.58	61.64	70.08	91.69	99.56
USSD	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.07	1.02	3.08	2.22	2.08	1.87	1.91	1.99
AePS (Including BHIM Aadhaar)	229.25	228.94	236.34	257.15	268.71	373.44	431.58	410.16	516.96	565.30	680.67	755.18
IMPS	321.80	338.90	359.30	420.90	361.70	527.80	624.20	597.50	674.10	650.80	667.20	658.40
Debit card at PoS	1,290.70	1,305.30	1,251.90	1,405.90	2,364.70	4,154.60	3,286.20	2,517.50	2,711.70	2,680.00	2,675.10	2,546.60
Credit Cards	794.40	839.50	779.30	888.60	979.10	1,160.80	1,128.00	949.30	1,076.10	1,065.80	1,153.30	1,094.70
NEFT	1,134.80	1,185.50	1,201.50	1,332.10	1,230.50	1,663.10	1,641.90	1,482.10	1,867.00	1,431.70	1,558.20	1,523.40
NACH	1,896.00	1,533.30	1,572.90	1,693.90	1,611.10	2,080.50	1,668.20	1,587.10	1,910.10	2,221.70	2,040.30	2,077.90
M-Wallet	594.50	706.80	753.00	995.70	1,380.90	2,131.10	2,616.70	2,469.50	3,074.50	3,208.70	2,417.20	2,216.30
NETC	Service not launched											
CTS	792.40	816.20	789.40	820.40	870.80	1,300.10	1,184.50	1,004.40	1,192.10	952.60	970.80	918.50
TOTAL	7,053.88	6,955.40	6,944.52	7,815.71	9,070.43	13,444.05	12,688.71	11,126.87	13,161.28	12,922.65	12,337.07	11,974.60

Online Tools used for transactions include:

Unified Payment Interface (UPI), (Launched in August 2016), Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD), Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS), National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT), National Automated Clearing House (NACH), Mobile Wallets (m-wallet), National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC), (Launched in December 2016), Cheque Truncation System (CTS).

Sources: RBI and NPCI

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan

2962. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently approved a scheme titled “Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) to usher in digital literacy in rural India;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the time by when the scheme is likely to introduced in each district of the country; and

(c) the funds allocated/released to States/Union Territories, including Himanchal Pradesh, for implementation of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Government has approved a scheme titled “Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)” in February, 2017 to usher in digital literacy in rural India by covering 6 Crore rural households (one person per household). The total outlay of the above Scheme is ₹ 2,351.38 crores (approx.). The PMGDISHA is implemented as a Central Sector Scheme by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology through an implementing agency namely CSC e-Governance Services India Limited (CSC-SPV), with active collaboration of all the State Governments and UT Administrations, District e-Governance Society (DeGS), etc. The details of indicative targets of the States/UTs based on availability of average number of rural households are given in the Statement (*See* below).

To ensure equitable geographical coverage across the country, a Gram Panchayat centric approach is adopted with targets being assigned and monitored for each of the 2.50 lakh Gram Panchayats. On an average a target of 200-300 beneficiaries per Gram Panchayat is envisaged. All the Panchayats in the country would be covered under the scheme except the Panchayats which are part of urban agglomerations.

(c) The tentative State-wise funds requirement for the States/Union Territories based on the expenses towards training fee, certification/assessment fee and programme management is also included in the above mentioned Statement.

Statement

Indicative States/Union Territories including Himanchal Pradesh-targets and funds requirement under PMGDISHA Scheme

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Indicative Targets	Indicative fund requirement (₹ in crore)
1	2	3	4
1.	Uttar Pradesh	1,11,71,000	437.79
2.	Bihar	66,30,000	259.83
3.	West Bengal	44,81,000	175.61
4.	Maharashtra	44,33,000	173.73
5.	Madhya Pradesh	37,84,000	148.29
6.	Rajasthan	37,12,000	145.47
7.	Karnataka	27,05,000	106.01
8.	Tamil Nadu	26,79,000	104.99
9.	Odisha	25,17,000	98.64
10.	Gujarat	24,97,000	97.86
11.	Andhra Pradesh	20,28,000	79.48
12.	Telangana	20,28,000	79.48
13.	Assam	19,29,000	75.6
14.	Jharkhand	18,03,000	70.66
15.	Chhattisgarh	14,12,000	55.33
16.	Kerala	12,57,000	49.26
17.	Punjab	12,47,000	48.87
18.	Haryana	11,91,000	46.67
19.	Jammu and Kashmir	6,58,000	25.79
20.	Uttarakhand	5,06,000	19.83
21.	Himachal Pradesh	4,44,000	17.39
22.	Tripura	1,95,000	7.64
23.	Meghalaya	1,71,000	6.7
24.	Manipur	1,37,000	5.37
25.	Nagaland	1,01,000	3.96
26.	Arunachal Pradesh	77,000	3.02

1	2	3	4
27.	Goa	40,000	1.57
28.	Mizoram	38,000	1.49
29.	Sikkim	33,000	1.29
30.	NCT of Delhi	30,000	1.17
31.	Puducherry	28,000	1.1
32.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	18,000	0.71
33.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	13,000	0.51
34.	Daman and Diu	4,000	0.15
35.	Chandigarh	2,000	0.08
36.	Lakshadweep	1,000	0.04
TOTAL		6,00,00,000	2,351.38

Note: Targets and funds requirement per State/UT may vary depending upon performance

Policy to boost electronic manufacturing

2963. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that information technology-driven economy of the country has a great potential to grow;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard to promote it; and

(c) the present status with regard to implementation of New Electronic Policy to boost electronic manufacturing in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHOUDHARY): (a) to (c) The Information Technology-driven economy of the country has a great potential to grow. Government of India has launched a Digital India programme with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. The digital economy, *inter alia*, includes Information Technology (IT)/Information Technology Enabled Services (ITeS), Electronics, Telecommunications, e-Commerce, Digital payments, Cyber Security, Internet of Things (IoT) and Digital Skilling. Considering the current and upcoming opportunities in the digital economy in above mentioned areas, it is estimated that the size of digital economy would grow to over 1 Trillion US Dollars (USD) by 2024-25, from

about USD 413 Billion during 2016-17. The emerging technology areas such as Data Centre/Cloud, Space technologies, Robotics, Augmented Reality, IoT, Big Data/Business Analytics/Data Mining, Cyber Security, etc., have been identified to drive the growth.

Under the Digital India programme, the Government has launched two BPO promotion schemes namely India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS) and North East BPO Promotion Scheme (NEBPS), for creation of employment opportunities and promotion of investment in Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled Services (IT/ITES) sector across the country, particularly in small cities/towns including rural areas. These schemes provide capital support along with special incentives like encouraging employment to women and physically disabled persons, promoting local entrepreneurs, etc.

In order to promote an inclusive, vibrant and sustainable ecosystem for R&D and innovation, the Government, industry and academia are working together on a common platform to find solutions for the growing societal need and challenges. Towards achieving these goals Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has initiated various research programmes in different areas of Information Technology (IT). The Ministry has launched R&D Programmes in IT such as Technology Development Council (TDC), Technology Development for Indian Languages (TDIL), Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), High Performance Computing (HPC), Information Technology Research Academy (ITRA), etc. Some of the technologies have been transferred to industry and have been commercialized. These R&D programmes have also contributed to development of complex IT solutions and competence building in the R&D centres.

Deactivation of Aadhaar Numbers

2964. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Aadhaar numbers deactivated so far, State-wise and year-wise, since the issuance of first Aadhaar;

(b) the reasons for which numbers are deactivated and for each reason, the number of Aadhaar deactivated so far;

(c) the procedure which was followed for deactivation prior to enactment of Aadhaar Act in 2016 and the procedure being followed after notification of Aadhaar regulations; and

(d) which authority is responsible for deactivation and whether an opportunity of being heard is given to the person whose Aadhaar is being deactivated, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Aadhaar numbers are deactivated for a number of reason(s) as stated in Section 27 and 28 of Aadhaar (Enrolment and Update) Regulations, 2016. Till date, approximately 81 lakh Aadhaar numbers have been deactivated. The State-wise, year-wise and reason-wise data is not maintained by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

(c) Prior to enactment of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, the deactivation (suspension) of Aadhaar numbers was done as per the Aadhaar Life Cycle Management (ALCM) guideline. Subsequent to the enactment of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, the provisions of the Aadhaar Life Cycle Management were incorporated in the Aadhaar (Enrolment and Update) Regulations, 2016 and deactivation of Aadhaar numbers is done as per these Regulations.

(d) The authority to deactivate the Aadhaar number rests with Regional Offices of UIDAI. In addition, deactivation of Aadhaar due to mixed/anomalous biometrics is done by the UIDAI Technology Centre. As per the laid down procedure, "Any Case reported/identified as a possible case of requiring omission/deactivation may require a field enquiry which may include hearing the persons whose Aadhaar number is sought to be omitted or deactivated."

Amendment of IT Act

2965. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Committee or a Group of Experts has been constituted under the Ministry for examining the proposals to amend or replace the Information Technology (IT) Act;

(b) if so, the details of its terms of reference, composition and deliberations till date; and

(c) if not, whether such a proposal is being considered by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has not constituted any Group of Experts to amend the Information Technology Act, 2000. However, Ministry of Home Affairs has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri T. K. Vishwanathan, former Law Secretary to examine the existing domestic and international provisions on Cyber Laws and to suggest and recommend effective legal framework/

guidelines to tackle Cyber Crime. The Terms of Reference and Composition of the Committee are given in the Statement (*See below*). The Committee is yet to submit its recommendations.

Statement

Composition and Terms of Reference of the Committee constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs for making recommendations for effective legal framework/ guidelines to tackle cyber crime.

Composition of the Committee

(i)	Shri T.K. Vishwanathan	Secretary (Law) (Retd.)	Chairman
(ii)	Dr. Gulshan Rai	Director General, CERT-In D/o Electronics and IT	Member
(iii)	Dr. Ms. Mukulita	Joint Secretary, Legislative Department, M/o Law and Justice	Member
(iv)	Shri Sai Manohar	DIG (IPC), CBI	Member
(v)	Shri J. P. Agrawal	Joint Secretary (Judicial), MHA	Member
vi.	Shri K. Muralidharan	Director (CS Division), MHA	Convenor

Terms of Reference of the Committee

- (i) To study and examine the existing Domestic Cyber Laws and International Cyber Laws and suggest measures/amendments and a road map taking into account the need of legal competence/expertise on Cyber Law from investigation, prosecution and judiciary angle.
- (ii) To study and recommend the aberrations and entire change situation in the Indian Laws and International Laws with regard to the cyber crime and suggest measures/safeguards for effective enforcement of Cyber Laws to tackle the Cyber Crimes in the cyber space.
- (iii) To suggest/recommend any amendment in IT (Amendment) Act, 2008 and the corresponding provisions in the IPC, Cr. P.C. and Evidence Act to facilitate establishment of a strong legal framework to fight the Cyber Crimes.
- (iv) Any other measures/suggestions the Expert Committee may like to recommend with regard to Capacity Building on Law Enforcement.

Setting up of electronic manufacturing hubs

2966. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken initiatives to promote the Indian electronic hardware/appliances manufacturing sector and to curb cheap imports;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the achievements made therein; and

(c) whether Government aims to set up electronic manufacturing hubs 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) and (b) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India has taken various initiatives to create conducive environment to attract global and overseas industries to invest in electronics manufacturing sector in the country. The steps taken by the Government to promote electronics hardware manufacturing in the country are given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

(c) MeitY is implementing Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) Scheme to support creation of world-class infrastructure for attracting investments in electronics manufacturing. As of now, under the Scheme, fifteen (15) applications for setting up of Greenfield Electronics Manufacturing Clusters and two (2) applications for setting up of Common Facility Centres (CFCs) in Brownfield Cluster have been accorded final approval. The details of the approved Greenfield and CFCs in Brownfield Electronics Manufacturing Cluster are given in the Statement-II (*See below*).

Statement-I

Initiatives taken by the Government to promote electronics manufacturing in the country

- (1) Promotion of electronics hardware manufacturing is one of the pillars of Digital India campaign of the Government.
- (2) The National Policy on Electronics (NPE 2012) was notified in October 2012 with the vision to create a globally competitive electronics design and manufacturing industry to meet the country's needs and serve the international market.
- (3) Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS) provides financial incentives to offset disability and attract investments in the Electronics Systems Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) sector. The scheme was notified in July 2012 and subsequently modified in August, 2015 and January, 2017. The scheme

provides subsidy for investments in capital expenditure - 20% for investments in SEZs and 25% in non-SEZs. The scheme is available for both new projects and expansion projects. For high technology and high capital investment units like Fabs, production subsidy @10% is also provided. Under the scheme, 237 proposals with proposed investments of ₹ 1,25,968 crores have been received. Of these, 97 proposals with proposed investments of ₹ 20,698 crores have been approved.

- (4) Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) Scheme provides financial assistance for creating world-class infrastructure for electronics manufacturing units. The assistance for the projects for setting up of Greenfield Electronics Manufacturing Clusters is 50% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of ₹ 50 crores for 100 acres of land. For larger areas, pro-rata ceiling applies. For lower extent, the extent of support is decided by the Steering Committee for Clusters (SCC) subject to the ceiling of ₹ 50 crores. For setting up of Brownfield Electronics Manufacturing Cluster, 75% of the cost of infrastructure, subject to a ceiling of ₹ 50 crores is provided. Under the scheme, 15 Greenfield EMCs and 2 Common Facility Centres (CFCs) in Brownfield Clusters have been accorded final approval and 10 EMCs have been granted in-principle approval.
- (5) A policy for providing preference to domestically manufactured electronic products in Government procurement has been implemented. Nine electronics products *viz.* Desktop PCs, Dot Matrix Printers, Laptop PCs, Tablet PCs, Smart Cards, LED Products, Biometric Access Control, Biometric Finger Print Sensor, Biometric Iris Sensor have been notified.
- (6) Approvals for all foreign direct investment up-to 100% in the electronic hardware manufacturing sector are under the automatic route.
- (7) For promotion of exports in the sector, Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) and Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme are available under the Foreign Trade Policy, 2015-20. MEIS offers export incentives so as to offset disabilities of manufacturing. The export incentive for electronic goods is available @ 2% of FOB value of export. Zero duty EPCG scheme allows import of capital goods at zero customs duty, subject to specified export obligation.
- (8) Tariff Structure has been rationalized to promote indigenous manufacturing of electronic goods, including *inter alia* Mobile Handsets, Televisions, Electronic Components, Set Top Boxes, LED Products, Medical Electronics, Solar PV Cells and Microwave Ovens. As a result, the production of LCD/LED TVs has gone up from 0.87 crore units in 2014-15 to 1.2 crore units in 2015-16 and is estimated to be 1.5 crore units in 2016-17. The production of Light Emitting Diode (LED)

products has gone up from ₹ 2,172 crores in 2014-15 to ₹ 5,092 crores in 2015-16 and is estimated to be ₹ 7,134 crores in 2016-17. The production of Mobile Handsets has gone up from 6 crore units in 2014-15 to 11 crore units in 2015-16 and is estimated to be 17.5 crore units in 2016-17.

9. With the introduction of the Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP) in the Budget 2015-16, significant manufacturing capacities have been set up in India during the past two years. Approximately 70 new plants for manufacturing of mobile handsets and components have been set up and the sector has already generated about 1 lakh direct and 2 lakh indirect employment opportunities.
10. To promote indigenous manufacturing of Televisions, baggage rules have been amended to ban duty free import of Flat Panel Television Sets w.e.f. August 2014 under the baggage allowance.
11. Mandatory compliance to safety standards has been notified for identified Electronic Products with the objective to curb import of sub-standard and unsafe electronics goods. As of now, 30 electronic products are under the ambit of this Order. The Compulsory Registration Scheme has resulted in high compliance of notified electronic goods to Indian safety standards and over 9466 registrations have been granted by BIS. The Indian Language support for Mobile Phones as per IS 16333 (Part 3) has been added to the schedule of Compulsory Registration Order.

Statement-II

Details of EMCs accorded final approval (As on 07.08.2017)

Sl. No.	States	Location of EMC	Area (Acres)	Chief Promoter/ SPV	Financial out lay (₹ in crore)	
					Project Cost	Grant-in-aid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Chilamathur, Anantapur District	47.32	Elcina Raaga Mayuri Electronics Park Private Limited	52.13	23.00
2.	Andhra Pradesh	Village-Cherivi, Satyavedu Mandal, Chittor District	94	Sri City Pvt. Ltd.	56.75	27.34

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Andhra Pradesh	Vikruthamala Village, Yerpadu Mandal, Chittor District	501.40	Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd. (APIIC)	339.80	111.42
4.	Chhattisgarh	Village-Tuta, Sector-22, Naya Raipur, Tehsil-Abhanpur, Raipur District	69.98	Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (CSIDC)	89.23	43.08
5.	Gujarat	Village-Tunda, Taluka-Mundra, District-Kutch	631.38	Mundra Solar Techno park Private Limited (MSTPL)	745.14	315.69
6.	Goa	Village-Tuem, Taluka-Pernem Goa	147.55	Department of Information and Technology, Government of Goa	161.32	73.77
7.	Jharkhand	Adityapur, Saraikela-Kharsawan District	82.49	Adityapur Industrial Area Development Authority (AIADA)	97.88	41.48
8.	Kerala	Kakkanad Village, Kanayannur Taluk, Ernakulam District	66.87	Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (KINFRA)	140.01	50
9.	Madhya Pradesh	Badwai-Bhopal	50	Madhya Pradesh State Electronics Development Corporation Ltd. (MPSEDC)	46.16	20.86
10.	Madhya Pradesh	Purva-Jabalpur	40		38.01	17.76
11.	Odisha	Infovalley, Bhubaneswar Industrial Area, Khurda District	203.37	Odisha Industrial development Corporation (IDCO)	200.76	93.09

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	Rajasthan	SPL-1, Salarpur, Khushkera, Bhiwadi	50.3	ELCINA Electronics Manufacturing Cluster Pvt. Ltd (EEMCPL)	46.09	20.24
13.	Telangana	E-city, Fab City, Hyderabad	603.52	Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC)	667	252.42
14.	West Bengal	Sector-IV and V, Falta Industrial Centre, P.S Ramnagar, District South 24 Parganas	58.04	West Bengal Electronics Industry Development Corporation Limited (WEBEL)	58.86	26.52
15.	West Bengal	Naihati town, North 24 Parganas district	70		58.31	25.70
16.	Karnataka (CFC)	Plot No. 360, KIADB Industrial Area, Hebbal, Hottagalli, Mysore	1.11	Mysore ESDM Cluster Private Limited	29.53	21.31
17.	Maharashtra	Shendra Five Star Industrial Area, Aurangabad	1.98	Deogiri Electronics Cluster Private Limited	27.24	20.58

Setting up of ITIR in Visakhapatnam

2967. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Andhra Pradesh submitted a proposal for setting up of Information Technology Investment Region in Visakhapatnam district;

(b) if so, when such proposal was received and the present status of the same;

(c) whether the proposal was placed before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA); and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, by when it is likely to be placed before the CCEA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (d) A proposal for setting up of Information Technology Investment Region (ITIR) in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh was received in Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) on 26th August, 2014. The matter is under consideration.

Digital India outreach programme

2968. SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has launched any Digital India outreach programme to make the people understand the main thrust of the Digital India and increase the habit of Digitalisation, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of the effect of the programmes in achieving the people understand the Digital India in its letter and spirit, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India has conducted a Digital India outreach programme to spread awareness about various projects, services and products of Digital India programme. The outreach campaign was a citizen engagement program designed to empower citizens preferably at Digital Points of Presence (PoP) locations such as District e-Governance Societies (DeGS), Common Services Centres (CSCs), Gram Panchayats, Schools, Colleges, Post Offices, Haats and similar congregation points.

The campaign was rolled out in 28 States/UTs, covering 464 districts. The campaign was carried out by a fleet of approx 67 vans spread across the country. The vans are equipped with audio visual facilities, and also offer Internet connectivity, education material and other items. The campaign vans have covered more than 12000 locations across the country. The campaign has been effective in spreading understanding of Digital India services to citizens especially among the rural/semi-urban population.

Protection of privacy of data

2969. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of statements like 'data is oil', which highlights interests of corporates in getting control of massive data for use as commodity;

(b) in this background, how Government intends to protect the privacy of data of individuals, families, etc., so that they are not used as parts in the cut throat war among corporates;

(c) the guarantees made by Government to protect data; and

(d) if not, the effective steps including legislation if intended to be adopted by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (d) The provisions contained in Section 43, Section 43A, Section 72 and Section 72A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 provide for privacy and security of data in digital form. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has recently been mandated to develop a legal framework for Data Protection for protection of online personal data. An Expert Committee under the chairmanship of Justice Shri B. N. Srikrishna has been set up to work out the modalities.

Rise in prices of hot spices

†2970. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of hot spices (garam masala) in the country have risen about ten times;

(b) if not, the details of prices of cumin seed, clove, black pepper, cardamom and other spices per kilogram during the financial year 2013-14 to 2016-17; and

(c) whether the Government would take stern steps to control the exorbitant prices of hot spices (garam masala), if not, the reason thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) to (c) Spices are cash crops and their prices are determined by market forces. The annual average wholesale prices of various hot spices (garam masala) ruling in different cities during 2013-14 to 2015-16 and during

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

April-June, 2017-18 as compiled from different sources and furnished by the Spices Board of India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India are as under:

Price of various spices in Domestic Market

						(₹/Kg)
Spice	Market	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (Apr-June)
Cumin Seed	Chennai	139.01	127.95	167.04	190.76	199.29
Clove	Cochin	914.77	1015.74	796.00	749.20	648.56
Black Pepper (Mg-1)	Cochin	448.29	686.64	655.22	694.77	550.95
Cardamom (Large)	Gangtok	938.21	1409.16	1470.91	973.94	643.37
Chillies	Guntur	67.06	68.66	98.35	97.68	37.28
Ginger	Cochin	181.68	274.55	209.36	160.33	123.37
Turmeric	Erode	60.31	66.04	79.57	78.70	66.43
Coriander	Chennai	79.29	113.88	108.19	85.03	77.29
Cardamom (Small)*	All India	649.20	785.19	602.18	1096.48	

Sources: India Pepper and Spice Trade Association, Cochin (for Pepper); reports from Licensed cardamom auctioneers (for small cardamom); Spices Board, Regional Office, Gangtok (for large cardamom), Agriculture Produce Market Committee, Guntur (for Chillies); Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Cochin (for ginger); Erode Market Committee (Turmeric), Madras Kirana Merchant's Association, Chennai (for Cumin and Coriander); Daily News Paper (for Clove)

*The weighted average auction price of cardamom (small) corresponds to crop season which starts in August every year

Employment in FPIs

†2971. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons employed in the Food Processing Industries (FPIs), the percentage of employment generated in all the manufacturing factories registered under the Factory Act, 1948;

(b) the total employment generated in Food Processing sector during the last three years, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the total amount of Foreign Direct Investment in the food processing sector during the last three years; and

(d) the extent to which it has helped development of this industry and the additional employment generated through this, the details thereof, State-wise?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) and (b) As per the latest Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) of 2014-15 conducted by Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Food Processing Industries constituted 12.77 per cent of employment generated in all manufacturing factories registered under Factories Act, 1948. The State-wise details of total employment generated in registered Food Processing sector during the last three years are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) According to the data provided by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the total amount of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) equity inflows received in food processing sector during the last three years are as follows:

Year	FDI Equity Inflow (US\$ Million)
2014-15	515.86
2015-16	505.88
2016-17	727.22

(d) The inflow of FDI equity into the food processing sector is one of the major factors that has contributed towards the growth and development of the sector. As per the National Accounts Statistics of Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the growth of gross value added (GVA) in food processing industries has gone up from 1.60 per cent in 2013-14 to 6.87 per cent in 2015-16. As per the latest available data under ASI, the total number of employment generated in registered food processing factories has gone up from 16,89,175 in 2012-13 to 17,73,939 in 2014-15.

Statement

State-wise Estimated Number of Persons Engaged in Registered Food Processing Sector

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UTs	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	135	135	116
2.	Andhra Pradesh	144394	139065	152847
3.	Arunachal Pradesh*	-	-	1375
4.	Assam	79141	88448	88057
5.	Bihar	23955	22406	35881
6.	Chandigarh (U.T.)	663	1008	903
7.	Chhattisgarh	22145	23051	25564
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	324	293	295

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UTs	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
9.	Daman and Diu	1863	1810	2841
10.	Delhi	11905	13840	13735
11.	Goa	6443	6936	7338
12.	Gujarat	90318	100025	97623
13.	Haryana	48818	41878	49518
14.	Himachal Pradesh	15733	13236	11934
15.	Jammu and Kashmir	7458	9102	7500
16.	Jharkhand	5163	4736	6488
17.	Karnataka	110189	108405	113141
18.	Kerala	163766	157997	153851
19.	Madhya Pradesh	36091	40133	45976
20.	Maharashtra	217123	234196	239343
21.	Manipur	576	433	558
22.	Meghalaya	679	749	890
23.	Nagaland	136	172	267
24.	Odisha	35436	27171	27224
25.	Pudducherry	4038	4610	5023
26.	Punjab	90813	104002	106617
27.	Rajasthan	40547	37530	39639
28.	Sikkim	1754	1843	1776
29.	Tamil Nadu	188706	194330	204647
30.	Telangana	70364	79190	60315
31.	Tripura	1644	1547	1998
32.	Uttar Pradesh	160325	166326	158489
33.	Uttarakhand	26655	30344	28380
34.	West Bengal	81857	85966	83656
ALL INDIA TOTAL		1689175	1741034	1773939

*Arunachal Pradesh got included in ASI from 2014-15

Source: Annual Survey of Industries*

Implementation of SAMPADA Scheme in Maharashtra

†2972. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has started a new scheme, SAMPADA, in the country,

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

including in Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof and the total budget allotted under this scheme;

(b) the main objectives of the SAMPADA scheme along with the main components thereof; and

(c) the total number of programmes running in Maharashtra under the SAMPADA scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has approved a new Central Sector Scheme, KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA, for promotion and development of food processing sector in the country, including Maharashtra. The objectives of “KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA” are to Supplement Agriculture, Modernize Processing and Decrease Agri-Waste. The KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA has an outlay of ₹ 6000 crore for the period 2016-20 coterminous with the 14th Finance Commission cycle. KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA is comprehensive package to give a renewed thrust to the food processing sector includes new schemes of (i) Infrastructure for Agro Processing Clusters; (ii) Creation of Backward and Forward Linkage; and (iii) Creation/Expansion of Food Processing and Preservation Capacities along with ongoing schemes of (i) Mega Food Parks; (ii) Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure; (iii) Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure; and (iv) Human Resources and Institutions.

(c) The total number of projects sanctioned in Maharashtra under the KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA is as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	Number of Projects
1.	Mega Food Parks	03
2.	Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure	50
3.	Food Testing Laboratories	17

Functioning of EVMs

2973. SHRI JAVED ALI KHAN:

SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Election Commission is aware of the RTI reply given by District authorities of Maharashtra confirming malfunctioning of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), if so, the details thereof;

- (b) the response of Government and the Election Commission thereto; and
- (c) the details of private agencies involved in maintenance of EVMs during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) The Election Commission has informed that they are aware of the RTI reply given by the District Election Officer, Buldana regarding the technical fault in one particular Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) which was used at the polling station 57/6-Sultanpur from 57-Sultanpur Constituency of Buldana Zila Parishad. The Commission has requested the Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra to send the defective EVM in question to the Commission immediately for further examination by the Technical Expert Committee. No private agencies are involved in the maintenance of Electronic Voting Machines.

Funds for Fast Track Courts

2974. SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the total number of Fast Track Courts (FTCs) set up in the last three years in different States;
- (b) the details of the funds allocated to set up FTCs in the last three years, State-wise, and
- (c) the details of the amount utilised in the creation of these courts along with the amount unspent in the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) Setting up of Fast Track Courts (FTCs) lies within the domain of the State Governments who set up such courts as per their need and resources in consultation with the concerned High Courts.

The 11th Finance Commission had recommended a scheme for creation of 1734 FTCs in the country for disposal of long pending cases and the cases involving undertrial prisoners. The scheme recommended by the 11th Finance Commission was for a period of five years upto 2004-05. The Government accorded its approval for the continuation of central funding of 1562 FTCs that were operational as on 31.3.2005 for a further period of 5 years *i.e.* up to 31st March, 2010. The scheme was continued for another one year upto 31st March, 2011.

An amount of ₹ 870 crore was released to the State Governments for FTCs during a period of 11 years from 2000-01 to 2010-2011 and Central funding was discontinued beyond 31.03.2011. In its judgment in *Brij Mohan Lal and Others Vs. Union of India and Others* on 19.04.2012, Supreme Court has endorsed the position of Government of India that continuation of FTCs is within the domain of the States and has directed the States that they need to decide either to bring the FTC scheme to an end or to continue the same as a permanent feature in the State. A number of States have continued FTCs beyond 31.03.2011 with their own resources.

However, the Central Government decided to provide funds upto a maximum of ₹ 80 crore per annum on a matching basis upto 31.03.2015 from the 13th Finance Commission Award for meeting expenditure on salaries of the 10% additional positions of Judges being created in the subordinate judiciary pursuant to the direction of Supreme Court in the case of *Brij Mohan Lal Vs. Union of India*.

The 14th Finance Commission (14th FC) has endorsed the proposal of the Union Government to strengthen the judicial system in States which includes, *inter alia*, establishing 1800 FTCs for a period of five years for all cases of heinous crimes like cases involving senior citizens, women, children etc. at a cost of ₹ 4144 crore. Further, the 14th FC has urged the State Governments to use the additional fiscal space provided by the Commission in the tax devolution to meet such requirements.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister vide his letter dated 23rd April, 2015 has urged the State Governments to allocate funds for the activities mentioned in the 14th FC recommendations from their State budget from 2015-16 onwards. This issue was also discussed in the CM/CJ Conference on the 05th April, 2015 and 24th April, 2016 wherein it was resolved to strengthen the existing coordination and monitoring mechanism between the State Government and the Judiciary for effective implementation of the recommendations of the 14th FC. The Minister of Law and Justice has further urged all the Chief Ministers of the States and the Chief Justices of the High Courts to implement the resolution of the Conference vide letters dated 3rd June, 2015, 26th September, 2016 and 2nd May, 2017 respectively.

As per the information received from the High Courts, at present 575 FTCs are functional in the country and the funds allocated to set up these Courts during the 14th Finance Commission period through the tax devolution are given in the Statement (*See below*). The details regarding the amount utilized/unspent with the respective State Governments/High Courts is not maintained centrally.

Statement-I*(A) Details of 575 FTCs functional in the country*

Sl. No.	State	No. of FTC functional (as on date)
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	38
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	-
3.	Assam	3
4.	Bihar	51
5.	Chhattisgarh	14
6.	Delhi	13
7.	Goa	5
8.	Gujarat	0
9.	Haryana	0
10.	Himachal Pradesh	0
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	-
12.	Jharkhand	12
13.	Karnataka	0
14.	Kerala	0
15.	Madhya Pradesh	0
16.	Maharashtra	100
17.	Manipur	-
18.	Meghalaya	0
19.	Mizoram	-
20.	Nagaland	-
21.	Odisha	0
22.	Punjab	0
23.	Puducherry	-
24.	Rajasthan	0
25.	Sikkim	1
26.	Tamil Nadu	39
27.	Telangana	34

1	2	3
28.	Tripura	1
29.	Uttar Pradesh	183
30.	Uttarakhand	4
31.	West Bengal	77
TOTAL		575

(B) Funds allocated for establishment of 1800 Fast Track Courts for a period of five years (2015-2020) as endorsed by the 14th Finance Commission

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Funds allocated*
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

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Funds allocated*
21.	Punjab	115.11
22.	Chandigarh	4.61
	Haryana	110.51
23.	Rajasthan	214.11
24.	Sikkim	2.3
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

*The amount is to be allocated by the State Governments from their enhanced State budgets made available to them in the form of tax devolution.

Fast-Track Justice System

2975. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any new initiative to expedite delayed court cases into fast-track justice system in the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the number of cases disposed of in the various High Courts in the last two years under "five plus zero" policy initiative under National Court Management System; and

(c) the data of pendency of civil and criminal cases in Supreme Court and the High Courts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) A new initiative, the Integrated Court Management Information System (ICMIS) has been launched with effect from 10.05.2017 to usher in a higher level of objectivity, consistency, timeliness and transparency. In this behalf a new automated, dynamic and a responsive software has been prepared to provide speedy justice to all the stakeholders in the Supreme Court of India.

(b) A National Court Management System (NCMS) mechanism has been established in May, 2012, under the overall control of Hon'ble Chief Justice of India. One of the major initiative of the NCMS is the "five plus zero" policy initiative. Under this initiative special focus has been given to reduce cases before every court that are more than five years old. Disposal of cases in courts is within the domain of Judiciary. Data on disposal of cases is not maintained centrally.

(c) Data on pendency of cases is maintained by the Supreme Court and the High Courts. As per information made available by the Supreme Court, 48,772 Civil Cases and 9,666 Criminal Cases were pending in the Supreme Court of India as on 14.07.2017. As per information made available by the High Courts, 29.26 lakh Civil Cases and 10.88 lakh Criminal Cases were pending in the various High Courts as on 31.12.2016.

**Simultaneous elections for Parliament and Assembly Constituencies,
Urban Local Bodies and Panchayats**

2976. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH:

DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to hold simultaneous election to Panchayats, Urban Local Bodies, Parliament and Assembly constituencies so as to reduce the expenditure on frequent elections and to make use of the time for service of the people, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has held discussions at various levels and took the opinion of the States and Union Territories in this regard, if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The matter regarding conduct of simultaneous election for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies was examined by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice. The Committee in its 79th Report has given certain recommendations which are under examination of the Government.

Funds for infrastructure in Courts

2977. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated for modernisation and infrastructure development of High Courts and Lower Courts during the last year and current year, court-wise;

(b) whether Government has received proposals to increase the said allocation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) The primary responsibility for development of infrastructural facilities for judiciary in the States including High Courts rests with the State Governments. The Central Government augments the resources of the State Governments by releasing financial assistance under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for the development of infrastructure facilities for Judiciary. A sum of ₹ 5,844 crore has so far been sanctioned to State Governments/UTs under the Scheme since its inception in the year 1993-94, out of which a sum of ₹ 538 crore was sanctioned during 2016-17. ₹ 365 crore has so far been sanctioned during current financial year (2017-18). The details of Grants sanctioned under the aforesaid scheme during 2016-17 and 2017-18 are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) and (c) Demands for higher allocation of funds under the scheme are received from various State Governments. The Central Government sanctions the financial assistance under the scheme based on action plans of State Governments, utilisation of funds sanctioned earlier, availability of the funds under the scheme and other parameters as per the guidelines of the scheme.

Statement

Details of funds sanctioned under CSS Scheme for Infrastructural Facilities for Judiciary during 2016-17, 2017-18

(As on 09.08.2017)

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	State	Funds sanctioned in 2016-17	Funds sanctioned in 2017-18
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh		
2.	Bihar	5000.00	
3.	Chhattisgarh		
4.	Goa		
5.	Gujarat	5000.00	
6.	Haryana		
7.	Himachal Pradesh	819.00	

1	2	3	4
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	2104.00	
9.	Jharkhand		5000.00
10.	Karnataka	5000.00	5000.00
11.	Kerala		2500.00
12.	Madhya Pradesh		5000.00
13.	Maharashtra	4975.00	5000.00
14.	Odisha		
15.	Punjab	4800.00	5000.00
16.	Rajasthan	4374.00	
17.	Tamil Nadu	5000.00	
18.	Uttarakhand		
19.	Uttar Pradesh	5000.00	5000.00
20.	West Bengal		
TOTAL (A)		42072.00	32500.00
NE States			
1.	Arunachal Pradesh		
2.	Assam		2000.00
3.	Manipur		
4.	Meghalaya	2000.00	
5.	Mizoram		2000.00
6.	Nagaland	2000.00	
7.	Sikkim		
8.	Tripura		
TOTAL (B)		4000.00	4000.00
UTs			
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	259.68	
2.	Chandigarh		
3.	Dadra and Nagar Havelli		
4.	Daman and Diu	42.43	
5.	Delhi	5,000.00	

1	2	3	4
6.	Lakshadweep		
7.	Puducherry	2500.00	
	TOTAL (C)	7802.11	0.00
	GRAND TOTAL (A+B+C)	53874.11	36500.00

Meetings with Ministries/Departments regarding framing of rules/regulations

2978. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry holds two meetings every year with all the Ministries/Department regarding framing of rules/regulations under the respective Acts;

(b) if so, the dates of meetings and decisions taken therein during 2012-2016; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): (a) The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs holds meetings with the officers of all Ministries/Departments regarding framing of rules/regulations under the various Acts as per the suggestions of Committee on Subordinate Legislation of the Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha as and when required to guide the Ministries concerned as per Chapter-XI (Subordinate Legislation) of Manual of Parliamentary Procedures.

(b) During 2012-2016, three meetings were held on 11.07.2012, 21.01.2013 and 13.10.2016. The main objective to hold such meetings is to sensitize the officials of Ministries/Departments to follow the detailed guidelines of the Manual of Parliamentary Procedures as well as to adhere to the time frame prescribed for various process of Subordinate Legislation.

(c) Question does not arise.

**Electoral Reforms and Delimitation of Parliamentary
and Assembly Constituencies**

2979. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB:

DR. V. MAITREYAN:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the effective steps taken by Government to make electoral reforms and

delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies in various States/Union Territories in the country;

(b) the steps taken by Government to conduct Parliamentary and State Assembly elections in the country in one go after 2019 elections; and

(c) whether Government has taken any stand with regard to granting of voting rights to NRIs in the next General Elections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) As per Article 82 and 170 of the Constitution, it shall not be necessary to readjust the allocation/division of Parliamentary/Assembly seats until the relevant figures for the first census taken after the year 2026 have been published. So far as the issue of electoral reforms is concerned, the Law Commission in its 244th and 255th report has made certain recommendations in this regard, which are under consideration of the Government.

(b) The matter regarding conduct of simultaneous election for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies was examined by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice. The Committee in its 79th Report has given certain recommendations which are under examination.

(c) At present, under the provisions of section 20A of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 read with the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, Non Resident Indian Voters can cast their vote in person in the constituency where their names are registered.

Introduction of EVMs with Verifiable Audit Trail

2980. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to introduce EVMs with verifiable audit trail throughout the country; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Election Commission has informed that they are committed to use 100% Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in all elections. For this purpose, the Commission has already placed order for procurement of 8,07,500 VVPAT units each from M/s Bharat Electronics Limited, Bangalore and M/s Electronics Corporation of India Limited, Hyderabad.

Separate High Court for Andhra Pradesh

2981. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the difference between the provisions of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh Acts and the Andhra Pradesh Re-organisation Act, as far as setting up of High Court is concerned;

(b) whether it is a fact that a separate legislation is required to set up a separate High Court for Andhra Pradesh, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the present status of case going on in the Supreme Court with regard to setting up of High Court in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) by when Government will set up a High Court in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (d) Article 214 of the Constitution of India provides that there shall be a High Court for each State.

The States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh Re-organisation Acts, have a provision for establishment of High Courts for the newly created States. Accordingly, the High Courts of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand were established.

In so far as Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 is concerned, it provides for setting up of a separate High Court for the State of Andhra Pradesh. The Act also provides that once separate High Court for the State of Andhra Pradesh is established, the existing High Court will go to the State of Telangana. Till such time the existing High Court i.e. the High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad will serve as common High Court for the States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

To enable the creation of separate High Court for the State of Andhra Pradesh, all necessary infrastructure such as Court buildings, quarters for the Judges and officials/ staff of the Court has to be created by the State Government in consultation with the High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad. The Central Government had requested the Chief Justice of the High Court and the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh to take all the necessary steps towards the creation of separate High Court for the State of Andhra Pradesh. Presently, the matter is sub-judice at High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad for the States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Cases pending in Family Courts

2982. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Family Courts in the country, State-wise;
- (b) the number of cases pending in these courts, State-wise; and
- (c) the number of cases disposed of in these courts in the years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) Family Courts (FCs) are set up by the State Governments in consultation with the respective High Courts as per the provisions of the Family Court Act, 1984. The details of total number of Family Courts functional in the country State-wise as well as the number of cases disposed of in these courts in the years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 are given in the Statement (*See below*). The data regarding the total number of cases pending in these Courts is not maintained centrally.

Statement

Details of number of cases disposed of in Family Courts for the last three years and number of courts functional as on date

Sl. No.	State	Cases Disposed of during the year			No. of FCs functional
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4068	5668	6611	16
2.	Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram	2710	3085	4487	06
3.	Bihar	13826	15966	17914	39
4.	Chhattisgarh	9100	8496	10642	19
5.	Delhi	10426	11968	20923	15
6.	Goa	-	-	-	-
7.	Gujarat	12953	15910	18913	34
8.	Haryana	9130	9151	11369	09
9.	Himachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	876	921	1000	01
11.	Jharkhand	4736	6282	8648	24
12.	Karnataka	20223	17903	18192	25
13.	Kerala	54215	47881	48968	28
14.	Madhya Pradesh	-	-	24417	58
15.	Maharashtra	23022	22812	21906	25
16.	Manipur	-	-	-	06
17.	Meghalaya	-	-	-	-
18.	Odisha	5692	8926	10015	24
19.	Punjab	-	-	4418	05
20.	Puducherry	466	616	361	02
21.	Rajasthan	21218	35163	51926	32
22.	Sikkim	300	245	290	04
23.	Tamil Nadu	15142	11991	13754	20
24.	Telangana	6140	6599	7715	16
25.	Tripura	1484	586	708	03
26.	Uttar Pradesh	34723	113219	132189	76
27.	Uttarakhand	6067	5710	6585	07
28.	West Bengal	957	1054	1091	02
TOTAL					496

Fillip to International Arbitration

2983. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court is of the view that Government keeps away from the arbitration process to help promote confidence of the business community in international arbitration, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the 'Make in India' initiative would give a fillip to international commercial arbitration in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Government has not come across any

observation of the Supreme Court wherein the Hon'ble court has stated that the Government keeps away from the arbitration process.

The 'Make in India' initiative has been designed, *inter alia*, to facilitate investment and to build best-in-class manufacturing infrastructure in the country.

Linking Aadhaar Number with Voter Identity Card

2984. DR. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to link Aadhaar Card with Voter Identity Card to eliminate bogus names from the voter list and facilitate fair election, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government proposes to introduce Aadhaar based verification of voters at polling booth linked with Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) to prevent impersonation and bogus voting; and

(c) whether Government proposes to make registration of names in voter list user-friendly and simple based on Aadhaar/PAN number so that new voters are encouraged to register themselves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) The Election Commission has informed that they launched National Electoral Roll Purification and Authentication Programme (NERPAP) on 3rd March 2015 in all States/Union Territories with major objective of linking of Aadhaar with Electoral Roll database. However, the Commission had to suspend all activities relating to collection/feeding/seeding of Aadhaar number under NERPAP in view of Hon'ble Supreme Court's, interim order dated 11th August, 2015, in the Writ Petition (C) No 494 of 2012 (Justice K. S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) and Another Vs. Union of India & Others), which enjoined that 'the Unique Identification Number or the Aadhaar card will not be used by the respondents for any purpose other than the PDS Scheme and in particular for the purpose of distribution of foodgrains, etc. and cooking fuel, such as kerosene. The Aadhaar card may also be used for the purpose of the LPG Distribution Scheme.'

The Election Commission has filed Application for Impleadment and Application for Directions in the matter on 4th July 2017, before Hon'ble Supreme Court praying to permit the Election Commission to obtain Aadhaar details from the voters who are willing to submit or have submitted it voluntarily in order to link the same with the Voter Electoral Database. However, the matter is still *sub-judice*.

Timely justice to Under Trials

2985. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by Government to help the detainees awaiting trial get timely justice; and

(b) whether Government is considering spelling out a time-frame for the same, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Minister of Law and Justice has written to the Chief Justices of High Courts on 3rd February 2017 requesting for periodic monitoring of release of Under Trials so that every accused person receives a fair trial and does not languish in jail longer than it is absolutely necessary as per law. In compliance with the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 05.02.2016, Under Trial Review Committees have started functioning at district levels in the country. The Legal Services Authorities have set up legal aid clinics in jails and are providing adequate number of competent panel lawyers and para legal volunteers to assist Under Trial Prisoners and convicts, particularly the poor and indigent. The National Legal Services Authority has recently set up video conferencing facility at State Legal Services Authorities levels for video conferencing between the inmates in jails and their relatives.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has prepared a new Model Prison Manual in 2016 covering all aspects of prisons and copy of the same has been sent to the States/UTs for guidance. The Under Trial Review Committees are looking into all issues raised in this Manual including jail visits as suggested in the Manual.

'Prisons' is a State subject as per entry 4 of the List II of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Therefore, the administration and management of prisons is primarily the responsibility of State Governments. Similarly, timely trial for early justice is in the domain of Judiciary. In view of this, no time frame for timely justice to Under Trials can be spelt out.

Committees for withdrawal of frivolous and ineffective cases

2986. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments and High Courts have been asked to review pending court cases and set up committees to suggest withdrawal of frivolous and ineffective cases;

(b) the details of States which have set up such committees and have started the process of withdrawing such cases; and

(c) the number of cases withdrawn as a result thereof during the last year, State/ Union Territory-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) During the Joint Conference of Chief Ministers of States and Chief Justices of High Courts held at New Delhi in April 2015, reduction of pendency and backlog of cases in courts emerged as an area which required focused attention at the High Court level. The Chief Justices of High Courts in the Conference held on 03rd and 04th April 2015 have resolved that each High Court shall establish an Arrears Committee, which would go into the factors responsible for the delays and prepare an action plan to clear the backlog of cases pending for more than five years. As per information available, all High Courts have set up Arrears Committees. The Supreme Court has also constituted an Arrears Committee consisting of two Hon'ble Judges to formulate steps to reduce pendency of cases in High Courts and District Courts. Data on disposal and pendency of cases in courts is maintained by the Supreme Court and High Courts. There is no mandate for the Arrears Committees to suggest withdrawal of cases.

Shortage of judicial officers in Subordinate Judiciary

2987. SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases in the lower judiciary in the country, pending trial and judgment, and since when;

(b) whether it is a fact that the primary reason of pendency of cases is large scale vacancies of judicial officers in the Subordinate judiciary, if so, the number thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to conduct centralised examination to select judges timely, if so, the opinion of the Supreme Court in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) Data on pendency of cases is maintained by the Supreme Court and the High Courts. As per the information furnished by High Courts, 2.74 crore cases were pending in various District and Subordinate Courts as on 31.12.2016, out of which 1.38 crore (50.35%) cases were less than two years old, 72.16 lakh (26.24%) cases were two to five years old, 43 lakh (15.64%) cases were five to ten years old and 21.35 lakh (7.77%) cases were more than ten years old.

(b) Increasing number of state and central legislations, accumulation of first appeals, continuation of ordinary civil jurisdiction in some of the High Courts, vacancies of Judges, appeals against orders of quasi-judicial forums going to High Courts, number of revisions/appeals, adjournments, indiscriminate use of writ jurisdiction, lack of adequate arrangement to monitor, track and bunch cases for hearing are some of the main factors responsible for pendency of cases in courts. The appointment of Judges and Judicial Officers in the District and Subordinate Courts falls within the domain of the High Courts and State Governments concerned. As per the information made available by the High Courts, 5875 posts of Judges/Judicial Officers of District and Subordinate Courts were vacant as on 31.12.2016.

(c) The appointment of Judges and Judicial Officers in the District and Subordinate Courts falls within the domain of the High Courts and State Governments concerned in which the Central Government has no role. However, in order to facilitate regular filling up of these vacancies in a smooth and time-bound manner, the Department of Justice *vide* its letter dated 28th April, 2017 suggested certain options to the Hon'ble Supreme Court for creation and operation of the Central Selection Mechanism. The Hon'ble Supreme Court *suo motu* converted the Government's letter dated 28th April, 2017 into a writ petition on 09th May, 2017 and directed all State Governments (including Union Territories) to file their responses and suggestions by way of affidavits. The above matter is *subjudice* at present.

Safety of Unmanned Level Crossings

2988. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a system has been devised for the safety of unmanned level crossings, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) by when the process will be in operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Following two trial projects are in progress:

- (i) Development and implementation of Satellite based system for warning at unmanned level crossing gates of Indian Railways has been undertaken by Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO)/Ministry of Railways and Space Applications Centre/Indian Space Research Organisation (SAC/ISRO).
- (ii) Development and implementation of a "Suitable and Viable Vandal-Proof Advance Warning System" (Radio and Radio Frequency Identification based) to Pre-warn road users against approaching train at unmanned level crossing

gate was undertaken by RDSO in association with IIT/Kanpur at one LC gate. Based on the report submitted, RDSO is now conducting extended field trials at 10 unmanned LC gates in association with IIT/Kanpur to check the efficacy of the system.

Based on the extended trial report, the adoption of the technologies shall be considered.

Officers working in Western Railway in same position

2989. MAHANT SHAMBUPRASADJI TUNDIYA:

SHRI SHANKARBHAI N. VEGAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any data of officers working in Western Railway exceeding their sanctioned tenure in the same position; and

(b) the details thereof, division-wise including Ahmedabad division?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Officers working on sensitive posts for longer than 3 to 4 years are transferred as per the prescribed transfer/rotation policy.

Dedicated force for security of passengers

2990. SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR:

SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to lack of security in railways, crimes like harassment of ladies and chain snatching in coaches during journeys are increasing day by day;

(b) if so, the details of incidents happened during the last three years;

(c) whether Government has any single security agency to check crimes in the trains which has proved quite effective;

(d) if not, whether Government has a plan to form a dedicated security force for the security of passengers; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. At present, a three tier security system of Railway Protection Force (RPF), Government Railway Police (GRP) and District Police is prevailing over Indian Railways. Since law and order and policing are State subjects, the responsibilities of prevention and detection of crime against passengers, policing the Railways and maintenance of law and order are being discharged by the State Governments through their respective GRPs.

RPF has been constituted under the RPF Act, 1957 (as amended from time to time) for better protection and security of property, passengers, passenger area and matters connected therewith. RPF functions under the Ministry of Railways and supplements efforts of GRP, a wing of State Police, for strengthening of security over Indian Railways.

Security of Railway track, railway bridges and railway tunnels over Indian Railways is the responsibility of concerned District Police. Due to practical difficulties like co-ordination among GRPs, between GRP and RPF and among agencies responsible for security in Railways, the present system has not led to seamless policing across the Indian Railways.

(d) and (e) A proposal was initiated by the Ministry of Railways to amend the RPF Act in order to empower RPF to deal with passenger related offences in passenger area of railway premises. Most of the States have opposed the proposal for amendment in the RPF Act to empower RPF to deal with passenger related offences on the ground that it will adversely affect the principle of co-operative federalism. In addition, Ministry of Home Affairs has also expressed reservation on this proposal. Therefore, no subsequent action could be taken on the proposal.

CAG report on food served in Railways

2991. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE:

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CAG report suggests that the food served by Railways is not fit for human consumption, if so, reaction of the Ministry thereto;

(b) whether the Ministry is planning to do an internal survey and conduct test checks of food, the details thereof and if so, by when;

(c) whether the Ministry is planning to terminate the contract of present vendors and invite new vendors for the service; and

(d) if so, by when the process of the same will start and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a), (c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its recent Report No.13 of 2017 dated 21.7.2017 on “Catering Services in Indian Railways” has highlighted deficiencies in catering services being provided to passengers on Indian Railways.

Improvement of catering being an on-going process, a new Catering Policy has been notified on 27 February, 2017 wherein with the objective to provide quality food to rail passengers, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has been mandated to unbundle catering services on trains by creating a distinction primarily between food preparation and food distribution. IRCTC shall set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. These kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC. IRCTC shall retain the ownership and shall be fully accountable for all the issues pertaining to setting up and operation of the Base Kitchens and quality of food. All four Base Kitchens under departmental operation of Zonal Railways (Nagpur, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Mumbai Central (BCT) and Balharshah) and all kitchen units *i.e.* Refreshment Rooms at A1 and A category stations, Jan Ahaar, Cell Kitchens shall be handed over to IRCTC on ‘as is where is basis’. In the first phase, unbundling of catering services is under implementation on Delhi-Mumbai Sector. Base kitchens and Jan Ahaars at CSMT and BCT have been taken over by IRCTC from Zonal Railways.

- Further steps being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers are:—
 - (i) Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.
 - (ii) Introduction of precooked food (‘ready to eat’ meals) in the range of options available to passengers.
 - (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public.
 - (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services.
 - (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services
 - (vi) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

- To effectively check and control unfair practices of overcharging, issues of quality as well quantity, the following measures are planned :
 - In prepaid trains, optional catering is being introduced as a pilot project so that passenger has the option to 'not eat' if he does not want the food supplied onboard.
 - A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and in the last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the calendar year 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in the last one year.
 - Third Party Audit of mobile units and base kitchen is to be undertaken by zonal railway periodically, by hiring an independent agency in accordance with Catering Policy 2017.
 - As announced in the Rail Budget 2016-17, Tejas Train has been introduced on 22/05/2017. Management of on-board catering services on Tejas Express is done by IRCTC. Service-wise Catering services on Tejas Express are optional and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking, catering charges will not be included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service is levied, in addition to the cost of catering charges.
 - Instructions have been issued stipulating that Humsafar trains may have the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed and are fully functional.
- **Proliferation of e-catering**
 - E-catering service on Indian Railway (IR) is managed by IRCTC. Initially, e-catering service was train specific and made available in 1350 trains which did not have services of Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative during September 2015, this scheme has been reoriented to make it 'Station Based E-Catering' in place of train specific e-catering. In the first phase, a pilot project has been undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' & 'A' category of stations which is presently under implementation. E-catering service is now available on 357 railway stations and the average supply of meals under this scheme is around 5000 meals per day (as on September' 2016) against 2000 orders per day which was around 400 meals per day during October' 2015.

- Passengers travelling from these stations are now able to access E-Catering facilities for all trains passing through these stations. IRCTC is facilitating booking of meals through a specified phone number/ website / SMS / Mobile Apps etc. Passengers having mobile number are able to book meals under this scheme. CoD facility to passengers under this scheme has also been made available.
- IRCTC has established a call centre and has also operationalized E-catering website www.ecatering.irctc.co.in for this purpose. Passengers can pre-order the meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations through the e-catering (website and phone/SMS call centre). The mode of payment in e-catering shall be Pre-paid *i.e.* online payment as well as Cash on delivery (CoD) basis. The shortlisted vendor shall deliver the pre-ordered meal to customer on stationary train at the opted station. The opted meal is communicated to the Vendor through SMS as well as email at the time of booking and also again at about 2 hours in advance of delivery time (Delivery time is the train arrival time on a particular station). The Short-listing vendor can provide meals through his catering units on all India basis. Each unit/location, requested by vendor, to be included for e-catering project is required to have all statutory licences as required under the central/ state laws and should comply with the laws of the land. The shortlisted entity may request for addition of more locations/units during the currency of the Short-listing. The shortlisted entity may supply food items under e-catering project only from its approved (by IRCTC) locations/units to the stations in the reasonable vicinity of the said units.

● **Optional catering service**

- The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on the following two train's w.e.f. 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP (Advance Reservation Period).
 - Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani;
 - Train No. 12025-26, PUNE – SC Shatabdi Exp.

Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option

This scheme has been started from 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP *i.e.* 7.10.2016 to 20.11.2016 (for 45 days).

- Now instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01.08.2017 onwards

for the journeys to commence on 01.08.2017 and onwards. This scheme has been introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains under the management of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) w.e.f. 01.08.2017 for an initial period of 180 days, subject to mid-term review after 3 months.

- **Water Vending Machines (WVMs)**

- With the objective to make available potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, Water Vending Machines Policy has been notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015.
- IRCTC to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system. Bids can be invited for group of stations having similar type of WVMs. Group of platforms can be considered to form a composite offer.
- Pure water, conforming to BIS (Bureau of Indian Standard) specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) and other regulations made by the Government from time to time, will be dispensed through these WVMs for passengers in a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water.
- Provision of Microprocessors and interlocks to ensure correct quality and quantity with Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology or alternate superior technology, depending upon the level of contamination in the water.
- IRCTC has been mandated to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system.
- As on 30.06.2017, 350 stations have been provided with the facility of Water Vending Machines by IRCTC and as on 31.07.2017, IRCTC has already awarded license for installation of 2900 WVMs over IR out of which 1300 WVMs have already been commissioned at 350 stations.
- Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is to be finalized shortly.
- Further, 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly at various stations.

- **Zero tolerance policy**

- A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and during last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during January to August 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in the last one year.

- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crore has been imposed during January to June'2017 as compared to ₹ 4.05 crore imposed during 2016, ₹ 2.61 crore in 2015 and ₹ 1.73 crore in 2014.
- Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the last one year.
- More than 40,000 inspections done by railway officials to improve the catering services.
- **Third party audit**
 - The third-party audit of the catering service to examine the quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in the pantry car and base kitchen, which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit.
 - Food safety and Hygiene audits are being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors.
 - Third Party Audit of catering services are also to be conducted at periodic intervals by independent and reputed auditing agencies accredited by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies) as empanelled by the zonal railways.
 - Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway.
 - IRCTC has awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

(b) Detailed instructions/guidelines have been issued on 24.07.2017 to the Zonal Railways for conducting joint inspections by Medical, Commercial and infrastructure maintenance departments to inspect each and every catering unit (mobile and static) including base kitchens/cell kitchens on all Railway divisions/zones. Apart from this, regular and surprise inspections are done by Food Safety Officers, Designated Officers and Joint Food Safety Commissioners. A joint team of ticket checking staff and RPF/GRP staff also conduct surprise checks to prevent unauthorised vending on stations and trains. General Managers of the Zonal Railways have been requested to monitor such drives personally. Food samples collected by Food Safety Officers are sent to the nominated accredited Laboratories under Food Safety and Standard Act for analysis and testing. Penalties are imposed in cases of unsatisfactory food samples and prosecutions are carried out as per provisions of Food Safety and Standard Rule-2011.

**PPP model to facilitate advanced transportation
models and create jobs**

2992. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government believes that PPP model can bring in advanced transportation models and create jobs, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the experience in this regard during the past three years, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) The main objectives underlying PPP are to leverage Private Sector's participation and efficiency in execution of projects and provision of services in selected areas. The areas identified for PPP include redevelopment of stations, setting up of Rolling Stock manufacturing factories, connectivity to ports, mines and industry clusters, operation of container trains, private freight terminals, wagon investment schemes and operation of automobile freights trains. These PPP models have evoked positive response. PPP projects have the potential to create both direct and indirect jobs.

**Reduction in travelling time between Chennai
Egmore to Madurai**

2993. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to reduce the travelling time between Chennai Egmore to Madurai from the existing duration of approximately 8 hours to 6 hours in the future by fully doubling and electrifying the route in the current year itself; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) On Chennai Egmore-Madurai route, electrified quadruple broad gauge line exists on Chennai Egmore-Tambaram and electrified double broad gauge line exists on Tambaram-Chengalpattu-Villupuram and Dindigul-Madurai sections. On balance portion, doubling with electrification of Villupuram-Dindigul line (273 Km) has been taken up where track linking of entire line has been completed and 245 Km section has been commissioned.

Amount charged for buying a duplicate ticket

†2994. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount charged by Railways for issuing duplicate ticket after the preparation of train chart, from the passengers who lose their railway tickets, taken from the counter;

(b) whether Railways charge 50 per cent of the amount paid on buying tickets for a journey, for a duplicate ticket; and

(c) if so, whether it is not a contradictory rule that on one hand, travelling is possible with e-tickets by just showing an identity card and on the other hand, huge charge is imposed on losing tickets taken from railway counters, for issuance of duplicate ones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Duplicate ticket in lieu of original tickets can be issued as under:—

(A) Before preparation of first chart:

If the reservation status of a lost, misplaced, torn or mutilated ticket is confirmed or Reservation against cancellation (RAC) and duplicate ticket for such ticket is sought, in that case duplicate ticket in lieu of the original ticket is issued on the payment of ₹ 50 per passenger for second and sleeper class and ₹ 100 per passenger for other classes.

(B) After preparation of first chart:

(i) If the status of the lost or misplaced ticket is confirmed and the same is presented for issue of duplicate ticket, the duplicate ticket is issued on the charge equivalent to 50% of the total fare subject to minimum charge. No duplicate ticket is issued if the status of the tickets is in RAC.

(ii) For torn or mutilated tickets if the status of the ticket is confirmed or RAC, in that case duplicate tickets is issued on the payment of 25% of total fare.

(c) E-ticket and PRS counter ticket are two separate ticketing products for which as per rule certain separate conditions have been prescribed so that the same may not get misused.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

PRS counter ticket is a money value ticket for which showing original ticket is must during the journey. If the passenger is allowed to travel based on only identity cards without original ticket, in that case it can be misused and the ticket may be got cancelled at last moment before the departure of the train and also used for travel on the same berth mentioned in the chart.

Chemist stalls at railway stations

2995. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR:

SHRI ANIL DESAI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of stations where the chemist stalls are provided by Railways at present;

(b) whether the individuals and the partnership firms of unemployed graduates category can be allowed for allotment of a chemist stall at railway platforms for the facility of travelling public; and

(c) if so, the future planning in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) To augment the emergency medical facilities at railway stations, policy guidelines for setting up of chemist stalls/corners are already in vogue *vide* Commercial Circular number 50/2000 dated 03.11.2000 and Commercial Circular number 67/2008 dated 02.12.2008 wherein Zonal Railways have been advised to provide Chemist Stalls at all A1 Category of stations. At present, 21 exclusive chemist stalls are operational on Indian Railways. The names of stations where chemist stalls as provided by Zonal Railways are given in the Statement (*See* below). Further, pursuant to announcement made in Rail Budget 2016-17, in order to have a single outlet/stall at platforms for non-catering items required during travelling, it has been decided to set up Multi Purpose Stalls (MPS) at railway stations wherein items permitted for sale are miscellaneous items, books/magazines/news paper, chemist stall items-OTC (over the counter) medicines and non-pharmacy items *viz.* dry/spray milk powder etc. In the MPS policy, individuals are also eligible to participate in the bidding process.

Statement*Names of stations where chemist stalls as provided by Zonal Railways*

Zonal Railway	No. of Exclusive Chemist Stall	Name of Station
Central	2	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Lokmanya Tilak Terminus
East Coast	3	Visakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Puri
Eastern	1	Howrah
Northeast Frontier	1	Guwahati
Northern	1	Lucknow Jn.
North Western	1	Jodhpur Jn.
South Central	2	Secunderabad Jn., Vijayawada Jn.
South East Central	2	Raipur Jn., Bilaspur Jn.
Western	8	Mumbai Church Gate, Mumbai Central, Andheri, Valsad, Surat, Vadodara Jn., Ahmedabad Jn., Ujjain Jn.
TOTAL	21	

Non-payment of Travelling Allowance to Ticket Checking Staff

†2996. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

CH.SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) since when the travelling allowance has not been paid to the ticket checking staff working at Lucknow, Varanasi and headquarter of Eastern Railway; and

(b) the reasons for this delay and whether Department is considering to give interest on the payment of travelling allowance which is delayed due to administrative reasons, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Travelling allowance bills for Ticket Checking staff working at Lucknow, Varanasi and headquarter of Eastern Railway are being passed for payment regularly and there are no delays.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Fire at mechanical workshop at Gorakhpur

†2997. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an incident of fierce fire took place in the mechanical workshop of North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur, in last April, resulting in heavy loss to Railways;

(b) if so, whether the experts have attributed the fire to mismanagement of scrap and mess around; and

(c) whether any investigation has been conducted in this regard and the steps taken to avoid such accidents in future, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) A fire incident took place on 29.04.2017 in the yard of Mechanical Workshop at Gorakhpur, North Eastern Railway. It was peak summer period and the fire started in the dry grass and bushes, which subsequently spread due to heavy wind, to the rubbish stacked close by. There was no loss to Railway property. A Committee of four senior officers was appointed in North Eastern Railway to formulate an improved system for disposal of such rubbish after which the disposal of rubbish has commenced. In addition, detailed instructions have been issued by Ministry of Railways on various aspects of housekeeping in rolling stock workshops including focused attention to regular disposal of scrap and rubbish and other steps to be taken to avoid such incidents.

Newspapers supplied in trains

2998. SHRI ANIL DESAI:

SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR:

SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of Hindi and English newspapers which are allowed to be supplied in various Shatabdi, Rajdhani and other trains by the Railway Board;

(b) the names of publishers thereof; and

(c) the amount recovered by Railways in this regard?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) As per instructions issued vide Railway Board's Commercial Circular No. 87/2001 and 32/2014, Railways supply newspaper to every passenger travelling by Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains. Zonal Railways, being the implementation authority, decide the type of newspaper of different languages to be supplied in these trains, taking into consideration the passengers' demand and ensuring that wide range of reputed daily newspapers in Hindi/English/Regional language in equal proportion are supplied to the passengers. As the cost of the newspapers is absorbed within the integrated fare structure of Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto Express trains, the cost of service of newspapers is borne by the Zonal Railways.

Restructuring of Divisional Headquarters of Railways

2999. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry plans to undertake restructuring of divisional headquarters of Railways based on changes in demography and practical considerations in the near future; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when this restructuring will be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) At present, there is no decision for restructuring of divisional headquarters of Railways.

(b) Question does not arise.

Incidents of hate crimes against passengers in trains

3000. SHRI AHAMED HASSAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Railways are taking to stop the incidents of hate crimes against helpless passengers travelling in trains, particularly the members of minority communities;

(b) whether Railway Police is of no help to the passengers who are attacked and the role they are assigned in such cases;

(c) whether there is any plan for giving legal assistance to the victim passengers by Railways; and

(d) the compensation Railways are planning to provide to wounded and kin of murdered passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Policing on Railways being a State subject, prevention of crime viz. hate crimes etc. against passengers including the members of minority communities travelling in trains, 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)/District Police. However, Railway Protection Force (RPF) supplements the efforts of GRP in providing better protection and security of passenger area and passengers and for matters connected therewith. In each and every case of crime including hate crimes reported to police, action is taken as per extant legal provisions by the GRP/District Police of the concerned State.

(c) There is no plan for giving legal assistance to the victim passengers by the Railways.

(d) Compensation liability of Railway administration for death/injury of railway passengers in violent attacks (Untoward Incidents) is laid down in Section 124A of the Railways Act, 1989 read with Section 123 of the Railways Act, 1989. Admissibility of such compensation is decided by Railways Claims Tribunal (RCT) on the basis of a claim application filed before them. Railway administration is liable to pay compensation to rail passengers only when a decree is awarded by Hon'ble RCT in favour of the claimant and Railways decide to implement the decree. At present, the scale of compensation as specified in Railway Accident and Untoward Incidents (Compensation) Amendment Rules, 2016 is ₹ 08 lakh for death and ₹ 64,000/- to ₹ 08 lakh for injury depending upon the gravity of injury.

CAG report on working of Railways and its Catering

†3001. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether adverse remarks have been made in the recent report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on the working of Railways, especially its catering services, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the corrective steps Government proposes to take in the wake of remarks of the CAG?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The points of deficiencies highlighted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its Report No. 13 of 2017 laid in the House

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

on 21.07.2017, *inter alia*, include (i) Due to frequent policy changes, Indian Railway could not take effective steps to bridge the gap to provide necessary infrastructure in terms of base kitchens, Static Catering Units, Trains Side Vending arrangements and Automatic Vending Machines etc. (ii) Zonal Railways were required to prepare a Master Plan (Blue Print) of catering services to be provided at each station and onboard trains. Blue Print for provision of catering services was not prepared in seven Zonal Railways (East Central, Eastern, Northeast Frontier, North Western, South Eastern, South Western and East Coast Railway) (iii) Gas burners were to be progressively switched over to electric power Equipment in pantry cars in trains as per policy. However, ICF (Integral Coach Factory) manufactured 103 pantry cars during April 2011 to March 2016 with provision for centralized LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) cylinders, which were distributed to Zonal Railways. (iv) Zonal Railways did not ensure provision of pantry cars in a number of long distance trains. During joint inspection, it was seen that in nine trains having a run of more than 24 hours, no pantry car was provided. No Train Side Vending Services were provided by North Central, South East Central and Southern Railway for the trains which run for more than 12 hours during the day time. (v) Base kitchens were to be set up in railway premises to monitor and control the quality and hygiene of food served in trains. However, only 16 base kitchens were located in railway premises. 115 base kitchens were located outside the railway premises and were not subjected to quality check. In respect of 128 trains of seven Zonal Railways, meals were picked up from outside base kitchens. (vi) Railway Board instructed (January 2012) Zonal Railways to make efforts to improve the sale/availability of Janta meals so as to provide good quality food at affordable price to railway passengers. However, out of 74 stations where joint inspections were conducted by Audit, Jan Ahaar units were not provided on 46 stations. Share of Janta meals sold to the overall meals sold in six Zonal Railways was declining in the last three years. (vii) During joint inspections of selected trains, audit observed a number of unauthorized vendors on platforms and trains. During 2013-14 to 2015-16, 2,39,096 cases were prosecuted by Railway Protection Force and fine imposed in eight Zonal Railways. (viii) Audit checked 124 contracts awarded by eight Zonal Railways and observed that a major portion of contract value was paid as license fee to Zonal Railways, leaving a small margin of the contract value for the licensee for providing catering services. It may not be workable for the licensees to cater to the needs of passengers within the available margin and may result in compromising the quality, quantity and prices etc. (ix) During the joint inspection of selected 74 stations and 80 trains over Zonal Railways, Audit noticed that Cleanliness and hygiene were not being maintained at catering units at stations and in trains. Unpurified water straight from tap was used in preparation of beverages, waste bins were not found covered, not emptied regularly and not washed, food stuff were not covered to protect them from flies, insects and dust,

rats and cockroaches were found in trains etc. Unfair practices were being followed in execution of catering services at stations and trains. Bills were not given for the food items served in mobile units in trains. Printed menu cards with tariff for the list of food items sold in the mobile units were not available with waiters and Catering Managers in trains. Food stuff served was less than the prescribed scheduled quantity, unapproved packaged drinking water was sold, Proprietary Article Depot (PAD) items were sold at the railway stations at Maximum Retail Price (MRP) with weight and prices different from the open market and per unit price of food articles sold in railway premises is significantly higher. Deficiencies in respect of quality of food served were noticed. Articles unsuitable for human consumption, contaminated foodstuff, recycled foodstuff, shelf life expired packaged and bottled items, unauthorized brands of water bottles, etc., were offered for sale on stations. (x) Though a complaint redressal system has been put in place, there is no reduction in the number of complaints over the years. It was also seen that the major share of complains pertained to overcharging and quality issues.

(b) Improvement of catering being an on-going process, a new Catering Policy has been notified on 27 February, 2017 wherein with the objective to provide quality food to rail passengers, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has been mandated to unbundle catering services on trains by creating a distinction primarily between food preparation and food distribution. IRCTC shall set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. These kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC. IRCTC shall retain the ownership and shall be fully accountable for all the issues pertaining to setting up and operation of the Base Kitchens and quality of food. All four Base Kitchens under departmental operation of Zonal Railways (Nagpur, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Mumbai Central (BCT) and Balharshah) and all kitchen units *i.e.* Refreshment Rooms at A1 and A category stations, Jan Ahaar, Cell Kitchens shall be handed over to IRCTC on 'as is where is' basis. In the first phase, unbundling of catering services is under implementation on Delhi-Mumbai Sector. Base kitchens and Jan Ahaars at CSMT and BCT have been taken over by IRCTC from Zonal Railways.

- Further steps being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers:—
 - (i) Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.
 - (ii) Introduction of precooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers.
 - (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities

and real time assistance to travelling public. (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services. (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services. (vi) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

- To effectively check and control unfair practices of overcharging, issues of quality as well quantity, the following measures are planned:
 - In prepaid trains, optional catering is being introduced as a pilot project so that passenger has the option to 'not eat' if he does not want the food supplied onboard.
 - A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and in last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the calendar year 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year.
 - Third Party Audit of mobile units and base kitchen is to be undertaken by zonal railway periodically, by hiring an independent agency in accordance with Catering Policy 2017.
 - As announced in the Rail Budget 2016-17, Tejas Train has been introduced on 22.05.2017. Management of on-board catering services on Tejas Express is done by IRCTC. Service-wise Catering services on Tejas Express are optional and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking, catering charges will not be included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service, in addition to the cost of catering charges will be charged.
 - Instructions have been issued stipulating that Humsafar trains may have the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed and are fully functional.
- **Proliferation of e-catering**
 - E-catering service on IR is managed by IRCTC. Initially, e-catering service was train specific and made available in 1350 trains which did not have services of Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative during September 2015, this scheme has been reoriented to make it 'Station Based E-Catering' in place of train specific e-catering. In the first phase,

a pilot project has been undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' and 'A' category of stations which is presently under implementation. E-catering service is now available on 357 railway stations and the average supply of meals under this scheme is around 5000 meals per day (as on September' 2016) against 2000 orders per day which was around 400 meals per day during October' 2015.

- Passengers travelling from these stations are now able to access E-Catering facilities for all trains passing through these stations. IRCTC is facilitating booking of meals through a specified phone number/ website / SMS / Mobile Apps etc. Passengers having mobile number are able to book meals under this scheme. CoD facility to passengers under this scheme has also been made available.
- IRCTC has established a call centre and has also operationalized E-catering website www.ecatering.irctc.co.in for this purpose. Passengers can pre-order the meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations through the e-catering (website and phone/SMS call centre). The mode of payment in e-catering shall be Pre-paid *i.e.* online payment as well as Cash on delivery (CoD) basis. The shortlisted vendor shall deliver the pre-ordered meal to customer on stationary train at the opted station. The opted meal is communicated to the Vendor through SMS as well as email at the time of booking and also again at about 2 hours in advance of delivery time (Delivery time is the train arrival time on a particular station). The Short-listing vendor can provide meals through his catering units on all India basis. Each unit/location, requested by vendor, to be included for e-catering project is required to have all statutory licences as required under the central/ state laws and should comply with the laws of the land. The shortlisted entity may request for addition of more locations/units during the currency of the Short-listing. The shortlisted entity may supply food items under e-catering project only from its approved (by IRCTC) locations/units to the stations in the reasonable vicinity of the said units.

- **Optional catering service**

- The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on the following two train's w.e.f 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP (Advance Reservation period).
 - Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani;
 - Train No. 12025-26, PUNE – SC Shatabdi Exp.

Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option.

This scheme has been started from 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP *i.e.* 7.10.2016 to 20.11.2016 (for 45 days).

- Now instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01.08.2017 onwards for the journeys to commence on 01.08.2017 and onwards. This scheme has been introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains under the management of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) w.e.f. 01.08.2017 for an initial period of 180 days, subject to mid-term review after 3 months.

● **Water Vending Machines (WVMs)**

- With the objective to make available potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, Water Vending Machines Policy has been notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015.
- IRCTC to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system. Bids can be invited for group of stations having similar type of WVMs. Group of platforms can be considered to form a composite offer.
- Pure water, conforming to BIS (Bureau of Indian Standard) specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) and other regulations made by the government from time to time, will be dispensed through these WVMs for passengers in a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water.
- Provision of Microprocessors and interlocks to ensure correct quality and quantity with Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology or alternate superior technology, depending upon the level of contamination in the water.
- IRCTC has been mandated to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system.
- As on 30.06.2017, 350 stations have been provided with the facility of Water Vending Machines by IRCTC and as on 31.07.2017, IRCTC has already awarded license for installation of 2900 WVMs over IR out of which 1300 WVMs have already been commissioned at 350 stations.
- Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is to be finalized shortly.
- Further, 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly at various stations.

- **Zero tolerance policy**

- A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and during last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during January to August 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year
- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crore has been imposed during January to June'17 as compared to ₹ 4.05 crore imposed during 2016, ₹ 2.61 crore in 2015 and ₹ 1.73 crore in 2014.
- Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the last one year.
- More than 40,000 inspections done by railway officials to improve the catering services.

- **Third party audit**

- The third-party audit of the catering service to examine the quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in the pantry car and base kitchen, which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit.
- Food safety and Hygiene audits are being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors.
- Third Party Audit of catering services are also to be conducted at periodic intervals by independent and reputed auditing agencies accredited by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies) as empanelled by the zonal railways.
- Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway.
- IRCTC has awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

Rating of trains

3002. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether emulating Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Railways will start rating its trains based on punctuality, cleanliness on board, toilets, coaches and interiors;

(b) whether the CAG, in its recent audit reports, has adversely commented on the cleanliness maintained, both at stations and on-board of trains; and

(c) whether the proposed quality audit of trains under 'Project Swaran' will be on the basis of nine parameters, done by third party agency identified as Quality Council of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) There is no proposal to start rating of trains based on punctuality, cleanliness on board, toilets, coaches and interiors.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No decision has been taken to get the trains audited by the Quality Council of India under the "Project Swaran".

Safety of passengers

3003. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH MANHAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken for the safety of passengers during their travel in Railways; and

(b) whether any new technology is being introduced in Railways to identify causes and prevent train accidents across the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) 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)/District Police. However, Railway Protection Force (RPF) supplements the efforts of the GRP by providing better protection and security of passengers by way of escorting of trains, providing access control at major stations, assisting passengers in distress through Security Helpline number 182, exercising surveillance at about 344 railway stations through close circuit television cameras etc. Regular co-ordination is also being made with the State Police/GRP authorities at all levels to improve security of passengers during their travel in Railways.

(b) Safety is accorded the highest priority by Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continual basis including upgradation of technology to aid safe running of trains. These include replacement of over-aged assets, elimination of unmanned level crossings, adoption of suitable technologies for up gradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, safety drives, greater emphasis on training of officials and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. Safety devices/systems used to prevent

accidents include complete track circuiting, provision of Block Proving Axle Counters (BPAC), Train Protection Warning Systems (TPWS), Colour light LED Signals, Vigilance Control Device (VCD), usage of 60 kg rails and Pre-stressed Concrete Sleepers, long rail panels, better welding technology, 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 Coupler with Integral Coach Factory (ICF) Coaches etc. Other measures include training of loco pilots and other safety category staff, improvement of other working conditions including proper rest and periodic medical examinations etc. Besides, periodic safety drives, inspections as per laid down schedules, patrolling of tracks, footplate inspections and safety reviews at various levels are continuously conducted to monitor and improve safety aspects of the Railways.

CCTV cameras in coaches for safety

†3004. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether installation of high definition CCTV cameras (Day-Night long time memory) on both the entry gates, opposite to each other, in every coach would be considered, keeping in view the theft of luggage in the coaches of the trains and for security of women;

(b) if so, whether these high definition cameras would be effective to curb incidents of luggage theft, stopping miscreants and for safety of passengers; and

(c) if so, the reasons for reluctance to install high definition CCTV cameras, if not, by when it would be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Railways has installed CCTV cameras on a limited number of coaches of passenger and suburban trains on a pilot basis. As on 12.07.17.

- CCTV cameras have been installed by Northern Railway in 21 coaches.
- 10 Humsafar rakes have been fitted with CCTVs by Modern Coach Factory, Rae Bareilly and Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala (RCF) (5 rakes each).
- CCTV system has been provided in one rake of Tejas train service by RCF.
- CCTVs have been provided in 6 Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) rakes by ICF.
- Integral Coach Factory, Chennai (ICF) has provided CCTVs in 20 coaches of Mainline trains.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- Western Railway and Central Railway have provided CCTVs in 100 suburban coaches (50 suburban coaches each).
- CCTV cameras have also been provided in coaches with glass roof top for Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). Two such coaches have been turned out by ICF.
- Provision of CCTV cameras acts as deterrent against incidents of theft and other passenger related crime besides instilling sense of confidence among passengers.

(c) Strengthening and upgradation of security infrastructure is an ongoing process. Sanction under Rolling Stock Programme for provision of CCTV cameras in 750 coaches is available and fitment of CCTVs in coaches shall be carried out in a phased manner.

Medical Colleges under Railways

3005. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway medical colleges functioning under Ministry of Railways, State-wise and location-wise;

(b) the details of the admission process, total number of seats offered each year, etc., college-wise and state-wise; and;

(c) whether Railways have any plan to set more medical colleges in other parts of the country, if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Nil.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

Doubling and electrification of tracks between Janghai-Phulpur and Manduadih-Allahabad

3006. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether work relating to doubling and electrification of tracks between Janghai and Phulpur and Manduadih and Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh has been sanctioned;

(b) if so, by when the work on the same will begin and completed; and

(c) whether Government has set any priority for completion of the same for speedy connection to eastern Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) The details of both the projects are as under:—

(1) Janghai-Phulpur:

Doubling with electrification of Janghai-Phaphamau *via* Phulpur (46.79 km) project has been included in budget 2017-18, at a cost of 357.48 crore subject to obtaining requisite approval/clearances. An outlay of 1 crore has been provided for the project for the year 2017-18.

The existing single line between Janghai-Phulpur has already been electrified.

(2) Manduadih-Allahabad:

Doubling with electrification of Manduadih-Allahabad (118.46 km) has been sanctioned as a part of Varanasi-Madhosingh-Allahabad (122.00 km) doubling with electrification project in March, 2016 at a cost of ₹ 750.56 crore. The project is being executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL). The work of Earthwork, ballast supply, minor bridges etc. have been taken up. An outlay of ₹ 50 crore has been provided for this project for the year 2017-18.

The funds for each project are allocated on yearly basis, based on the Gross Budgetary Support from Ministry of Finance and internal generation and progress of the project. In view of the uncertainty with regard to funding, issues regarding land acquisition and NOC from various departments, timeframe for completion of these projects has not been fixed.

To expedite completion of throughout enhancement projects, Railways have arranged additional funds by way of loan from Life Insurance Corporation for funding doubling projects and regular coordination meetings are held with Ministries/ Department /State Government Authorities to expedite land acquisition and other issues. Other measures taken to expedite completion are prioritization of projects, delegation of powers at field level, inviting the State Governments to participate with Railways for resource mobilization for projects, nomination of nodal officers for improved co-ordination with the State Governments etc.

Besides this, in order to expedite electrification of railway lines in the country, the number of executing agencies have been increased from existing three to six by entrusting electrification works to new agencies *viz.* Indian Railway Construction Company, Rail India Technical and Economic Services and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited.

Loss of lives and property due to accidents

3007. SHRI CHUNIBHAI KANJIBHAI GOHEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of train accidents that took place during the last two years with details of each accident;
- (b) the details of loss of lives and property suffered due to each accident; and
- (c) whether Government has any plan to procure anti-collision equipments to prevent such accidents and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Details of number of consequential train accidents and number of persons lost their lives therein that took place in the last two years *i.e.* 2015-16 and 2016-17 are as under:—

Type of Accident	2015-16		2016-17	
	Number of Accidents	Number of Persons killed	Number of Accidents	Number of Persons killed
Collisions	03	01	05	05
Derailments	65	36	78	193
Manned Level Crossing Accidents	06	12	0	0
Unmanned level Crossings Accidents	29	58	20	40
Fire	0	0	01	0
Miscellaneous	04	15	0	0
TOTAL	107	122	104	238

During the last two years *i.e.* 2015-16 and 2016-17 there have been 107 and 104 consequential train accidents and in these train accidents loss to railway property were ₹ 45.24 crore in 2015-16 and ₹ 62.29 crore (approx.) in 2016-17.

(c) Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) along with the indigenously developed Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) are being deployed on Indian Railways to prevent collisions. The details of these are given below:—

1. **Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS)**

Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) proven European train protection technology has capability to control the speed of train in accordance with the sectional permitted speed and signal aspect ahead by automatic actuation of brakes, in case loco pilot fails to do so in

time. Thus it mitigates safety risk of accidents/collisions due to loco pilot's error of Signal Passing at Danger or over speeding. TPWS also reduces delays during foggy weather.

TPWS based on this proven technology has been operationalized on 342 RKM's of Indian Railways.

Further TPWS works have been sanctioned on 3330 RKM. In first phase, work on suburban sections (1244 RKM) on Eastern, South Eastern, Northern, Southern and South Central Railways have been taken up for implementation.

In Phase II, implementation of the balance sanctioned works of TPWS on 2086 RKMs on HDN-1/HDN-2/HDN-3 Routes is also being taken up.

2. **Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS)**

RDSO has taken an initiative in association with Indian Vendors and taken up a pilot project for indigenous development of a cost effective safety system called Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). 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. The system has a feature of reflecting aspects of signal in the locomotive cab.

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. Trials on passenger carrying trains were started during the year 2016-17 leading to initial safety certification and validation by Independent Safety Assessor (ISA).

As development of TCAS is in the final stages, further new works have been sanctioned covering 1427 RKMs on South Central Railway.

Safety enhancement signaling systems as mentioned above are being progressively introduced based on availability of financial resources.

Wi-Fi Facility at railway stations

3008. SHRI M. P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of stations provided with free Wi-Fi facilities in the last two years;

(b) the stations listed in Kerala to be provided with Wi-Fi facility; and

(c) whether this number meets the prescribed target and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) 106 stations have been provided with free Wi-Fi facilities in the last 2 financial years *i.e.* 2015-16 and 2016-17.

(b) and (c) Wi-Fi facility is to be extended to all A1, A and B category stations on Indian Railways. List of stations in Kerala to be provided with Wi-Fi facility is given in the Statement (*See below*). So far, all 'A1' category stations in Kerala have been provided with Wi-Fi facility as targeted.

Balance stations in 'A' and 'B' category shall be provided with Wi-Fi facility by March, 2020.

Statement

List of stations in Kerala State where Wi-Fi Internet Facility provided/planned

Sl. No.	Name of Station	Category of Station	State	Status
1.	Tiruvananthapuram Central	A1	Kerala	Commissioned
2.	Ernakulam Jn.	A1	Kerala	Commissioned
3.	Thrisur	A1	Kerala	Commissioned
4.	Kozhikkode	A1	Kerala	Commissioned
5.	Kollam Jn.	A	Kerala	Commissioned
6.	Alappuzha	A	Kerala	
7.	Aluva	A	Kerala	
8.	Chengannur	A	Kerala	
9.	Ernakulam Town	A	Kerala	
10.	Kanhangad	A	Kerala	
11.	Kannur	A	Kerala	
12.	Kasargod	A	Kerala	
13.	Kayankulam Jn.	A	Kerala	
14.	Kottayam	A	Kerala	
15.	Palakkad Jn.	A	Kerala	
16.	Payyannur	A	Kerala	

Sl. No.	Name of Station	Category of Station	State	Status
17.	Shoranur Jn.	A	Kerala	
18.	Thalassery	A	Kerala	
19.	Tirur	A	Kerala	
20.	Tiruvalla	A	Kerala	
21.	Vadakara	A	Kerala	
22.	Changanacheri	B	Kerala	
23.	Guruvayur	B	Kerala	
24.	Kochuveli	B	Kerala	
25.	Kuttipuram	B	Kerala	
26.	Ottappalam	B	Kerala	
27.	Quilandi	B	Kerala	
28.	Varkalashivagiri	B	Kerala	

Supply of filthy linen and blankets in trains

3009. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the recent CAG report, Railways are serving food unfit for human consumption and supplying filthy and unhealthy linen and blankets in trains, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the response of Government thereto; and

(c) the details of percentage of increase in passenger fare since 2014 till date and rationale for this increase when quality of food served, cleanliness in trains and timely arrival and departure has deteriorated rapidly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its recent Report No.13 of 2017 dated 21.7.2017 on “Catering Services in Indian Railways” has highlighted deficiencies in catering services being provided to passengers on Indian Railways. The points of deficiencies highlighted by CAG, *inter alia*, include (i) Due to frequent policy changes, Indian Railway could not take effective steps to bridge the gap to provide necessary infrastructure in terms of base kitchens, Static Catering Units, Trains Side Vending arrangements and Automatic Vending Machines etc. (ii) Zonal Railways were required to prepare a Master Plan (Blue Print) of catering services to be provided at each station and onboard trains.

Blue Print for provision of catering services was not prepared in seven Zonal Railways (East Central, Eastern, Northeast Frontier, North Western, South Eastern, South Western and East Coast Railway). (iii) Gas burners were to be progressively switched over to electric power Equipment in pantry cars in trains as per policy. However, ICF (Integral Coach Factory) manufactured 103 pantry cars during April 2011 to March 2016 with provision for centralized LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) cylinders, which were distributed to Zonal Railways. (iv) Zonal Railways did not ensure provision of pantry cars in a number of long distance trains. During joint inspection, it was seen that in nine trains having a run of more than 24 hours, no pantry car was provided. No Train Side Vending Services were provided by North Central, South East Central and Southern Railway for the trains which run for more than 12 hours during the day time. (v) Base kitchens were to be set up in railway premises to monitor and control the quality and hygiene of food served in trains. However, only 16 base kitchens were located in railway premises. 115 base kitchens were located outside the railway premises and were not subjected to quality check. In respect of 128 trains of seven Zonal Railways, meals were picked up from outside base kitchens. (vi) Railway Board instructed (January 2012) Zonal Railways to make efforts to improve the sale/availability of Janta meals so as to provide good quality food at affordable price to railway passengers. However, out of 74 stations where joint inspections were conducted by Audit, Jan Ahaar units were not provided on 46 stations. Share of Janta meals sold to the overall meals sold in six Zonal Railways was declining in the last three years. (vii) During joint inspections of selected trains, audit observed a number of unauthorized vendors on platforms and trains. During 2013-14 to 2015-16, 2,39,096 cases were prosecuted by Railway Protection Force and fine imposed in eight Zonal Railways. (viii) Audit checked 124 contracts awarded by eight Zonal Railways and observed that a major portion of contract value was paid as license fee to Zonal Railways, leaving a small margin of the contract value for the licensee for providing catering services. It may not be workable for the licensees to cater to the needs of passengers within the available margin and may result in compromising the quality, quantity and prices etc. (ix) During the joint inspection of selected 74 stations and 80 trains over Zonal Railways, Audit noticed that Cleanliness and hygiene were not being maintained at catering units at stations and in trains. Unpurified water straight from tap was used in preparation of beverages, waste bins were not found covered, not emptied regularly and not washed, food stuff were not covered to protect them from flies, insects and dust, rats and cockroaches were found in trains etc. Unfair practices were being followed in execution of catering services at stations and trains. Bills were not given for the food items served in mobile units in trains. Printed menu cards with tariff for the list of food items sold in the mobile units were not

available with waiters and Catering Managers in trains. Food stuff served was less than the prescribed scheduled quantity, unapproved packaged drinking water was sold, Proprietary Article Depot (PAD) items were sold at the railway stations at Maximum Retail Price (MRP) with weight and prices different from the open market and per unit price of food articles sold in railway premises is significantly higher. Deficiencies in respect of quality of food served were noticed. Articles unsuitable for human consumption, contaminated foodstuff, recycled foodstuff, shelf life expired packaged and bottled items, unauthorized brands of water bottles, etc., were offered for sale on stations.(x) Though a complaint redressal system has been put in place, there is no reduction in the number of complaints over the years. It was also seen that the major share of complains pertained to overcharging and quality issues.

Improvement of catering being an on-going process, a new Catering Policy has been notified on 27 February, 2017 wherein with the objective to provide quality food to rail passengers, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has been mandated to unbundle catering services on trains by creating a distinction primarily between food preparation and food distribution. IRCTC shall set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. These kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC. IRCTC shall retain the ownership and shall be fully accountable for all the issues pertaining to setting up and operation of the Base Kitchens and quality of food. All four Base Kitchens under departmental operation of Zonal Railways (Nagpur, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Mumbai Central (BCT) and Balharshah) and all kitchen units i.e. Refreshment Rooms at A1 and A category stations, Jan Ahaar, Cell Kitchens shall be handed over to IRCTC on 'as is where is basis'. In the first phase, unbundling of catering services is under implementation on Delhi-Mumbai Sector. Base kitchens & Jan Ahaars at CSMT and BCT have been taken over by IRCTC from Zonal Railways.

- Further steps being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers:—
 - (i) Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.
 - (ii) Introduction of precooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers.
 - (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public.
 - (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services.
 - (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services
 - (vi) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has

also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

- To effectively check and control unfair practices of overcharging, issues of quality as well quantity, the following measures are planned:
 - In prepaid trains, optional catering is being introduced as a pilot project so that passenger has the option to 'not eat' if he does not want the food supplied onboard.
 - A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and in last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the calendar year 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year.
 - Third Party Audit of mobile units and base kitchen is to be undertaken by zonal railway periodically, by hiring an independent agency in accordance with Catering Policy 2017.
 - As announced in the Rail Budget 2016-17, Tejas Train has been introduced on 22/05/2017. Management of on-board catering services on Tejas Express is done by IRCTC. Service-wise Catering services on Tejas Express are optional and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking, catering charges will not be included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service, in addition to the cost of catering charges will be charged.
 - Instructions have been issued stipulating that Humsafar trains may have the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed and are fully functional
- **Proliferation of e-catering**
 - E-catering service on IR is managed by IRCTC. Initially, e-catering service was train specific and made available in 1350 trains which did not have services of Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative during September 2015, this scheme has been reoriented to make it 'Station Based E-Catering' in place of train specific e-catering. In the first phase, a pilot project has been undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' and 'A' category of stations which is presently under implementation. E-catering service is now available on 357 railway stations and the average supply of meals under this scheme is around 5000 meals

per day (as on September 2016) against 2000 orders per day which was around 400 meals per day during October' 2015.

- Passengers travelling from these stations are now able to access E-Catering facilities for all trains passing through these stations. IRCTC is facilitating booking of meals through a specified phone number/ website / SMS / Mobile Apps etc. Passengers having mobile number are able to book meals under this scheme. CoD facility to passengers under this scheme has also been made available.
- IRCTC has established a call centre and has also operationalized E-catering website www.ecatering.irctc.co.in for this purpose. Passengers can pre-order the meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations through the e-catering (website and phone/SMS call centre). The mode of payment in e-catering shall be Pre-paid *i.e.* online payment as well as Cash on delivery (CoD) basis. The shortlisted vendor shall deliver the pre-ordered meal to customer on stationary train at the opted station. The opted meal is communicated to the Vendor through SMS as well as email at the time of booking and also again at about 2 hours in advance of delivery time (Delivery time is the train arrival time on a particular station). The Short-listing vendor can provide meals through his catering units on all India basis. Each unit/location, requested by vendor, to be included for e-catering project is required to have all statutory licences as required under the central/ state laws and should comply with the laws of the land. The shortlisted entity may request for addition of more locations/units during the currency of the Short-listing. The shortlisted entity may supply food items under e-catering project only from its approved (by IRCTC) locations/units to the stations in the reasonable vicinity of the said units.

- **Optional catering service**

- The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on the following two train's w.e.f 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP (Advance Reservation Period).
 - Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani;
 - Train No. 12025-26, PUNE – SC Shatabdi Exp.

Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option

This scheme has been started from 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP *i.e.* 7.10.2016 to 20.11.2016 (for 45 days).

- Now instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01.08.2017 onwards for the journeys to commence on 01.08.2017 and onwards. This scheme has been introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains under the management of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) w.e.f. 01.08.2017 for an initial period of 180 days, subject to mid-term review after 3 months.
- **Water Vending Machines (WVMs)**
 - With the objective to make available potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, Water Vending Machines Policy has been notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015.
 - IRCTC to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system. Bids can be invited for group of stations having similar type of WVMs. Group of platforms can be considered to form a composite offer.
 - Pure water, conforming to BIS (Bureau of Indian Standard) specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) and other regulations made by the government from time to time, will be dispensed through these WVMs for passengers in a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water.
 - Provision of Microprocessors and interlocks to ensure correct quality and quantity with Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology or alternate superior technology, depending upon the level of contamination in the water.
 - IRCTC has been mandated to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system.
 - As on 30/06/2017, 350 stations have been provided with the facility of Water Vending Machines by IRCTC and as on 31.07.2017, IRCTC has already awarded license for installation of 2900 WVMs over IR out of which 1300 WVMs have already been commissioned at 350 stations.
 - Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is to be finalised shortly.
 - Further, 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly at various stations.
- **Zero tolerance policy**
 - A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and during last six

months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during January to August 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year.

- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crores has been imposed during January to June 2017 as compared to ₹ 4.05 crores imposed during 2016, ₹ 2.61 crores in 2015 and ₹ 1.73 crores in 2014.
- Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the last one year.
- More than 40,000 inspections done by railway officials to improve the catering services.

● **Third-party audit**

- The third-party audit of the catering service to examine the quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in the pantry car and base kitchen, which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit.
- Food safety and Hygiene audits are being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors.
- Third Party Audit of catering services are also to be conducted at periodic intervals by independent and reputed auditing agencies accredited by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies) as empanelled by the zonal railways.
- Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway.
- IRCTC has awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

CAG in its recent Report No. 14 of 2017 on 'Management of Linen in Indian Railways' has highlighted some deficiencies regarding linen supplied in trains, particularly regarding cleaning/sanitization of blankets and pillows.

Washing of linen (except blanket) is done after every single use. Blankets are to be cleaned/washed at least once in two months. Some steps taken for improvement in Linen Management are as follows:—

Pace of setting up of Mechanized Laundries is being increased to improve the quality of washing. Higher capacity mechanized laundries is being done. Instructions for provision of fresh Blanket Covers in first AC have been issued. Necessary

improvement/augmentation will be done by the Railways to ensure that blankets are washed/cleaned at least once in two months.

(c) There has been no steep hike in train fare in recent times. The last fare hike was effected in 2014-15 with effect from 25.06.2014 wherein passenger fares were increased by 14.2%. However, there was no increase in Second Class (ordinary) Suburban fare upto a distance of 80 km.

Thereafter, in 2016-17, Flexi-fare system has been introduced in Rajdhani/Duronto and Shatabdi trains from 09.09.2016. Under this system, the base fare increases by 10% with every 10% of berths sold subject to maximum prescribed limit of 1.5 times in classes Second Air Conditioned, Sleeper, Second Sitting (Reserved), Air Conditioned Chair Car and 1.4 times in Air Conditioned 3-Tier.

However, various rebates have been introduced after an interim review of the flexi fare system and the following changes have been effected from 20.12.2016:

- (i) 30% Tatkal charges are not levied in these trains.
- (ii) 10% rebate in basic fare on vacant berths/seats after preparation of first chart in Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Duronto trains.
- (iii) Provision of Tatkal quota has been reduced in flexi fare train from maximum 30% to 10 % of the total available berths.
- (iv) Flexi fares are not applicable to First Air Conditioned and Executive Chair Car.
- (v) Discounted fare has been offered on some of these trains including Jaipur-Ajmer and Ajmer-Jaipur on Train No. 12015/12016 New Delhi-Ajmer Shatabdi and for the passengers of Bengaluru City-Mysuru and Mysuru-Bengaluru City on 12007/12008 Chennai Central- Mysuru Shatabdi Express.

New rail lines to link Amaravati

3010. DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether any timeline has been drawn to complete the survey of new railway lines linking Amaravati, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): Reconnaissance-Engineering-Cum-Traffic Survey (RETS) of new line Vijayawada-Guntur via Amaravathi (106 Km) has been completed and this project has been included in Pink Book 2017-18 at a cost of ₹ 2679.59 crore subject to requisite approvals. Now work of preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) has

been taken up. Project consists of:—

- (i) Double line connecting Errupalam on Vijayawada–Kazipet section and Numbur on Vijayawada–Guntur section for a length of 56.8 Km *via* Amaravathi.
- (ii) Single line connecting Amaravathi–Peddakurapadu on Guntur–Secunderabad line for a length of 24.5 Km.
- (iii) Single line connecting Sattenapalli on Guntur–Secunderabad section and Narsaraopet on Guntur–Guntakal section for a length of 25 Km.

Implementation of official language in Zonal Railways

†3011. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the latest details of the status of compliance of targets earmarked in annual programme for implementation of official language, along with original correspondence in official language in each of zonal railways in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): In accordance with the provisions of the Official Languages Act, 1963 and Official Language Rules 1976, promotion of usage of Hindi is a continuous endeavour on Indian Railways. The latest details of status for the Quarter ending June, 2017 for the compliance of targets earmarked in annual programme alongwith original correspondence in Official Language in each of Zonal Railways in the country are as under:—

Originating Correspondence in Hindi

Sl. No.	Zonal Railway	From A to A (Target-100%)	From A to B (Target-100%)	From A to C (Target-65%)	From Region A to Offices/ Individuals in States/UTs of A and B region (Target-100%)
1	2	3	4	5	6
‘A’ Region					
1.	Northern	99.6%	98.4%	92.8%	98.8%
2.	North Eastern	99.9%	100%	97%	99.9%
3.	East Central	99.7%	98.4%	89.7%	99.4%
4.	North Central	99.4%	99.4%	81.5%	99.5%
5.	North Western	99.1%	96.2%	93%	99%

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	South East Central	99.5%	100%	98%	100%
7.	West Central	99%	99%	86.4%	99%
‘B’ Region		From B to A (Target-90%)	From B to B (Target-90%)	From B to C (Target-55%)	From Region B to Offices Individuals in States/UTs of A and B region (Target-100%)
8.	Central	96.4%	95.7%	63.4%	98%
9.	Western	99%	94%	73%	91%
‘C’ Region		From C to A (Target-55%)	From C to B (Target-55%)	From C to C (Target-55%)	From Region C to Offices/Individuals in States/UTs of A and B region (Target -85%)
10.	Eastern	83%	77%	70%	88%
11.	Northeast Frontier	62.4%	56%	60%	56.4%
12.	Southern	63%	56%	62%	61%
13.	South Central	80%	83%	71.2%	89%
14.	South Eastern	56%	55.5%	57%	-
15.	South Western	84%	75%	61%	86%
16.	East Coast	60%	57%	58.8%	-
17.	Metro Railway	57%	57.4%	62.6%	-
		2	3	4	5
Sl. No.	Zonal Railways	Letters received in Hindi to be answered in Hindi	Noting in Hindi	Training Programme through Hindi Medium	Recruitment of employees utilized for Hindi Typing and Stenographers
‘A’ Region		(Target-100%)	(Target-75%)	(Target-70%)	(Target-80%)
1.	Northern	100%	88%	100%	100%
2.	North Eastern	100%	100%	100%	100%
3.	East Central	100%	90%	100%	99.6%
4.	North central	100%	97%	100%	90%
5.	North Western	100%	94%	100%	80%
6.	South East Central	100%	91%	100%	No recruitment done
7.	West Central	100%	97.3%	100%	100%

	2	3	4	5
‘B’ Region	(Target-100%)	(Target-50%)	(Target-60%)	(Target-70%)
8. Central	100%	78%	60%	No recruitment done
9. Western	100%	80%	100%	100%
‘C’ Region	(Target-100%)	(Target-30%)	(Target-30%)	(Target-40%)
10. Eastern	100%	35%	100%	No recruitment done
11. Northeast Frontier	100%	38.4%	100%	No recruitment done
12. Southern	100%	34.4%	40%	No recruitment done
13. South central	100%	71%	100%	No recruitment done
14. South Eastern	100%	35%	30%	No recruitment done
15. South Western	100%	36%	30%	Recruitment is under process
16. East Coast	100%	38%	100%	No recruitment done
17. Metro Railway	100%	30%	100%	-Recruitment is under process
	6	7	8	9
Sl. No.	Dictation in Hindi/Direct Typing on Key-Board (self and by the Asstt.)	Hindi Training (Language, Typing/ Stenography)	Preparation of Bilingual Training Material	Expenditure for the purchase of Hindi books etc., including digital matters <i>i.e.</i> , Hindi e-books, CD/DVD, Pen Drive including amount incurred on Translation in Hindi from English and Regional Languages out of the total Library grant excluding journals and standard reference books.
‘A’ Region	(Target-65%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-50%)
1. Northern	98%	99.9%	100%	100%
2. North Eastern	100%	100%	100%	100%
3. East Central	90%	100%	100%	50%
4. North central	96%	100%	100%	100%

		6	7	8	9
5.	North Western	86%	100%	100%	100%
6.	South East Central	88%	100%	100%	59%
7.	West Central	87%	99.9%	100%	100%
‘B’ Region		(Target-55%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-50%)
8.	Central	74%	100%	100%	50%
9.	Western	72%	100%	100%	50%
‘C’ Region		(Target-30%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-50%)
10.	Eastern	28%	92%	100%	36%
11.	Northeast Frontier	48.4%	78.4%	100%	50%
12.	Southern	28%	75%	100%	50%
13.	South Central	57%	99.8%	100%	50%
14.	South Eastern	30%	97%	100%	45%
15.	South Western	34%	94%	100%	48%
16.	East Coast	36.81%	80%	100%	62%
17.	Metro Railway	32%	70%	100%	77%

		10	11	12	13
Sl. No.	Zonal Railway	Purchase of all electronic equipments, including computers in bilingual form.	Website	Citizen Charter and display of Public interface information Board	Inspections in Hindi
					(i) Inspection by Ministries/ Departments/ Offices of their offices located outside their Headquarters and by the officers (DS/Dir/JS) of DOL (% of Offices)
	‘A’ Region	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-25%)
1.	Northern	100%	100%	100%	55%
2.	North Eastern	100%	100%	100%	30%
3.	East Central	100%	100%	100%	85.5%
4.	North Central	100%	100%	100%	35%
5.	North Western	100%	100%	100%	25%

		10	11	12	13	
6.	South East Central	100%	100%	100%	78%	13%
7.	West Central	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
‘B’ Region		(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-25%)	(Target-25%)
8.	Central	100%	100%	100%	25%	25%
9.	Western	100%	100%	100%	25%	25%
‘C’ Region		(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-100%)	(Target-25%)	(Target-25%)
10.	Eastern	100%	100%	100%	33%	30%
11.	Northeast Frontier	100%	100%	100%	30%	30%
12.	Southern	100%	100%	100%	41.2%	40%
13.	South Central	100%	100%	100%	84%	-
14.	South Eastern	100%	100%	100%	25%	25%
15.	South Western	100%	100%	100%	100%	29%
16.	East Coast	100%	100%	100%	45%	32%
17.	Metro Railway	100%	100%	100%	-	53%

		14		15	
Sl. No.	Zonal Railway	Meetings regarding Official Language Implementation Committee (One meeting every quarter)		Translation of Codes/Manuals, Forms, Procedural literature.	
‘A’ Region		Required Meeting	Meeting Held	(Target-100%)	
				Codes Manuals	Forms
1.	Northern	01	01	100%	100%
2.	North Eastern	01	01	100%	100%
3.	East Central	01	01	100%	100%
4.	North Central	01	01	100%	100%
5.	North Western	01	01	100%	100%
6.	South East Central	01	01	100%	100%
7.	West Central	01	01	100%	100%

14				15	
‘B’ Region			(Target-100%)		
8.	Central	01	01	100%	100%
9.	Western	01	01	100%	100%
‘C’ Region			(Target-100%)		
10.	Eastern	01	01	100%	100%
11.	Northeast Frontier	01	01	100%	100%
12.	Southern	01	01	100%	100%
13.	South Central	01	01	100%	100%
14.	South Eastern	01	01	100%	100%
15.	South Western	01	01	100%	100%
16.	East Coast	01	01	100%	100%
17.	Metro Kolkata	01	01	100%	100%

Concessions in train fares to persons and institutions

†3012. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the grounds on which concession is provided on train passenger fares to persons and institutions and the number of people and institutions to whom such concessions were provided each year since 2014 till date, along with the reasons therefor; and

(b) in the context of part (a) above, the details of the free journey passes issued during the said period along with reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) As a welfare measure, Indian Railways extend travel concessions in various classes of travel to different categories of travellers, such as patients, students, senior citizens, certain categories of disabled persons, doctors, artists, sports-persons, Press-correspondents, Kisans, certain educational and cultural institutions etc. The element of concession ranges from 10% to 100%.

The number of passengers who availed concession in passenger fare, whether as per individual eligibility or as representatives of institutions, during last three years are approximately as under:—

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Period	No. of passengers (in Million)
2014-15	231.45
2015-16	237.81
2016-17	242.39

Unmanned Level Crossings in Karnataka

3013. SHRI K.C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Karnataka is having 300 Unmanned Level Crossings (ULCs) in the State;

(b) if so, the reasons for such high number of ULCs and steps taken by the Ministry to either close them or make them manned; and

(c) how many ULCs will be closed in 2017 and by when all the remaining 300 ULCs are going to be closed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) As on 01.04.2017, there are 253 unmanned level crossings in the State of Karnataka.

(b) The unmanned level crossings on Broad Gauge are targeted for elimination by March 2020. It is the endeavor of Railways to eliminate all unmanned level crossings 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/unmanned level crossing or subway/Road Under Bridge (RUB)/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.

(c) During 2017-18, in the State of Karnataka, 94 unmanned level crossings are planned for elimination. Ministry of Railways has announced a specific submission to eliminate all unmanned level crossings on Broad Gauge by March 2020.

Different types of goods wagons

3014. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of different types of goods wagons available with the Railways, zone-wise;

(b) whether the present stock of goods wagons suffice the demand or there is a shortage of wagons;

(c) whether there is any plan of establishing a new wagon factory in the country; and

(d) whether Government would consider to establish the wagon manufacturing factory in Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) There are 2,58,584 different types of wagons available over Indian Railways. The zone-wise holding of wagons are as under:

(i)	Central Railway	: 17246
(ii)	Eastern Railway	: 17581
(iii)	East Central Railway	: 23379
(iv)	East Coast Railway	: 19173
(v)	Northern Railway	: 13591
(vi)	North Central Railway	: 19089
(vii)	North Eastern Railway	: 4570
(viii)	Northeast Frontier Railway	: 6449
(ix)	North Western Railway	: 8728
(x)	Southern Railway	: 8996
(xi)	South Central Railway	: 22607
(xii)	South Eastern Railway	: 35269
(xiii)	South East Central Railway	: 28119
(xiv)	South Western Railway	: 8675
(xv)	Western Railway	: 11781
(xvi)	West Central Railway	: 13331
	TOTAL	: 258584

(b) The present availability of wagons is adequate for meeting the present demand for rail transport.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise.

Wagon manufacturing units of Burn Standard Company Limited

3015. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two wagon manufacturing units of Burn Standard Company Limited, situated at Burnpur and Howrah, are suffering from inadequate quantity of orders from Railways; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the aforesaid units are also facing non-availability of working capital?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The Ministry of Railways has placed adequate orders for manufacture of wagons on M/s. Burn Standard and Company Limited (BSCL). As on 01.08.2017, orders for manufacture of 881 wagons, amounting to ₹ 126 crore are balance on M/s. BSCL. Since 2015, the Company is also carrying out major repairs of wagons for Indian Railways. In 2015-16, 2305 wagons, in 2016-17, 4028 wagons and in 2017-18 (till July 2017), 1341 wagons have been repaired by the Company. Orders for repair of 1835 wagons, amounting to ₹ 45.87 crore, are still balance on M/s. BSCL as on 01.08.2017. In addition, orders worth ₹ 17 crore for cast components are also balance on the Company.

(b) To tide over the shortage of working capital, Ministry of Railways has sanctioned advance payment to M/s. BSCL for fabrication of wagons. In 2015-16, an advance of ₹ 23.32 crore was paid to the Company for fabrication of wagons and in 2016-17, an advance of ₹ 21.20 crore has been sanctioned. In addition, the Company is arranging funds through borrowings from bank as well.

Serving of expired food in railway areas

3016. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received a report on serving of contaminated/expired food and unauthorized brands of water bottles, etc., within the railway areas of the country;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on the report; and

(c) the actions taken by Government to stop such malpractices and for monitoring of the quality of food served to passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its recent Report No. 13 of 2017 dated 21.7.2017 on “Catering Services in Indian Railways” has highlighted deficiencies in catering services being provided to passengers on Indian Railways.

Improvement of catering being an on-going process, a new Catering Policy has been notified on 27 February, 2017 wherein with the objective to provide quality food to rail passengers, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has been mandated to unbundle catering services on trains by creating a distinction primarily between food preparation and food distribution. IRCTC shall set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. These kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC. IRCTC shall retain the ownership and shall be fully accountable for all the issues pertaining to setting up and operation of the Base Kitchens and quality of food. All four Base Kitchens under departmental operation of Zonal Railways (Nagpur, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Mumbai Central (BCT) and Balharshah) and all kitchen units *i.e.* Refreshment Rooms at A1 and A category stations, Jan Ahaar, Cell Kitchens shall be handed over to IRCTC on ‘as is where is basis’. In the first phase, unbundling of catering services is under implementation on Delhi–Mumbai Sector. Base kitchens and Jan Ahaars at CSMT and BCT have been taken over by IRCTC from Zonal Railways.

- Further steps being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers:—
 - (i) Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.
 - (ii) Introduction of precooked food (‘ready to eat’ meals) in the range of options available to passengers.
 - (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public.
 - (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services.
 - (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services
 - (vi) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.
- To effectively check and control unfair practices of overcharging, issues of quality as well quantity, the following measures are planned:

- In prepaid trains, optional catering is being introduced a pilot project so that passenger has the option to 'not eat' if he does not want the food supplied onboard.
- A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and in last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the calendar year 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year.
- Third Party Audit of mobile units and base kitchen is to be undertaken by zonal railway periodically, by hiring an independent agency in accordance with Catering Policy 2017.
- As announced in the Rail Budget 2016-17, Tejas Train has been introduced on 22.05.2017. Management of on-board catering services on Tejas Express is done by IRCTC. Service-wise Catering services on Tejas Express are optional and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking, catering charges will not be included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service, in addition to the cost of catering charges will be charged.
- Instructions have been issued stipulating that Humsafar trains may have the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed and are fully functional.

● **Proliferation of e-catering**

- E-catering service on IR is managed by IRCTC. Initially, e-catering service was train specific and made available in 1350 trains which did not have services of Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative during September 2015, this scheme has been reoriented to make it 'Station Based E-Catering' in place of train specific e-catering. In the first phase, a pilot project has been undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' and 'A' category of stations which is presently under implementation. E-catering service is now available on 357 railway stations and the average supply of meals under this scheme is around 5000 meals per day (as on September' 2016) against 2000 orders per day which was around 400 meals per day during October' 2015.
- Passengers travelling from these stations are now able to access E-Catering facilities for all trains passing through these stations. IRCTC is facilitating

booking of meals through a specified phone number/ website / SMS / Mobile Apps etc. Passengers having mobile number are able to book meals under this scheme. CoD facility to passengers under this scheme has also been made available.

- IRCTC has established a call centre and has also operationalized E-catering website www.ecatering.irctc.co.in for this purpose. Passengers can pre-order the meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations through the e-catering (website and phone/SMS call centre). The mode of payment in e-catering shall be Pre-paid *i.e.* online payment as well as Cash on delivery (CoD) basis. The shortlisted vendor shall deliver the pre-ordered meal to customer on stationary train at the opted station. The opted meal is communicated to the Vendor through SMS as well as email at the time of booking and also again at about 2 hours in advance of delivery time (Delivery time is the train arrival time on a particular station). The Short-listing vendor can provide meals through his catering units on all India basis. Each unit/location, requested by vendor, to be included for e-catering project is required to have all statutory licences as required under the central/ state laws and should comply with the laws of the land. The shortlisted entity may request for addition of more locations/units during the currency of the Short-listing. The shortlisted entity may supply food items under e-catering project only from its approved (by IRCTC) locations/units to the stations in the reasonable vicinity of the said units.

- **Optional catering service**

- The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on the following two train's w.e.f. 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP (Advance Reservation Period).
 - Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani;
 - Train No. 12025-26, PUNE-SC Shatabdi Exp.

Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option

This scheme was started from 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP *i.e.* 7.10.2016 to 20.11.2016 (for 45 days).

- Now instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01.08.2017 onwards for the journeys to commence on 01.08.2017 and onwards. This scheme has been introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains under the

management of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) w.e.f. 01.08.2017 for an initial period of 180 days, subject to mid-term review after 3 months.

- **Water Vending Machines (WVMs)**

- With the objective to make available potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, Water Vending Machines Policy has been notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015.
- IRCTC to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system. Bids can be invited for group of stations having similar type of WVMs. Group of platforms can be considered to form a composite offer.
- Pure water, conforming to BIS (Bureau of Indian Standard) specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) and other regulations made by the government from time to time, will be dispensed through these WVMs for passengers in a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water.
- Provision of Microprocessors and interlocks to ensure correct quality and quantity with Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology or alternate superior technology, depending upon the level of contamination in the water.
- IRCTC has been mandated to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system.
- As on 30.06.2017, 350 stations have been provided with the facility of Water Vending Machines by IRCTC and as on 31.07.2017, IRCTC has already awarded license for installation of 2900 WVMs over IR out of which 1300 WVMs have already been commissioned at 350 stations.
- Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is to be finalised shortly.
- Further, 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly at various stations.

- **Zero tolerance policy**

- A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and during last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during January to August 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year.

- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crore has been imposed during January to June, 2017 as compared to ₹ 4.05 crore imposed during 2016, ₹ 2.61 crore in 2015 and ₹ 1.73 crore in 2014.
 - Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the last one year.
 - More than 40,000 inspections done by railway officials to improve the catering services.
- **Third party audit**
- The third-party audit of the catering service to examine the quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in the pantry car and base kitchen, which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit.
 - Food safety and Hygiene audits are being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors.
 - Third Party Audit of catering services are also to be conducted at periodic intervals by independent and reputed auditing agencies accredited by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies) as empanelled by the zonal railways.
 - Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway.
 - IRCTC has awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

Installation of TV screens at railway stations

3017. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways propose to install a large number of TV screens at the railway station complexes, foot over bridges, platforms, waiting rooms, etc;

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

(c) the number of TV screens installed so far and the number of total screens proposed to be installed along with the major stations/sites selected therefor; and

(d) the total expenditure likely to be incurred on the installation of these screens and the time by which these are proposed to be installed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. Railways propose to install display screens at foot-over bridges, platforms, waiting rooms etc. at Railway Stations under Railway Display Network (RDN) project. RailTel Corporation of India Ltd., a Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of Ministry of Railways, has been appointed as Nodal Agency to implement and manage Indian Railway's RDN system.

(b) Railway Display Network is envisaged to become a unique medium of communication with passengers which will not only provide necessary information and social messages to the passengers but will also become a medium of enriched infotainment.

Along with train information, it is proposed to display advertisement and social messages on the display screens. Railway Display Network will generate revenue by displaying contextualized advertisements for pre-agreed duration and frequency. Railway Display Network is planned to be built and operated on a self-sustainable model with no capital investment by Indian Railways.

Railway Display Network system will:

- (i) Display information related to train arrival, departure, train running status, platform and other passenger related information round the clock.
- (ii) Display information related to passenger amenities, comfort, convenience and safety.
- (iii) Display emergency messages on SOS basis and messages related to Disaster Management.
- (iv) Infotainment and social messages for engaging passengers.
- (v) Self-sustainable model by generating revenue through advertisement or any other related revenue generation opportunities.

(c) The Proof of Concept (Pilot) of the project has since been completed at 16 stations of Indian Railways and around 500 display screens have been installed for the pilot project. The Railway Display Network system including installation of Display screens is expected to cover all A1, A, B, C, and D category stations of Indian Railways.

(d) Railway Display Network system is proposed to be built and operated on a self-sustainable model with no capital investment by Indian Railways. Roll-out of the Railway Display Network system at various designated stations is expected to be done in a phased manner, starting with deployment at A1 category stations followed by A, C and other category stations. The complete project is expected to be completed in 4 years.

Fare in Humsafar and Suvidha Express Trains

†3018. SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether fare in Humsafar and Suvidha Express trains is fixed under the 'Flexi Fare Scheme'; and

(b) whether at times, passengers in these trains are deprived of complimentary catering facilities, despite paying more fare than charged for Rajdhani and Durgam Cheruvu trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir. Humsafar Express train has been introduced with special features based on variable fare structure. The fares structure of Humsafar train has been fixed at 1.15 times the base fare of AC 3-Tier superfast Mail/Express for the first passenger block of 50% and thereafter a 10% increase for every 10% increase in the passenger block for the remaining 50% subject to maximum of 1.7 times of the base fare of mail/express trains.

Suvidha trains are introduced on variable fares for meeting peak demand as may arise from time to time during summer, winter, festivals and on other occasions. The minimum fare of Suvidha trains is equal to Tatkal fare applicable for the class of accommodation for initial 20% of the berths and thereafter the fare increases for subsequent slabs of 20% of seats/berths booked subject to maximum three times of the Tatkal fare.

(b) Indian Railways does not provide complimentary catering facilities in trains. However in case of Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Durgam Cheruvu trains, catering charges are included in the chargeable fare.

Equipping Bilaspur Station with escalators

3019. SHRI RANVIJAY SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state by when all the stations in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh division will be equipped with escalators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): As per existing policy, escalators are to be provided at A1, A and C category stations progressively based on techno commercial feasibility and availability of funds.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

At present, two no. of escalators have been provided at Bilaspur Railway Station and additional 2 escalators are likely to be provided by March 2018.

Modernisation and extension of railway in Eastern Uttar Pradesh

†3020. SHRI SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the plan of modernisation and extension of railway in eastern Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) the details of the progress in the extension work of the line from Sahjanwa to Dohrighat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) On Indian Railways, modernisation and extension of Railways are not planned according to State and territorial boundaries. However, 15 new lines, 49 doubling, 9 gauge conversion and 33 Railway electrification works falling fully/partly in the State of Uttar Pradesh have been included in different annual budgets.

(b) Sahjanwa-Dohrighat new line work has been included in budget of 2016-17, subject to requisite approvals from the Government.

Reduction in emission standards

3021. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plans to reduce emission standards of Railways to achieve Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) targets submitted by India in the Paris Agreement, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether year-wise targets have been planned, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of low carbon and energy-efficient initiatives planned for the sector during this period; and

(d) the details of investments Railways are planning in low carbon and renewable energy initiatives in the next three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. At present, there are no emission standards for locomotives in India. However, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MOEF&CC),

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

which is the nodal and notification agency for fixing Emission Standards for Diesel Locomotives is examining the issue and as per MOEF&CC report:

“In order to reduce emission from Diesel locomotives in the country, the interim emission standards for Diesel locomotives are proposed to be drafted in consultation with Ministry of Railways, Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES), Engine Development Directorate Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) and Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). The process of development of standards is likely to be completed by March 2019, subject to adequate data being made available”.

In this regard, Railways have already submitted its interim report to Central Pollution Control Board (MOEF&CC). Moreover, Indian Railways has committed to reduce its emission intensity to the extent of 32% by 2030 by taking series of energy efficiency initiatives.

In addition, Indian Railways has also entrusted M/s RITES for “Consultancy contract for Study on Emissions from Diesel Locomotives and setting up of Emission Standards”.

(b) Since Emission Standards have not yet been fixed by MOEF&CC, the question of year-wise targets does not arise at this stage.

(c) Railways are taking the following further steps to promote use of clean fuels and reduce carbon emissions:

- (i) Use of B5 (5% Bio-Diesel) blends of bio diesel in the diesel locomotives.
- (ii) Use of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) based dual fuel system on DEMU trains to achieve 20% substitution of Diesel with gas.
- (iii) Development of CNG based dual fuel system with 40% substitution of diesel for high economy and environmental benefit.
- (iv) Process to establish two bio diesel manufacturing plants with 30 Tonn Per Day (TPD) capacity owned by Railways.
- (v) Promote use of LNG/CNG as environment friendly industrial gas in place of Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Acetylene in Railway workshops.
- (vi) Promote and install roof top based solar power generation system in railways workshops and production units.

(d) Railways are installing solar and wind power plants mostly through developer mode wherein investment will be made by the developer and Railways will procure power on long term Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).

Coaches with automatic door closure facilities

3022. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons killed while travelling on foot-board in trains, especially students, during the last three years;

(b) whether Government has any plan to have passenger coaches with automatic door closure facilities, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has commissioned coaches with automatic door closure on an experimental basis; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the time by which the coaches with automatic door closure facility will be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The number of persons killed while travelling on foot-board in the trains including students during the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 over Indian Railways is given below:—

Year	No. of persons killed
2014	2443
2015	2582
2016	2613

(b) Sanction under Rolling Stock Programme for provision of Automatic door closure mechanism is available for 525 coaches.

(c) and (d) Presently, Automatic door locking and opening mechanism has been provided in the Tejas rake of 15 Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches (plus 4 spare coaches) running between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and Karmali. Also, Automatic doors are provided in all thirty one Kolkata Metro rakes with conventional electrics manufactured at Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai. Further, the first Kolkata Metro rake with 3 Phase Propulsion System and the first air-conditioned Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) rake have been turned out by ICF, Chennai with Automatic doors.

Compensation to victims of train accidents

3023. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is providing any compensation to the victims of train accidents during the year, if so, the details thereof;

(b) how many train accidents happened in the last two years along with the number of people killed; and

(c) the status report of compensation being provided to victims of train accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. An amount of ₹ 303.17 lakh has been paid as compensation to the victims of train accidents in the year 2016-17.

(b) Total number of train accidents and people killed during the last two years are as under:—

Year	No. of Train accidents	No. of people killed
2015-16	107	97
2016-17	104	181
TOTAL	211	278

(c) Compensation liability of Railway Administration for death/injury of railway passengers in train accidents is laid down in Section 124 of the Railway Act, 1989. Admissibility of such compensation is decided by Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) on the basis of a claim application filed before them. Railway Administration is liable to pay compensation to rail passengers only when a decree is awarded by Hon'ble RCT in favour of the claimant and Railways decide to implement the decree. The scale of compensation as specified in Railway Accident and Untoward Incidents (Compensation) Amendment Rules, 2016 is ₹ 08 lakh for death and ₹ 64,000/- to ₹ 08 lakh for injury depending upon the gravity of injury. The amount of compensation paid by the Railways during the last two years is as under:—

(₹ in Lakhs)

Year	Compensation Paid in Train accidents (Sec-124)
2015-16	262.96
2016-17	303.17
TOTAL	566.13

Note: The compensation paid in a year is not related to the incident or casualties in that particular year. The amount paid in a year depends upon the number of cases finalized and decreed by the Railway Claims Tribunal or court of law in a particular year and amount paid by the Railways irrespective of the year(s) in which the accident they pertain to, have occurred.

Accidental deaths on railway tracks

3024. PROF. M. V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidental deaths that have occurred on railway tracks, since 2014, State-wise;

(b) whether the Ministry has taken measures to contain accidental deaths on railway tracks; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The number of accidental deaths occurred on railway tracks over Indian Railways during the years 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 (upto June) is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) and (c) The following measures have been taken by the Railways to contain accidental deaths on the railway tracks:—

- (1) Regular announcements are made through Public Address system at important Railway stations urging the passengers to use foot over bridges and to avoid crossing of Railway tracks.
- (2) Various passenger awareness programmes are being organized to create awareness amongst general public about the fatalities of crossing Railway tracks.
- (3) Erection of boundary wall/fencing at identified locations, vulnerable to trespass.
- (4) Warning sign boards are provided at conspicuous places for the awareness of passengers.
- (5) Worst affected stations, sections and spots are identified. Joint Committee of officers of various branches of Railways at Divisional level are formed to take action to reduce accidental deaths on railways.
- (6) The Ministry of Railways has decided to progressively eliminate unmanned level crossing by closure, merger, provision of subways and manning, based on the availability of funds and coordination from State Governments.
- (7) Unauthorized trespassing on Railway premises including the Railway track is a punishable offence in terms of section 147 of the Railways Act. Regular drives are conducted against unauthorized trespassing on Railway

premises as well as Railway tracks. During the year 2016, total 1,61,482 persons have been prosecuted for trespassing in Railways and 1,03,986 persons prosecuted for travelling on roof, engine and foot-board of trains over Indian Railways.

Statement

Number of accidental deaths occurred on railway tracks over Indian Railways during the years 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 (upto June)

Zonal Railway	No. of accidental deaths occurred on railway tracks			
	2014	2015	2016	2017 (Upto June)
Central	3253	3165	2986	1383
Eastern	2707	2494	2158	1187
East Central	1080	1185	1273	680
East Coast	808	848	879	487
Northern	4661	4500	4399	2373
North Central	908	751	869	720
North Eastern	550	503	459	261
Northeast Frontier	339	408	435	228
North Western	552	513	526	264
Southern	1620	1785	1863	1024
South Central	3286	3415	3205	1467
South Eastern	720	820	976	420
South East Central	539	583	605	307
South Western	919	856	747	336
Western	2527	2475	2406	1192
West Central	599	705	741	340
TOTAL	25068	25006	24527	12669

**Linkage through freight corridor between
Visakhapatnam and Kolkata**

3025. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether Government will consider providing a backward and forward linkage for the industrial hinterlands of Dhamra, Gopalpur and Paradip ports with the Northern and Central hinterlands through a dedicated freight corridor between Visakhapatnam and Kolkata through Odisha?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): Dhamra, Gopalpur and Paradip ports are already connected to Indian Railways' rail network. Preliminary-cum-Traffic Survey for the East Coast freight corridor (Kharagpur-Vijayawada) to strengthen the capacity on the East Coast Railway and connectivity to Dhamra, Gopalpur and Paradip ports as well as mineral and industrial regions of the State of Odisha has been completed.

Sharing of cost for a new line from Puri to Konark

3026. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether for a new line from Puri to Konark, Government of Odisha has offered to sanction 50 per cent of land cost and 50 per cent of construction cost with Railways;

(b) whether in spite of the fact that the Chief Minister of Odisha has sent this offer to the Railways on 26th April, 2017 but no confirmation has been received from Railways; and

(c) by when Railways will sign an MoU with Government of Odisha for this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) A proposal has been received from the Chief Minister of Odisha conveying Government of Odisha's decision to bear 50% cost of the project for laying of new line from Puri to Konark (32.6 km) considering the tourism potential of Golden Triangle of Bhuvaneswar-Puri-Konark. However, since land required for the project has not been offered by the State Government, Government of Odisha has been requested to provide land free of cost for which no reply has been received from the State Government. No target date has, therefore, been fixed for signing of MoU.

Revenue from non-fare and non-freight activities

3027. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total revenue earned by Railways from non-fare and non-freight activities and its percentage during the last three years and the current year; and

(b) whether Railways propose to earn additional revenue by granting permission for large scale advertising on trains and if so, the details thereof along with the number of trains selected under the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The details of non-fare revenue and percentage are as follows:

(₹ in crore)

	Financial Year 2014-15	Financial Year 2015-16	Financial Year 2016-17
Sundry Earnings	5092.74	5928.55	10368.04
Percentage of Gross Traffic Receipts	3.25	3.61	6.28

(b) The Indian Railways has come out with several new policies to earn non-fare revenue. These include Rail Display Network, Content on Demand, Out of Home Advertising, Mobile Assets, Automated Teller Machines and Unsolicited proposals. All trains are covered under Content on Demand and Mobile Assets' policies.

Making railway stations and trains disabled-friendly

3028. SHRIMATI THOTA SEETHARAMA LAKSHMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any steps to make railway stations and trains more disabled-friendly, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has received complaints of railway services being disabled-unfriendly, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereon; and

(c) the steps being taken to make maximum number of services of the Railways disabled-friendly, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) In order to provide better accessibility to Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), short term facilities, as detailed below, have been planned at all stations, beginning with 'A-1', 'A' and 'B' category stations:—

- Standard ramp for barrier free entry
- Earmarking at least two parking lots
- Non-slippery walk-way from parking lot to building
- Signages of appropriate visibility
- At least one toilet (on the ground floor)
- At least one drinking water tap suitable for use by Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
- 'May I help you' Booth

In addition, long term facilities, as detailed below, have also been planned at 'A-1', 'A' and 'B' category stations:—

- Provision of facility for inter-platform transfer
- Engraving on edges of platform

In order to facilitate easy movement of elderly and Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), as per the existing guidelines, 'A-1' category stations qualify for provision of escalators/elevators while 'A' category, 'C' category and stations of tourist importance qualify for provision of escalators under 'Desirable Amenities'. So far, 394 escalators at 167 stations and 219 lifts at 100 stations have been provided. Further, work is in progress for about 380 nos. of escalators at 133 stations and 427 nos. of lifts at 134 stations which shall be completed over a period of next two to three years.

Indian Railways have manufactured about 3450 SLRD/SRD coaches (SLRD-Second Class Cum Luggage Cum Guard Van & Disabled friendly compartment, SRD-Second Class Cum Guard Van & Disabled friendly compartment) which have a suitably designed compartment and toilet adapted to the needs of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)/wheelchair borne passengers. In SLRD coaches, wider entrance door for wheelchair borne passengers, wider berths, wider compartments, space for provision of wheelchair, larger lavatory and lavatory doors have been provided. Inside the toilets, additional grab rails on the side walls for support, wash basin and mirror at lower height have been provided. It is endeavored to have at least one such coach in each Mail/Express train having ICF design coaches.

Further, the fully air conditioned Garib Rath trains have been provided with an Air conditioned Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) friendly compartment and toilets in the power cars.

For assistance to visually impaired travelers, Braille signages are now being provided in newly manufactured coaches.

Availability of Wheelchairs on Platforms: Instructions already exist for provision of Wheelchair at stations. This facility is provided, duly escorted by coolies (on payment) as per present practice. Zonal Railways have also been instructed to provide one wheelchair per platform and in case of island platforms one wheelchair per two platforms at all 'A-1' and 'A' category stations.

Battery Operated Cars (BOCs): Zonal Railways have been authorized to introduce Battery Operated Cars (BOCs) at major railway stations for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), elderly and ailing passengers on 'first come first served' basis through sponsorship from individuals, NGOs, Trusts, Charitable institutions, Corporate and PSUs/Corporate Houses under their Corporate Social Responsibility free of charge to passenger or to the Railway. 70 BOCs have already been provided at 48 major railway stations. Further, instructions have also been issued to Zonal Railways to invite Expression of Interest for providing the facility of Battery Operated Car service on payment basis initially at all 'A-1' category stations keeping in view the financial sustainability of the service. This facility can be availed by passengers on 'first come first served' basis, however, preference shall be given to Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), pregnant women and medically sick passengers.

Yatri Mitra Sewa: 'Yatri Mitra Sewa' is being provided at major stations for enabling passengers to book wheelchair services cum Porter services etc. The responsibility of providing Yatri Mitra Sewa is entrusted to IRCTC who may provide this service 'Free of cost' through some NGOs, PSUs etc. under CSR or on payment basis. This service can be booked on IRCTC e-ticketing website and 139 (IVRS and SMS) or through a mobile.

Complaints on railway services are received from all walks of life through various channels *viz.* Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) web portal, Complaints Management System Portal, Social media etc. which are forwarded to concerned Departments of Railways for necessary action. However, no separate data is maintained regarding complaints of railway services being Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) unfriendly.

**Crackdown on touts, unauthorized ticketing agencies
and illegal vendors at railway stations**

3029. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways launched a 15 week drive to crack down on touts, unauthorized ticketing agencies and illegal vendors at railway stations recently, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the amount recovered, as traffic charges, following surprise checks by vigilance teams;

(c) number of touts, unauthorized vendors and illegal ticketing agencies that have been prosecuted during drive;

(d) whether Railways plan to create awareness among citizens not to patronize unauthorized vendors at railway premises or purchase tickets from touts, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) other steps taken to put a check on activities of touts and vendors at railway stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) A special drive was launched by all Zonal Railways during summer period from 01.04.2017 to 30.06.2017 to conduct checks in mass contact areas. The drive was aimed at curbing malpractices of touting activities, ticketless passengers, misuse of facilities of e-ticketing etc.

(b) An amount of 1.18 crore (approx) was recovered during the special drive.

(c) During the drive, 307 touts, 59115 unauthorized vendors and 07 illegal ticketing agencies have been prosecuted.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Some of the steps taken to make public aware of streamlining of reservation system and making it more transparent, are as under:

- (i) Educating general public through Public Address System and media, not to buy ticket from touts/unscrupulous elements and consequences of buying ticket from these sources.
- (ii) Restriction on agents on booking of tickets during first thirty minutes of opening of Advance Reservation Period (ARP) booking and Tatkal booking.
- (iii) Imparting information relating to availability of current status of reservation.

- (iv) Condition of carrying of original proof of identity during journey by any one of the passengers booked on the ticket, so as to check transfer of ticket.
- (v) Automatic preparation of reservation charts at least 4 hours before scheduled departure of train and thereafter booking of available accommodation through internet as well as through computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters.
- (vi) Making provision in the PRS system to transfer vacant available accommodation after preparation of second reservation chart to next charting station.
- (vii) Introduction of Alternate Train Accommodation Scheme (ATAS) known as VIKALP for providing confirmed accommodation to the willing waitlisted passengers in other Trains of same route thereby ensuring optimal utilization of available accommodation.
- (viii) Modification of Railway Passengers (Cancellation of Ticket and Refund of Fare) Rules to discourage speculative booking of tickets. No refund is granted to confirmed passengers after chart preparation.
- (ix) Provision of CCTVs at important PRS locations.
- (x) Only one booking in one user login session except for return/onward journey between 0800 and 1200 hours.
- (xi) Provision of CAPTCHA in the booking page of e-ticket/i-ticket on the IRCTC website to check use of scripting tools by unscrupulous elements for cornering of tickets.
- (xii) Introduction of a time check of 35 seconds for completion of online booking of tickets to avoid misuse through use of scripting software.
- (xiii) Making One Time Password (OTP) mandatory for payment of tickets booked online.
- (xiv) Conducting joint as well as independent checks by Commercial, Vigilance & Security Departments to curb the activities of touts, to curb the malpractices by Railway staff indulging in connivance with touts. Stringent action taken against the railway staff under Disciplinary and Appeal Rules, if found indulging in malpractices.
- (xv) Intensification of checks during peak rush and festival periods. Touts and unauthorized vendors are apprehended and prosecuted as per

provision of Section 143 & 144 of the Railways Act, 1989. Illegal users of online e-ticketing are also prosecuted under provision of Section 143 of Railways Act, 1989.

- (xvi) Simultaneous checks conducted at Reservation Offices and on the trains to detect the cases of transferred reserved tickets *i.e.* persons found travelling fraudulently against accommodation actually reserved in the name of another passenger.
- (xvii) Conducting checks in booking offices, reservation offices, trains etc. to curb malpractices by Railway staff in connivance with touts. Deployment of RPF staff at important Passenger Reservation System (PRS) Centres to prevent touting activities.
- (xviii) Surveillance is kept on the possible activities of touts and unauthorized vendors through Close Circuit Television Cameras installed at important Railway Stations.

CCTV surveillance system at stations under Nirbhaya Fund

3030. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Railways will install CCTV surveillance system across 900 stations under the Nirbhaya Fund, if so, the details of stations covered, State/UT-wise;
- (b) the funds allocated/approved to strengthen security at rail premises;
- (c) the details of the funds allocated and actual utilization under Nirbhaya Fund in the last two years and the current year, including those provided to NGOs, State/UT-wise;
- (d) the number of stations already equipped with CCTV cameras; and
- (e) whether Government is also planning to install CCTV cameras in Mumbai suburban railway, to ensure safety of women?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. Division-wise details are given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

(b) Works to the tune of ₹ 413.36 crore (latest anticipated cost) have been approved under Integrated Security System to strengthen security at 202 railway stations over Indian Railways. Sanction of ₹ 500 crore has also been received for installation of Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras at identified railway stations under 'Nirbhaya Fund'. Strengthening and upgradation of security infrastructure is

an ongoing process. Need based allocation of fund is being made for creation of security related assets and procurement of plant and equipment (vehicles, baggage scanners,) etc. under Works Programme and Machinery and Plant Programme (M&P) of Railways each year.

(c) Details of the release of funds for various Projects/Schemes under the 'Nirbhaya Fund' are given in the Statement-II (*See below*).

(d) About 344 railway stations have already been provided with CCTV cameras over Indian Railways.

(e) Yes, Sir. Stations of Mumbai Suburban have also been identified for installation of CCTV cameras under Nirbhaya Fund.

Statement-I

Division-wise details of installation of CCTVs

Region	Zonal Railways	Divisions	No. of Stations	Total Station
1	2	3	4	5
North	NCR	Agra, Allahabad, Jhansi	25	151
	NER	Varanasi, Izzatnagar, Lucknow Junction	33	
	NWR	Ajmer, Bikaner, Jaipur, Jodhpur	33	
	NR	Ambala, Delhi, Firozpur, Lucknow, Moradabad	60	
East	ECOR	Khurda Road, Sambalpur, Waltiar	28	343
	NFR	Alipuduar, Katihar, Lumding, Rangia, Tinsukia	27	
	ECR	Dhanbad, Danapur, Mughalsarai, Samastipur, Sonpur	52	
	ER	Asansol, Howrah, Malda, Sealdah	236	
West	CR	Bhusawal, Mumbai, Nagpur, Pune, Solapur	115	194
	WCR	Bhopal, Jabalpur, Kota	29	
	WR	Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar, Mumbai, Rajkot, Ratlam, Vadodara	50	

1	2	3	4	5
South	SCR	Hyderabad, Nanded, Secundrabad, Vijaywada	76	
	SER	Adra, Khagarpur, Ranchi	33	
	SECR	Bilaspur, Nagpur, Raipur	19	295
	SR	Chennai, Madurai, Palakkad, Salem, Tiruchirappalli, Tiruvananthapuram	136	
	SWR	Bangalore, Hubballi, Mysuru	31	

Statement-II

Details of the release of funds for various projects/schemes under 'Nirbhaya Fund'

(A) Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)–(Funds released during 2017-18)

Sl. No.	States	Funds Released (₹ in lakhs)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	980.5
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	539.32
3.	Assam	793.93
4.	Bihar	1229.6
5.	Chhattisgarh	743.31
6.	Goa	532.41
7.	Gujarat	1187.41
8.	Haryana	868.5
9.	Himachal Pradesh	471.83
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	701.12
11.	Jharkhand	937.89
12.	Karnataka	948.71
13.	Kerala	733.27
14.	Madhya Pradesh	1418.71
15.	Maharashtra	1284.66

Sl. No.	States	Funds Released (₹ in lakhs)
16.	Manipur	446.53
17.	Meghalaya	463.39
18.	Mizoram	438.09
19.	Nagaland	487.86
20.	Odisha	948.71
21.	Punjab	928.48
22.	Rajasthan	1013.03
23.	Sikkim	-
24.	Tamil Nadu	965.58
25.	Telangana	957.15
26.	Tripura	438.09
27.	Uttar Pradesh	-
28.	Uttarakhand	662.29
29.	West Bengal	878.05
SUB TOTAL		21998.42
Union Territories		
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	314.58
2.	Chandigarh	401.52
3.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-
4.	Daman and Diu	-
5.	National capital Territory of Delhi	2400 (Released during 2016-17)
6.	Lakshadweep	-
7.	Puducherry	323.41
SUB TOTAL		3439.51
TOTAL (STATES+UNION TERRITORIES)		25437.93

(B) Central Victim Compensation Fund - (Funds released during 2016-17)

Sl. No.	Name of States/Union Territory (UT)	Amount allocated (₹ in lakhs)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	662
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	33
3.	Assam	860
4.	Bihar	722
5.	Chhattisgarh	685
6.	Goa	50
7.	Gujarat	390
8.	Haryana	550
9.	Himachal Pradesh	120
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	170
11.	Jharkhand	450
12.	Karnataka	995
13.	Kerala	760
14.	Madhya Pradesh	2180
15.	Maharashtra	1765
16.	Manipur	34
17.	Meghalaya	50
18.	Mizoram	48
19.	Nagaland	10
20.	Odisha	1060
21.	Punjab	410
22.	Rajasthan	1545
23.	Sikkim	23
24.	Tamil Nadu	565
25.	Telangana	590
26.	Tripura	115
27.	Uttarakhand	2810

Sl. No.	Name of States/Union Territory (UT)	Amount allocated (₹ in lakhs)
28.	Uttar Pradesh	125
29.	West Bengal	1265
TOTAL STATE(S)		19042
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	15
2.	Chandigarh	23
3.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	10
4.	Delhi	10
5.	Daman and Diu	880
6.	Lakshadweep	10
7.	Puducherry	10
TOTAL UT(S)		958
TOTAL ALL INDIA		20000

(C) Funds sanctioned under One Stop Centre Scheme of MWCD

(₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Proposal Received States/UTs	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	13.19		
2.	Andhra Pradesh	13.19	268.97	90.50
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	13.19	28.41	
4.	Assam	38.84	75.65	
5.	Bihar	13.19	198.90	
6.	Chandigarh	13.19		
7.	Chhattisgarh	48.30	734.27	146.08
8.	Dadra Nagar Haveli	43.37		
9.	Daman and Diu	45.88		
10.	Goa	45.88	19.41	
11.	Gujarat	45.88	38.82	
12.	Haryana	36.41	116.48	14.30
13.	Himachal Pradesh	37.68		

Sl. No.	Proposal Received States/UTs	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
14.	Jammu and Kashmir	45.88	95.65	38.83
15.	Jharkhand	10.26	56.82	
16.	Karnataka	45.88	85.24	
17.	Kerala	45.08	113.65	
18.	Madhya Pradesh	45.88	773.04	
19.	Maharashtra	45.88	213.55	48.69
20.	Manipur	12.89		
21.	Meghalaya	13.19	28.41	7.75
22.	Mizoram	37.68		
23.	Nagaland	45.88	55.41	50.41
24.	Odisha	10.28	15.00	
25.	Puducherry	37.00		
26.	Punjab	43.82	97.07	191.66
27.	Rajasthan	12.12	346.24	
28.	Sikkim	45.88		
29.	Tamil Nadu	45.88		
30.	Telangana	45.88	155.31	
31.	Tripura	45.88		
32.	Uttar Pradesh	45.88	454.63	
33.	Uttarakhand	13.19	58.24	65.83
TOTAL		1102.49	4029.60	654.05

(D) Funds sanctioned under Women Helpline Scheme of MWCD

(₹ in lakhs)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
1.	Andhra Pradesh	51.58		
2.	Odisha	28.86		30.16
3.	Chhattisgarh	51.58	37.91	
4.	Sikkim	47.25		

Sl. No.	States/UTs	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
5.	Uttarakhand	43.10		46.79
6.	Arunachal Pradesh	49.70		59.50
7.	Kerala	51.58		
8.	Delhi	49.78		
9.	Telangana	28.86		
10.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	17.00		
11.	Chandigarh	17.00		42.09
12.	Nagaland	49.70	29.11	42.25
13.	Mizoram	51.08		85.20
14.	Jammu and Kashmir	51.58		
15.	Gujarat	62.70		
16.	Uttar Pradesh	62.70		40.11
17.	Jharkhand	34.54		
18.	Bihar	62.70		
19.	Meghalaya	49.70		
20.	Himachal Pradesh	49.70		
21.	Tripura	49.70		
22.	Karnataka	62.70		
23.	Haryana	51.58		
24.	Manipur	49.70		
25.	West Bengal	62.70		
26.	Tamil Nadu	62.70		
27.	Madhya Pradesh	62.70		
28.	Rajasthan	62.70		
29.	Daman and Diu	17.00		
30.	Maharashtra	62.70		
31.	Assam	34.54		
32.	Punjab	28.86		
33.	Goa	27.90		
TOTAL		1546.17	67.02	346.1

(E) Mahila Police Volunteers Scheme of MWCD

Sl. No.	State	Amount released (₹ in crore) during 2016-17	Amount released (₹ in crore) during 2017-18
1.	Haryana	0.77	-
2.	Andhra Pradesh	0.75	-
3.	Gujarat	-	0.76

(F) Abhaya Project of Government of Andhra Pradesh

An amount of ₹ 58.64 crore has been released to the State Government during 2017-18.

(G) Chirali Project of Government of Rajasthan

Funds amounting to ₹ 0.23 crore and ₹ 2.53 crore have been released to the State Government during 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively.

CAG's observation on AMC with WIPRO

3031. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the CAG in its 11th report of 2016 had pointed out a glaring case of mismanagement in signing an Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) with WIPRO for the worth of ₹ 4.9 crore;

(b) whether it is a fact that the systems provided by WIPRO were not subjected to acceptance tests before installation date even though the original contract mandated the same; and

(c) if so, the details regarding the same and whether Government has taken any action on this observation by the CAG?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) Yes, Sir. The report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India on Union Government (Civil) Compliance Audit Observations No. 11 of 2016 has pointed about avoidable expenditure on Annual Maintenance Contract with WIPRO amounting to ₹ 4.92 crores.

(b) No, Sir. The Contract stipulated that the acceptance tests (which involve the operation of the complete goods/services) were to be conducted after installation and commissioning of equipment only.

(c) Does not arise. However, Government has replied to CAG in October 2016 stating that no favour was extended to WIPRO by UIDAI and all decisions were taken in line with functional necessity to achieve the targets set under Aadhaar project in a time-bound manner and as per the terms of contract.

Appointments and retirements under Railways

†3032. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers/employees appointed during the last three years under Railways;

(b) the number of persons retired during the last three years; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Railways have issued directions to abolish 11,000 posts covering all 17 zones, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The total number of Group 'A' officers recruited through UPSC for the last three years (*i.e.* examinations conducted in 2013, 2014 and 2015) is 2930. The total number of non-gazetted employees empanelled during this period is 1,12,073 (Provisional).

(b) The number of employees retired in the last three years is 1,79,322.

(c) Manpower planning is a continuous exercise in Railways which aims at redeployment of staff from redundant activities to those requiring strengthening (*i.e.* safety, maintenance of new assets and train operations, etc.). Instructions for work-studies and rationalization of manpower are issued from time to time.

Rebate on sale of handloom cloth

3033. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry would consider or is planning to re-introduce the scheme of 10% rebate on sale of handloom cloth to boost the marketability of handloom products during the festive season, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether the Ministry is planning any such scheme to boost the marketability of handloom products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) and (b) With a view to reduce inventories/accumulated stocks, a 10% Rebate Scheme was introduced on January 15, 2004 with a provision of ₹ 100 crores to augment marketing of handloom products, particularly in the wake of stiff competition from textiles products of power looms and mill sub sectors. The scheme helped the handlooms sector to market handlooms products of ₹ 957.00 crores and was discontinued on March 31, 2005. Further, the State Governments and handloom organizations had requested for its re-introduction. Accordingly, scheme for reimbursement of one time rebate @ 10% given on sale of handloom products by the handloom agencies was reintroduced on April 01, 2006, for a period of three years, *i.e.* 2006-2009.

There are several central schemes whereby marketing support is given to weavers. Handloom Marketing Assistance (HMA), one of the components of National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) provides platform to the handloom weavers/agencies to sell their products directly to the consumers. For that financial assistance is provided to weavers for participating in various craft melas held in different parts of the country and to national and state level Handloom organizations to organize the marketing events like National Handloom Expos (NHE) and Special Handloom Expos (SHE) and District Level Events (DLE). In addition, Buyer Seller Meets and workshops etc. are also organized. During the last three years a total no. of 932 marketing events including Buyer Seller Meets and workshops has been organized.

Under Marketing Incentive (MI) scheme, infrastructural facilities are created to facilitate marketing of handloom products. Under the scheme, financial assistance of 10% of the average sales turnover of the last 3 years is given to the handloom agency for marketing support.

In addition, 'India Handloom' Brand (IHB) has been launched for branding of high quality handloom products. As on 30.06.2017, a total sale of ₹ 159 crores has been reported on account of IHB products. "India Handloom" Brand has partnered with various retails stores, to showcase and sell the exclusive IHB items from their stores. So far, a sale of ₹ 3.65 crores has been reported from IHB retails stores as on 30.06.2017. 20 e-commerce entities have also been engaged for on-line marketing of handloom products. As on 30.06.2017, total sales of ₹ 10.62 crores has been generated from online portal on account of online marketing of handloom products.

Request of AEPC for restoration of ROSL

3034. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Apparel Exports Promotion Council (AEPC) has urged the Government to restore the Rebate on State Levies (ROSL) rate to 3.9 per cent from current 0.39 per cent;

(b) whether it is a fact that the total ROSL amount for All India Readymade Garment Exports for the period September, 2016 to June, 2017 was ₹ 3,025 crore, of which only ₹ 400 crore had been disbursed so far, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for non-disbursal of funds, from allocation of ₹ 1550 crore for ROSL claim in the Union Budget 2017-18?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Since the launch of the scheme cumulatively there were claims worth ₹ 2700 crores of which ₹ 400 crores were disbursed by 31.03.2017 and during the current year claims amounting to ₹ 48 crores have been disbursed.

(c) The delay in disbursement of funds has been due to the procedure required under the Public Funds Management System (PFMS).

Encouragement to women weavers and artisans

†3035. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has announced Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay National Award especially for women weavers and artisans, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Ministry has launched a campaign to provide monetary loans to women weavers, the details of this campaign, so far, State-wise; and

(c) whether the Ministry has launched online Handloom Weaver Mudra Portal with/the co-operation of Punjab National Bank and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) Yed, Sir. Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay Award has been instituted in the field of weaving in 2016 exclusively for women weavers. This includes 2 Sant Kabir Award, 4 National Award and 4 National Merit Certificates. The Office of

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts has also instituted the award for the handicraft artisans.

(b) The Ministry of Textiles is providing concessional credit to handloom weavers and weaver's entrepreneurs including women weavers under weaver MUDRA scheme. Under the scheme, the loans are provided at concessional interest rate of 6% for a period of 3 years. Margin money assistance @20% of loan amount to a maximum of ₹ 10,000/- per weaver and credit guarantee for a period of 3 years is also provided. State-wise details of loan sanctioned during last year are given in the Statement (See below).

(c) A portal named 'Handloom Weaver MUDRA Portal' has been developed in association with Punjab National Bank for submitting the claims for financial assistance in respect of interest subsidy, credit guarantee and margin money in electronic mode through the portal. Margin money is transferred directly to loan account of weaver and interest subvention and credit guarantee fee is transferred to banks in electronic mode.

Statement

Details of number of MUDRA loan sanctioned and loan disbursed under Weavers Mudra Scheme during 2016-17

Sl. No.	Name of State	No. of loan sanctioned	Total loan sanctioned (₹ in lakh)
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	592	338.00
2.	Bihar	194	102.05
3.	Chhattisgarh	413	206.00
4.	Delhi	0	0.00
5.	Gujarat	178	81.70
6.	Haryana	70	34.90
7.	Himachal Pradesh	66	105.75
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	212	201.72
9.	Jharkhand	55	30.60
10.	Karnataka	1059	748.90
11.	Kerala	133	69.50

1	2	3	4
12.	Madhya Pradesh	203	101.50
13.	Maharashtra	143	170.04
14.	Odisha	1445	818.00
15.	Rajasthan	150	75.50
16.	Tamil Nadu	18340	8892.15
17.	Telangana	1067	542.36
18.	Uttar Pradesh	1341	914.93
19.	Uttarakhand	23	24.50
20.	West Bengal	467	232.30
TOTAL		26151	13690.40

NER

1.	Arunachal Pradesh		
2.	Assam	322	112.58
3.	Manipur	0	0.00
4.	Meghalaya		
5.	Mizoram	0	0.00
6.	Nagaland	54	26.80
7.	Sikkim		
8.	Tripura	0	0.00
SUB TOTAL		376	139.38
GRAND TOTAL		26527	13829.78

Impact of GST on textile industry

3036. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH DULLO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with the implementation of GST, the Textile industry has been badly affected, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the poor weavers of the industry have become jobless because most of the Textile industry has been on the verge of closure; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to address the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) The Ministry has received several representations wherein the trade bodies have mentioned that under the GST regime, the tax on Man made fibre/filament and yarn is 18% while that on fabric is 5%. With an inverted duty structure at the fabric stage and no refund of unutilized input tax, the manufacturer will have to bear the stranded tax making him uncompetitive. Further, the effective duty on import of Manmade fabric under the GST regime has reduced substantially thereby reducing the market competitiveness of the domestically produced Manmade fabric further *viz-a-viz* the imported Manmade fabric.

Given the unorganized nature of the industry and the multiple job works involved at each stage in the textile value chain, the Industry has also separately raised the concern of decreasing the job rate from 18% to 5% across the Textile value chain.

All the above concerns raised by the Industry have been taken up by the Ministry of Textiles with the Ministry of Finance/GST Council.

(b) No Madam. While some strikes have been reported, no closure of textile units have been reported on account of GST.

(c) Question does not arise.

Export of apparels

3037. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is way behind in export of apparels compared to Bangladesh and Vietnam, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the Textile Policy of the country, introduced about 17 years ago, is the main reason for under-exploitation of the available resources; and

(c) whether there is any plan to replace the old Textile Policy with a new one to give a boost to the industry soon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) Yes, Sir. The apparel export values of Bangladesh, Vietnam and India in 2016 are as below:—

Country	Exports Value, (US\$ Bn)
Bangladesh	33.4
Vietnam	24.7
India	17.0

Source: DGCI&S, ITC Trade map.

The main reason for India's lack of competitiveness in garment exports as compared to Vietnam and Bangladesh include higher tariff rates imposed on Indian exports and the relatively lower input costs in these countries.

(b) and (c) With a view to promoting exports and employment, Government of India has launched a special package for garmenting and made-ups sector in 2016. This package includes several policy measures which are aimed at reducing labour cost, providing additional incentive for technology upgradation and also measures for incentivising exports.

**Coverage of Handloom and Powerloom Weavers
under Insurance Schemes**

3038. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal to bring handloom and powerloom weavers under the health insurance scheme of Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the progress made in this regard so far;

(c) the approximate number of weavers likely to be covered under the scheme in the country, particularly in Odisha, where a large number of weavers and their families are in this business; and

(d) by when the scheme is likely to be implemented in the entire country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) No Sir.

(b) to (d) Question does not arise.

Encouraging silk production

3039. SHRI RANVIJAY SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Champa in Chhattisgarh has potential for silk production and silk fabrics; and

(b) whether Government has plans to encourage silk production and its manufacturers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) Yes, Sir. Champa District in Chhattisgarh has good potential for Tasar silk reeling, weaving and trading activities. This district is unique for all the activities

in sericulture right from silkworm rearing to fabric production. It is famous for its Kosa silk mainly produced in Chhattisgarh by the tribal which resides in the Gondwana and other forest belts.

(b) Yes. The Government has taken following steps to encourage silk production in Chhattisgarh State including Champa region:—

- (i) Integrated “Soil to Silk” Tasar project in Janjgir-Champa District of Chhattisgarh has been approved with a total financial outlay of ₹ 68.53 crore for a period of three years, from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The project involves Government of India share of ₹ 22.88 crore, against which ₹ 86.91 lakh have been released to Chhattisgarh State till 2016-17 for implementation of the project. The project envisages to develop 2,500 hectares of new block Tasar plantations and maintenance of 2,000 Ha. of existing block plantations in forest/community land, besides support for building forward and backward linkages to facilitate basic and commercial seed production, supply of rearing appliances and disinfectant for disease management to Tasar rearers for ensuring crop productivity, cocoon storage facilities, supply of buniyaad reeling machines, reelers collectives, cocoon bank, marketing support and capacity building of the farmers, seed producers, reelers and weavers in the project area.
- (ii) Actions have been taken during 2016-17 for shifting of Central Silk Board’s Research Extension Centre, Kathghora to Champa for providing technological support and training to the project for implementing pre-cocoon components of the project, raising of new Tasar block plantations in 570 Ha. area with assistance from Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) Scheme of Department of Forest, distribution of 105 Buniyaad Reeling machines to the reelers to eliminate practice of thigh reeling, organizing two day “Technology Demonstration” on newly developed reeling/spinning machine at Champa and training of 160 weavers for enhancing skill in silk weaving and related activities.

Revival of Sambalpuri Bastralaya H.L.C.S. Ltd., Odisha

3040. SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of production of handloom clothes is the country per year and the share of the cooperative sector in the total production;

(b) whether there has been a rise or fall in production during the last three years and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is aware that one of the biggest and oldest primary handloom weavers cooperative society of the country, the Sambalpuri Bastralaya H.L.C.S. Ltd., in Odisha, is in a tottering condition; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to boost this organisation to save the future of thousands of weavers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) The handloom production in million square meters in the last three years has been as under:—

Sl. No.	Year	Handloom Production in million square meters
1.	2014-15	7203
2.	2015-16	7638
3.	2016-17	8014 (Provisional)

The data on share of cooperative in production is not available.

(b) There has been rise in the production in the last three years.

(c) No such report has been received from the State Government.

(d) Question does not arise.

*The House then adjourned sine die
at thirty four minutes past
one of the clock.*
