

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Friday, December 22, 2017/Pausa 1, 1939 (Saka)*

**(Ministries : Agriculture and Farmers Welfare; Chemicals and Fertilizers; Coal;
Communications; Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; Electronics
and Information Technology; Food Processing Industries; Law and Justice;
Parliamentary Affairs; Railways)**

Total number of questions — 160

Government's plan to merge research institutes

801. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to merge National Research Centre for Banana in Trichy with Indian Institute for Horticultural Research in Bangalore;

(b) whether Government is also planning to merge the Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) in Chennai with the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) in Kochi;

(c) whether Government is also planning to make Sugarcane Breeding Institute as a sub-centre of Indian Institute for Sugarcane Research in Lucknow; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

Excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers

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

(a) whether it is a fact that excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers is adversely affecting the fertility of agricultural land in Maharashtra and rest of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government has taken or proposes to take to detoxify poisoned farmlands in Maharashtra and rest of the country within a time-frame?

Assistance to Kerala under PKVY

803. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of financial assistance

provided to farmers under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) during 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17; and

(b) the details of financial assistance provided under PKVY in Kerala in 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17?

Suicides by farmers

804. SHRI RONALD SAPA TLAU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is monitoring the data relating to farmers' suicides, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) if so, the main reasons for farmers' suicides;

(c) the details of farmers' suicides during the last four years, year-wise; and

(d) whether Government has a reliable statistics on farmers' suicides in the country, thus resting all controversies relating thereto?

Steps to boost production and marketability of agricultural produces

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

(a) the details of projects carried out to support and improve the production of pulses, grains and essential edible oils in West Bengal;

(b) the details of funds allocated, released and utilized for the above purpose during the last five years, State-wise; and

(c) the measures taken by Government to improve the marketability of agricultural produces and price realization for farmers?

Setting up of STLs

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

(a) the number of Soil Testing Laboratories (STLs) constructed in/near APMC Mandis in States after the implementation of National Agriculture Market (NAM) along with the details thereof; and

(b) the difference between this service from the Soil Health Card scheme, the details thereof?

Welfare schemes for fishermen

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

(a) the details of welfare schemes for fishermen;

(b) whether the fishermen are reaping benefits of subsidy on High Speed Diesel, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any Government scheme to take care of families of fishermen caught and detained for years by neighbouring countries, particularly Pakistan and Sri Lanka; and

(d) the demand and projected allocation of diesel to States during the last three years and the current year?

Funding pattern under PMFBY

808. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would take steps to revise the funding pattern in Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

(PMFBY) from 50:50 to 60:40 between the Centre and State like other Central Sector schemes;

(b) whether Government will also take necessary steps for provision of Contingent funds under PMFBY for smooth implementation of the programme as at present there is no such fund provision and the entire liability of implementing the scheme is being borne by the State Governments; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider allowing greater operational flexibility to States?

Setting up of cold storages

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

(a) the quantity of fruits and vegetables got wasted due to non-availability of proper cold storage facilities during the last three years, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has taken any steps to control the transportation cost of fruits and vegetables, which have a lower shelf life; and

(c) the number of cold storage units Government has acquired or established in the last three years?

Implementation of PMFBY

810. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of coverage under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) since its implementation from last year in the country, State-wise and Kharif and Rabi crop season-wise;

(b) the details of premium paid to each of the insurance company involved since implementation of the Scheme, company-wise, State-wise and Rabi and Kharif crop season-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that crop insurance companies are getting more profit as they are getting more premium than what they are paying as compensation to farmers annually; and

(d) if so, whether there is a need to revisit the PMFBY?

Fertility of soil

811. 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;

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

(c) the details of the schemes and projects under implementation to check the declining fertility of agricultural land and improve the fertility of soil for increasing agricultural production in the country; and

(d) the success achieved thereunder during each of the last three years?

Improvement in the economic condition of farmers

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

(a) whether it is a fact that according to Government the increasing number of farmers having small land holdings,

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

traditional farming and low productivity are the biggest obstructions in the way of improving the economic condition of farmers;

(b) if so, whether Government is considering upon preparing any plan for their improvement; and

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

Implementation of Rashtriya Gokul Mission

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

(a) whether Government is implementing the Rashtriya Gokul Mission in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the funds sanctioned under the Mission, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether the Mission will enhance the production of milk in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Production of soyabean in Maharashtra

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

(a) the total production of soyabean in Maharashtra during the current crop season and how it compares with the last two crop seasons;

(b) the quantity of soyabean procured by Government agencies at Minimum Support Price (MSP) in the State; and

(c) the welfare measures introduced or proposed to be introduced by Government for the farmers growing soyabean in the State?

Protests by farmers

815. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of farmer protests took place across the country in the last two years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the protests, State-wise?

Import and export of agricultural commodities

816. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government will soon come out with a formula to increase or decrease import of agriculture commodities and to allow export or restrict it by fixing a benchmark price;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the MSP, which is assured by Government to farmers, is fixed every year for 24 commodities and the main items are rice, wheat, pulses and oilseeds; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Changes in agricultural courses

817. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made agricultural courses as professional course recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits extended/provided to agricultural students due to this change?

Familiarising the farmers with crop insurance schemes

†818. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts being made by Government to protect the farmers from natural calamities;

(b) the manner in which the farmers are being familiarized with crop insurance schemes, State-wise, so that more and more farmers benefit from them; and

(c) whether the practical threat like water logging is being covered under farmer insurance scheme, if so, the details thereof?

Educating rural people to obtain e-services through smartphones

819. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the status of provisioning of internet connectivity in rural areas which constitute 68.86 per cent of the total population of the country, including the State of Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government has initiated special drive to educate rural people in order to obtain e-services by using smartphones on their own instead of obtaining services from entrepreneurs; and

if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Settlement of claims under Fasal Bima Yojana

820. SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total premium collected under the Fasal Bima Yojana in the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the total claims paid to the farmers under the Yojana during the said period; and

(c) the average time taken to settle such claims?

Suicide by farmers due to rising debt

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

(a) whether Government has any plans to reduce the benchmark for initiating relief for farmers from 33 per cent to 25 per cent crop loss in view of rising farmer suicides;

(b) the details of farmer suicides due to rising debts in the country over the past year, including the State of West Bengal; and

(c) whether Government has provided for waiver of loans for farmers affected by natural calamities over the past year, if so, the details of the amount spent on this for the State of West Bengal over that past year?

Production cost of agricultural produces

†822. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers producing onions, tomatoes and other agricultural produces are not even getting the cost of their production in the country;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure that these farmers could at least recover the cost of their production and the outcome thereof; and

(d) whether the export of onion was not allowed when prices went down, if so, the reasons therefor?

Demand by CIFA for removal of CACP

823. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Consortium of Indian Farmers Association (CIFA) has been demanding for removal of CACP as it is not scientifically and practically calculating the MSP for various crops and has been demanding for setting up of an Agriculture Tribunal to look into such aspects;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the above Consortium has also demanded to scrap the Essential Commodities Act; and

(c) if so, the details of its demand made in part (a) above and the reasons behind part (b) above?

Poisoning effects of pesticides

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

(a) whether Government is aware of the reports that pesticide poisoning has become a plague of sorts in States like Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the extent of this problem and the deaths attributed to pesticide poisoning, State-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken/proposed to be taken to regulate pesticide manufacture, sale, dosage and usage?

Problems in implementation of e-NAM

825. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Electronic National Agricultural Market (e-NAM), launched amid great fanfare a year back, has failed to take off; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the problems being faced in implementing the system along with the corrective measures being taken for the success of the system?

Outbreak of wheat blast disease

826. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any study into the possibility of wheat blast disease outbreak prevailing in Bangladesh coming to India, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether there have been any incidents of wheat blast disease outbreak in any part of the country, if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken to contain it; and

(c) the pre-emptive steps being taken to prevent spread of the disease in the eastern part of the country?

Burning of crops

827. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS

WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has issued any directions to the States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh on the issue of burning of crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the help Central Government proposes to extend to the concerned States?

Shifting from tobacco farming to alternate farming

828. SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of funds utilized by different States to shift from tobacco farming to alternate farming;

(b) the number of farmers/hectares of land in each State shifted from tobacco to other crops;

(c) the alternative crops identified in each State and the most preferred diversified suitable one adopted for farming; and

(d) whether the Central or the State Governments allocated funds for the above purpose for the year 2017-18, if so, how much in each State?

Quality testing at Agmark testing laboratories

829. SHRIMATI THOTA SEETHARAMA LAKSHMI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Agmark testing laboratories currently operating in the country along with the details thereof;

(b) the details of various tests carried

out in these laboratories;

(c) whether Government proposes to increase the number of these laboratories in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of steps taken in the past to ensure that quality of testing is maintained at each laboratory?

Decrease in nutrient value of soil in the country

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

(a) whether it is a fact that agricultural soil in the country is losing its nutritional value very sharply, which is affecting per acre production of crops and their nutritional value as well; and

(b) if so, the details of average nutritional value of soil recorded during the last five years, State-wise and nutrition-wise?

MIDH in Maharashtra

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

(a) whether Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) has proved beneficial to the farmers in Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the name of horticultural produces identified for production in western Maharashtra in particular, and Maharashtra in general and the action plan Government has drawn up for their production on a large scale; and

(c) the main benefits farmers may derive under the Mission and the procedure to be followed to avail assistance thereunder?

Coverage of PMFBY

832. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the coverage of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana in the country is not satisfactory since it was launched in the year 2016;

(b) if so, the details of the peasants covered under the scheme and premium amount paid by them along with the insurance amount paid to the affected peasants by various insurance companies during the year 2016-17 and 2017-18, State-wise, so far; and

(c) the measures being taken to widen the coverage of the scheme to more peasants, crop variety and area in the country?

Rationing of dangerous pesticides

833. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers using excessive dangerous pesticides for the agricultural crops are exposed to severe health hazards;

(b) if so, whether Government will consider rationing of the dangerous pesticides in order to minimise dangerous effect on human health; and

(c) whether Government would consider evolving methods to educate the farmers about all the aspects of the ill-effects of excessive use of dangerous pesticides?

Advisory to States for doubling the income of farmers

834. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of

AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has issued any advisory to State Governments to double farmers' income in a time-bound period; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Remunerative price to farmers

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

(a) whether Government is aware that farmers are compelled to sell their agricultural produces at the rate lower than the MSP announced, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh during the current year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reasons for repeated failure of Government to ensure remunerative price to suicide committing farmers?

Production of onion

†836. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken to provide remunerative prices to farmers for their agriculture produce and doubling their agricultural income along with the time-bound action plan to achieve the same; and

(b) the State-wise production of onions in the season from March, 2017 to June, 2017 and the price at which onions were bought from farmers along with the steps taken for storage and preservation of onions?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Training for farmers on Israel model of agriculture

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

(a) whether despite various ongoing schemes for promotion of agriculture in the country, more than 33 per cent farmers are living below the poverty line and another 30 per cent under debts;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the remedial measures taken by Government to mitigate the farmers' plight during the last three years;

(c) whether Government proposes to provide hands on training for farmers in the Israel model of agriculture to improve and develop farming techniques; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

Budgetary provision for income security of farmers

838. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for providing income security to farmers of the country and provisions in the budget therefor; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Information mechanism

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering upon issuing any guidelines to the Directorate of Knowledge

Management in Agriculture to strengthen information mechanism;

(b) if so, whether Government is considering upon taking any step in this direction; and

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

Remunerative price for agricultural produces

†840. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:
CH. SUKHRAM SINGH
YADAV:
SHRIMATI CHHAYA
VERMA:

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

(a) the details of steps taken to provide remunerative prices for agricultural produces during the last three years and details of steps taken to implement the recommendations made by the Swaminathan Commission;

(b) whether it is a fact that steps taken to reduce the agricultural inputs and to make the crop a remunerative deal are not reaching at ground level; and

(c) whether the Ministry will consider to formulate mandatory rules to remove the middlemen from purchasing process of all agriculture produces and to purchase all crops that the farmers want to sell at MSP?

Amendment to pricing mechanism of non-scheduled drugs

841. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has proposed

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

to amend the price setting methods of non-scheduled drugs, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) the likely impact of the amendments on the growth of the pharmaceutical industry; and

(c) whether any consultation was held with stakeholders and if so, their reaction towards the new pricing method?

Working status of PSUs under the Ministry

842. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) currently functioning under the Ministry;

(b) the number of them making financial losses for at least a decade;

(c) whether there have been any structured efforts to convert them into profit-making organizations during the last three years;

(d) if so, the details of such efforts and also their impact; and

(e) whether there have been any efforts during the last three years to further motivate the employees of these organizations to convert them into profit-making and the details thereof and their impact?

Mechanism to monitor post-acquisition (FDI) activities of companies

843. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no mechanism or system to monitor the post-

acquisition (FDI) activities of a company in the country;

(b) whether Government is contemplating tougher foreign investment norms for multinational firms to acquire existing pharmaceutical facilities in the country; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposed Draft Pharmaceutical Policy to monitor the post-acquisition activities of a company?

Setting up of Plastic Parks

844. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has announced a scheme for setting up of Plastic Parks in the country;

(b) if so, the locations identified for setting up of these Parks, State and Union Territory-wise;

(c) the incentives offered for the purpose; and

(d) whether any study has been conducted on the environmental hazards in the increased availability and usage scenario of plastics in the country, if so, the details thereof?

Draft Pharmaceutical Policy

845. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's new Draft Pharmaceutical Policy includes the proposal for prescribing the medicines based on salt names instead of brand names, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the measures proposed by Government in the new Policy for improving the accessibility of medicines in remote regions of the country?

**Medical Devices Park at
Visakhapatnam**

846. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposal received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for setting up of a Medical Devices Park at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the details of financial and other assistance sought for setting up of the above Park; and

(c) the action taken by the Ministry on the proposal so far and the present status thereof?

Revival of Barauni fertilizer plant

†847. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has formulated schemes to restart the Barauni fertilizer plant in Bihar, which has remained closed for several years, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the closure of Barauni fertilizer plant has severely affected the State of Bihar;

(c) if so, by when Barauni fertilizer plant would be restarted; and

(d) whether any time-frame has been fixed for its revival, if so, the details thereof?

Private entities to run IDPL

848. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's effort to explore the possibility of engaging private participation in running the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL), including IDPL, Chennai, has yielded any desired result;

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

(c) the details of the private entrepreneurs who evinced interest in running the IDPL units?

Janaushadhi Scheme

849. SHRI VINAY DINU TENDULKAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is implementing Janaushadhi Scheme;

(b) if so, the details of the number of districts in which it is being implemented in the country and the details of generic medicines made available through this scheme;

(c) whether Government has taken any decision to implement this scheme throughout the country, if so, the details thereof; and

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

Impact of GST on drug prices

850. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the impact of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on drug prices;

(b) the increase in the prices of essential drugs after the implementation of GST;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government has recently reduced prices of certain drugs, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how Government would ensure that these drugs are available to public at reduced prices?

Sale of loss-making coal mines

851. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently taken a decision to sell coal mines which are running in losses at present;

(b) if so, the details of such coal mines, mine-wise;

(c) whether tenders have been invited in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when the process of sale of such coal mines is likely to be completed?

Rehabilitation of families residing along coal mines

852. SHRI A.U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families residing in unsafe areas along coal mines in each of the subsidiaries of Coal India Limited; and

(b) the number of families rehabilitated and the amount of funds spent on the rehabilitation during the last three years?

Posting of CIL officers in Delhi

853. SHRI SANJIV KUMAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of officers of Coal India Ltd. (CIL) posted in its Delhi office as in 2014;

(b) the total number of officers of CIL

posted in its Delhi office currently;

(c) the reasons for the huge spurt in posting of CIL officers in Delhi; and

(d) whether it is a fact that most of the CIL officers are being attached to the Ministry without due authorization?

payment of compensation to prior allottees of coal blocks

854. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any cases which are pending for more than two years for payment of compensation to prior allottees of coal blocks for transferring their land and mine infrastructure to the Government, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of pendency and amounts due to such allottees, State-wise?

Study Group on royalty on coal and lignite

855. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Study Group was constituted on 21 July, 2014 to study rates of royalty on coal and lignite, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details regarding the constitution and suggestions of this Study Group; and

(c) whether the suggestions of this Study Group have been taken into consideration, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

Exploration of new coal reserves

856. SHRIMATI THOTA SEETHARAMA LAKSHMI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking up measures to expand coal exploration in the country, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government has taken cognizance to the fact that India's coal reserves will be exhausted in a few decades, if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the details of the steps being taken to address the issue?

Abolition of Coal Linkage Committees

857. SHRI T.G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to abolish the Coal Linkage Committees governing the distribution of coal to the companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the method being adopted by the Ministry for allocation of coal in the absence of Coal Linkage Committees?

Safety measures at coal mines

858. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the safety measures implemented by the coal companies during the last five years;

(b) whether Government is aware of illegal and risky mining happening in these mines; and

(c) if so, the details of safety measures adopted and steps taken to stop illegal mining?

Rise in import of coal from North America

859. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM:
SHRIMATI VIJILA
SATHYANANTH:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's coal imports from North America quadrupled to 2.1 million tonnes in October, 2017 from a year ago, the highest since January, 2015;

(b) whether it is also a fact that buyers are looking to boost purchases amid a shortage of the fuel;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government, on the other hand, is trying to curtail import of coal; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

Increase in dispatch of coal by CIL

860. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN:
SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the dispatch of coal by Coal India Limited (CIL) to its consumers in various sectors, including power, through road in April-October went up by 12 million tonnes;

(b) whether it is a fact that CIL had offered to supply the fuel to plants located at shorter distance by road from the available pit head stock; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government had launched Grahak Sadak Koyla Vitaran App in a bid to benefit customers of CIL lifting coal through road, if so, the details thereof?

Problems in implementation of Bharat-Net Project

861. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 22 per cent of Gram Panchayats in the country have been provided with broadband connectivity under the BharatNet Project;

(b) if so, the problems in implementation of the Project and by when the targets would be achieved; and

(c) how many Gram Panchayats have been covered in North East India and how many are yet to be covered under the BharatNet Project?

Landline and mobile phone connections by BSNL and private companies

862. SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the coverage percentage of BSNL and major private companies with regard to landline and mobile phone connections;

(b) whether all areas in different States are having sufficient network range for easy connectivity;

(c) if not, which areas are lagging behind; and

(d) whether Government will adopt effective measures to overcome complaints about BSNL service from the capital to far flung areas?

Net neutrality

863. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a diametrically opposite

move as compared to the US, India's TRAI has settled for net neutrality;

(b) whether TRAI opted for net neutrality, as internet in a developing country like India, is a great equaliser, delivering quality communications to the hitherto silent interiors, driving information, education and health services seamlessly; and

(c) whether free internet provides easy and equitable access to the poor to connect with Government and the financial system?

Feedback for improving quality of service

864. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has any established mechanism of seeking feedback from MTNL, BSNL, and Department of Posts customers and other stakeholders and analysing it from time to time, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Ministry has undertaken any special efforts to improve upon the quality of service through enhancing the level of work culture in MTNL, BSNL and Department of Posts during the last three years, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether there has been any impact assessment of such efforts, if so, the conclusions of the same?

Internet connectivity to all Gram Panchayats

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

(a) whether the target set in early 2015

to provide internet connectivity to all Gram Panchayats in three years is not likely to be achieved;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the reasons for delay; and

(c) the expected time-limit to connect all the Gram Panchayats in the country?

Non-availability of BSNL network in Himachal Pradesh

866. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that non-availability of network of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has become a serious problem in some parts of Himachal Pradesh, especially in Kangara district, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government proposes to take any corrective steps to solve this network issue and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Vacancies in post offices of Karnataka

867. SHRI K.C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are more than 2000 vacancies of postmasters, supervisors, postal assistants, postmen, etc., in the State of Karnataka, if so, the details thereof, circle-wise;

(b) how postal services are impacted by such huge vacancies; and

(c) since how long the above are lying vacant and the steps taken by the Ministry to fill up all the vacancies?

Illegal use of identity papers

868. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that certain anti social elements are illegally using identity papers including Aadhaar cards submitted by mobile subscribers to mobile companies;

(b) if so, the number of such incidents reported during the last five years; and

(c) the concrete steps taken by Government to check such illegal practices?

Lack of internet facilities

869. SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many places in the country lack internet connectivity, compelling people not to use modern internet facilities;

(b) the main obstacles to this;

(c) the percentage of areas in the country suffering from this malady; and

(d) the ways in which Government plans to overcome these difficulties?

New Telecom Policy

870. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes New Telecom Policy in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes relief packages to Telecom sector;

(c) if so, the reasons behind supporting

private telecom companies and the contract details during their award;

(d) the reasons for changing policies of Government to favour the private telecom players; and

(e) the present debt position of the telecom companies in the country?

Requisite spectrum for Government initiatives

871. SHRI K. T. S. TULSI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country has requisite spectrum and wired connectivity to support the Government initiatives like Digital India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps taken by Government, if any, in this regard, before the launch of Digital India programme?

Vacant plots of Department of Posts in Telangana

872. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether 111 plots belonging to Department of Posts are lying vacant in Telangana, if so, the details of places where they are situated, District-wise;

(b) whether these plots are meant for construction of postal department buildings;

(c) if so, whether Ministry is going to construct postal buildings or exploit that land for other commercial purposes so as to reduce its losses, which were running into more than 6,000 crore last year; and

(d) whether any of the above plots are

under encroachment and if so, the details thereof and efforts being made to vacate them?

Completion of first phase of BharatNet

873. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN:
SHRIMATI VIJILA
SATHYANANTH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the first phase of the National Optical Fibre Network will be completed by the end of this year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that BharatNet has now reached to 83,000 Gram Panchayats; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that it is imperative to create a fibre first programme where Government as well as private sector can join hands to achieve the objective of doubling the reach of telecom fibre network in the country by 2020, if so, the steps taken in this regard?

Fake ration cards

†874. SHRI R.K. SINHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fake ration cards are essentially made through a collusion between Government employees and ration depot holders; and

(b) if so the action taken by Government so far against persons involved in criminal conspiracy of committing a fraud in the Public Distribution System (PDS)?

Unfair trade practices

875. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS,

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sharing any details of consumers for commercial purpose by companies will be treated as unfair trade practice which will attract punishment under the consumer protection law;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in developed countries stricter penalties are being imposed on companies violating the norms;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is considering to make reflection of the best practices being followed in other countries in its policies too; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Cheating in selling of rice by traders

†876. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rice costing ₹ 30 per kg. is being sold at the rate of ₹ 100 per kg. by powdering it throughout the country, including Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat;

(b) whether it is also a fact that 3,000 quintal Basmati and same quantity of Katarani rice is being exported from Bihar while its production in the State is very low; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government against the traders involved in cheating common people of the country, if not, the reasons therefor?

Rise in price of onion

877. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of

CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the various measures Government has taken in order to control the rising prices of onion in various parts of the country, including in the metro cities;

(b) the reasons for sudden rise in the prices of onions;

(c) whether Government has taken action against hoarders and black marketeers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Action against hoarders

878. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rates of onion and tomato have risen alarmingly;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to control the prices of onion and tomato and ensure the availability of these produces throughout the year at reasonable rates; and

(c) the steps taken to advise the States to take stern action against hoarders?

Complaints received on INGRAM portal

879. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of consumer complaints received till October, 2017 on the Integrated Grievance Redressal Mechanism (INGRAM);

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the number of complaints resolved within the stipulated time of 60 days;

(c) whether Government maintains a list of companies and the number of complaints received for each of them through the INGRAM portal; and

(d) if so, whether a copy of the same may be provided?

Shortage of trained manpower in BIS

880. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the BIS has huge shortage of trained manpower and labs, etc., required to fulfill its mandate throughout the country;

(b) if so, in what manner the BIS is managing its activities; and

(c) whether it is hampering the working of BIS especially in view of the fact that it is looking at the extent of spurious/fake products and substandard food stuff available today?

Procurement of pulses

881. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Centre is considering to pull out of the procurement of pulses at Minimum Support Price and instead ask States to procure the key farm produces;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Centre would bear about 30 per cent of the amount spent for procurement that agencies of State Governments would incur during storage and release of pulses; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is also struggling to dispose of the old stock of about 1.8 million tonnes of pulses since States are not picking them up from the Central pool?

Rise in prices of essential commodities

882. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of all essential daily items have gone up in recent times;

(b) whether it is also a fact that cost of eggs have hit a high now, as costly as chicken;

(c) if so, whether Government is considering to take an action to streamline the increase in price of all essential commodities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Rise in prices of vegetables

883. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that prices of most vegetables have recently shot up sharply making it difficult even for the middle class families to manage their household budget in the National Capital;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is also aware that prices of vegetables in the wholesale market are not so high but the retailers who are also trading in the same market are selling them at a very high rate; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the steps taken to curb the abnormal rise of prices by the retailers?

Releasing of funds to Odisha

884. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposal of Government of Odisha for release of Central Government's share of ₹ 50.00 crore for State-level Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) is pending with the Ministry; and

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay and by when the due funds would be released?

Rise in prices of onion and tomato

885. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of onion and tomato had reached to ₹ 80/- per kg. in retail market during November, 2017;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is unable to check price rise of essential vegetables, particularly onion and tomato, as per the recent statement of the Minister; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Implementation of NFSA

†886. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the supply system of foodgrains to the total rural population of the country under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) has not been established;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether adequate budget is being allocated by the Central Government to ensure proper implementation of the NFSA in all States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Decentralized procurement of wheat

887. SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has released pending storage benefits regarding Decentralized Procurement of wheat from covered and capped godowns respectively of all the States in the country;

(b) the details of the States whose payment under storage benefit on procurement is pending; and

(c) by when it will be released?

Supply of foodgrains to poor people

†888. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:
SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the poor are not getting foodgrains because of non-submission of their Aadhaar number due

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

to which they are becoming victim of malnutrition;

(b) the number of cases came to light where the supply of foodgrains could not reach the poor in last three years;

(c) the steps taken to implement the present system of foodgrains' supply effectively in last three years; and

(d) the obstacles coming in the way of providing facilities of food security to the poor without Aadhaar and details of steps taken to address it?

Misleading advertisements

889. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) has been receiving complaints regarding misleading, false and unsubstantiated claims in advertisements;

(b) if so, the details of such complaints since 2014, till date, date-wise and the action taken against these complaints along with the present status thereof; and

(c) the details regarding complaints received against companies selling natural/herbal products in respect of such advertisements and the action taken along with the present status of the complaints, date-wise?

Implementation of National Food Security Act

890. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has taken a strong exception for the tardy implementation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) by the Governments;

(b) if so, the details of judgement given by the Supreme Court; and

(c) the lacunae found by the Ministry in implementation of NFSA and how it is planning to rectify them for its effective implementation?

Delay in payment of cash under DBT scheme of PDS

891. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA:
SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre has received complaints from various States regarding delay in payment of cash under the DBT reforms introduced in the PDS;

(b) if so, the reasons identified for the delay in payments; and

(c) whether Government provides any compensation to the affected because of delayed payments?

Sale of crops by farmers below the MSP

†892. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:
SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:
CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the farmers

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

were compelled to sell pulses and other agricultural produces below the Minimum Support Price (MSP) in the year 2016-17 and because of this farmers had faced losses;

(b) the reasons due to which farmers are compelled to sell their agricultural produces below the MSP;

(c) the manner by which the Ministry would ensure that farmers may get at least MSP on their agricultural produces; and

(d) whether Government would consider to bring binding rules for purchasing of crops of farmers on MSP?

Aadhaar centres in post offices

893. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention is drawn towards recent complaints regarding private vendors on alleged leakage of UID data, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has approved setting up of Aadhaar centres in post offices, if so, the details thereof and the objective behind the move;

(c) the amount allocated for setting up Aadhaar centres in post offices;

(d) the estimated number of post offices where this facility will be available; and

(e) by when Aadhaar centres in post offices will start functioning?

Employment in call centres

†894. SHRI R.K. SINHA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of people getting employment in call centres across the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the scheme for creating jobs through call centres in last three years has not been progressing satisfactorily; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the scheme Government is formulating to address the reasons thereof?

GST on electronic manufacturing sector

895. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Make in India plan set for Electronics sector of the country is being hurt by the GST rates, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Electronic industry/sector of the country has raised their concern to the Ministry in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Ministry thereon?

Steps to protect UIDAI's iris scan-based security

896. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the police have arrested a few men for allegedly cloning fingerprints to subvert Aadhaar's vaunted biometric-based security system, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps Government is taking to protect UIDAI's iris scan-based security and to secure it from fresh vulnerabilities?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Frauds in digital payments

†897. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken cognizance of the increase in the cases of fraudulent embezzlement of money through internet/online/ATM/Debit/Credit Cards;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the number of such cases registered and officials found involved in the cases during the last three years, bank-wise and State-wise;

(c) whether Government has drawn up a cyber crisis management plan to check cyber frauds in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by Government to check such frauds and protect customers in this regard?

Issuance of Aadhaar to persons with disabilities

898. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether hundreds of Aadhaar applicants with disabilities have not been issued Aadhaar cards, in spite of making multiple attempts;

(b) whether separate arrangements have been made for persons with disabilities, including those with cerebral palsy, for issuing of Aadhaar cards;

(c) whether enrolment agencies/operators have been sensitized regarding persons with disabilities and those having partial or no biometrics;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether any modified software is being developed for persons with disabilities, if so, the details thereof?

Employees found guilty of leaking Aadhaar data

899. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government for the protection against leakage of data submitted to Government authorities like Aadhaar data under UIDAI;

(b) the action taken against employees found to be guilty of leaking data of individuals or citizens to unauthorized persons; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Government has set up a Committee for data protection and drafting of Data Protection bill, if so, the details thereof?

Issuing of Aadhaar cards through post offices and banks

900. SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is contemplating handing over the work of issuing of Aadhaar cards to post offices and banks in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Job creation in IT sector

901. SHRI K.T.S. TULSI: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state the total number of jobs created in the IT sector and the total number of IT professionals hired by major IT companies in the country during the last three years alongwith details thereof?

Steps to protect citizens from Aadhaar data leak

†902. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL:
Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is violating the privacy of citizens of the country by taking their full details through Aadhaar and sharing the same with private companies, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether this does not amount to violation of the decision of the Supreme Court that privacy is a fundamental right; and

(c) if not, in what manner Government protects the details of Aadhaar so that privacy of the citizens is not violated?

CMs panel on Digital Payments

903. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether CMs panel on Digital Payments has submitted its report to Government, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether said panel has recommended for continuation of service tax exemptions to make the digital currency comparable with the physical currency; and

(c) whether incentives to smartphone users and subsidies for such phones were proposed in the report and if so, the response of Government thereto alongwith the details thereof?

Spread of misinformation and malicious content on social media

904. SHRI P.L. PUNIA:
SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the enactment of IT Act, 2000, misinformation and malicious content is being openly circulated on social media on daily basis;

(b) whether Government has any additional plan/policy to counter this spread of false information, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is aware that many anti-social persons, posting malicious content on social media, have been misusing photographs of many Union Ministers and senior leaders to assert their legitimacy for violating the IT Act, 2000; and

(d) if so, the details of action taken by Government against them?

Manufacturing of mobile phones for creation of jobs

905. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ:
SHRI T. RATHINAVEL:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government expects its major new policy of a phased manufacturing programme for mobile phones would create two million jobs and half a billion dollars worth of manufacturing activity in the country over

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

the next five to seven years, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government has held discussions with mobile manufacturers in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

Setting up of cold storage chain facilities

†906. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether 4 to 16 per cent of foodgrains and horticulture produces, fruits and vegetables get perished due to lack of sufficient cold storage chain facilities, including processing, transportation and marketing facilities in the country, including Maharashtra; and

(b) whether Government is considering to create basic infrastructure of cold storage chains, processing, packaging, transportation and distribution at Panchayat level and in villages itself, if so, the total number of cold chains established at Panchayat level in the last three years?

Achievement in World Food India 2017 event

907. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government organized a mega global food event—World Food India 2017 from 3rd to 5th November, 2017 in Delhi, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the number of Indian and foreign delegates that participated in the event along with the achievements made in the event;

(c) whether any programme of such kind had been organized in the country in the past, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other steps taken by Government to create environment for bringing higher returns for farmers, creating employment and fostering entrepreneurship?

Expansion of FPI in the country

†908. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures taken by Government during the last three years for the expansion of Food Processing Industry (FPI) in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether Government has conducted any study on establishment of FPI in the country and expansion of the same, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has received suggestions thereto from different States, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether Government has taken any steps on the suggestions received from the States, if so, the details thereof?

Employment generation in FPI

909. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of registered food processing units in the country;

(b) the details of number of factories started in food processing during 2014-15 to 2016-17; and

(c) the details of employment generation during the last ten years in the Food Processing Industry (FPI)?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Cold storages in rural areas

910. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any steps to develop affordable cold storage facilities for rural areas which consume less energy, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government is taking or contemplating any steps for promotion of any food processing industries to curb wastage of perishable agricultural and horticultural produces, if so, the details thereof?

Gram Nyayalayas in Andhra Pradesh

911. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is not even a single Gram Nyayalayas in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that, in view of Government of Andhra Pradesh not coming forward for setting up of Gram Nyayalayas, no financial assistance has been provided to the State so far;

(c) whether the Ministry has tried to find out the reasons behind not setting up of Gram Nyayalayas in spite of increase in crime rate in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in rural areas; and

(d) the efforts being made to persuade Government of Andhra Pradesh to set up Gram Nyayalayas?

All India Judicial Service

912. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would go for an All India Judicial Service with an all-India entrance examination for judges for uniform recruitment, in view of recent scams surfacing regarding recruitment of judges for the lower judiciary, eroding the confidence and trust of the public in judiciary;

(b) whether the report of the 116th Law Commission includes many workable solutions to do away with the problems faced in lower and higher courts; and

(c) if so, the Government's stance thereon?

Provision of legal aid at police stations

913. SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken steps to provide legal aid to persons at police stations in furtherance of Article 39A of the Constitution;

(b) if so, the names of the schemes/ regulations formulated to provide legal aid alongwith the total number of persons who were given legal assistance at police stations during the last one year, State-wise; and

(c) if not, whether the Ministry proposes to develop any schemes in this regard?

Vacancies in courts

914. SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies in the various District Courts, High Courts across the country and the Supreme Court, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(b) whether Government has any plan to fill up the vacancies in the various courts of the country?

Malfunctioning of EVMs

915. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that EVMs used in elections for local bodies continue to malfunction and no remedy has been found for these snags; and

(b) if so, whether Government would order a technical audit of these EVMs for a relook at their design and mode of functioning?

Committee's recommendations on reforms in arbitration mechanism

916. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee set up to suggest reforms in India's arbitration mechanism has submitted its recommendations, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has accepted all the recommendations, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the follow-up action taken by Government thereon?

Reservation of seats for SC and ST Judges in Supreme Court

917. SHRI RONALD SAPA TLAU: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is eager to provide maximum benefits to the deserving/qualified minority groups

like SCs, STs, etc, even in high places like Supreme Court;

(b) if so, the present number of Judges belonging to the SC, ST etc. in the Supreme Court;

(c) the number of such posts lying vacant in Supreme Court today; and

(d) the action being taken by Government in promoting more seats for SC and ST Judges in the Supreme Court?

Prisoners benefited from legal aid by NALSA

918. SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) gives legal aid to the poor prisoners languishing in various jails;

(b) if so, the number of legal assistance establishments set up in each State, State-wise;

(c) the total number of persons languishing in jails due to lack of legal assistance; and

(d) the number of poor prisoners benefited through NALSA till date?

Recruitment of Judges and disposal of cases

919. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether nearly 23 per cent of posts in the lower judiciary are lying vacant;

(b) if so, the steps taken to recruit Judges to fill up vacant posts;

(c) whether speedy trial is a part of reasonable, fair and just procedure

guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution;

(d) if so, whether any time-frame has been fixed for deciding a case in lower and High Courts; and

(e) the total number of cases pending in lower, High and Supreme Courts and the number of them which are pending for more than five years and ten years, respectively?

Malfunctioning of EVMs

920. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are growing reports of malfunctioning of EVMs that record votes only on a particular political party symbol, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(b) the remedial measures being taken by the Election Commission to resolve the issue?

Fast Track Courts for crimes against women

921. SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of operational Fast Track Courts (FTCs) for crimes against women in the country;

(b) whether there has been any shutdown of FTCs in few States and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has conducted periodic monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the said court, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of any measures being

undertaken by Government to ensure that all the State Governments set up FTCs?

Appointment of Judges to Supreme Court and High Courts

922. SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nine High Courts are functioning with acting Chief Justices;

(b) if so, whether this could be described as unprecedented situation amid a lingering standoff between the judiciary and the Government and inter-collegium differences;

(c) the action Government proposes to take to remedy the situation; and

(d) whether it is a fact that in the past three months, there has not been a single meeting for considering any appointment to the Supreme Court, having six vacancies as of today, if so, the reasons therefor?

Proxy voting for NRI voters

923. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to allow proxy voting for NRIs, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the process of proxy voting for registered NRIs is finalized, if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the criteria for a voter to be considered as proxy on behalf of an overseas voter and how would Government ensure maintenance of secrecy and avoidance of unfair financial dealing?

Proxy voting for NRIs and internal migrants

924. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to allow proxy voting for NRI and internal migrant voters, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) the total number of registered overseas electors as of October, 2017, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether the Ministry has defined the process for proxy voting, the details of any deadline set for the registration process; and

(d) by when will NRIs be allowed to vote using proxy voting?

Strength of Judicial Officers and Prosecutors

925. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI:
SHRIMATI VANDANA
CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the sanctioned strength and vacancies for Judicial Officers and Prosecutors State-wise and rank-wise;

(b) the steps taken by Government to reduce the gap between their sanctioned and actual strength;

(c) the total number of training academies/institutes with their trainee capacities available for the training of Judicial Officers and Prosecutors State-wise; and

(d) the total number of Judicial Officers

and Prosecutors, who have been imparted basic training 2014 onwards State-wise and rank-wise?

Simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, Local Bodies and Gram Panchayats

†926. DR. SATYANARAYAN
JATIYA:
SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH
DHINDSA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of initiatives taken so far to implement the proposed action plan of holding elections of Lok Sabha, Legislative Assemblies, Local Bodies and Gram Panchayats together in the country to save public money, time and energy of administration; and

(b) the changes and under consideration details of the proposal, from past till date, regarding electoral reforms with reference to 'a' above?

Supply of food by Railways on the pattern of airlines

927. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways are planning to supply food just like that is supplied in airlines, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a study has already been conducted on this front, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when this service would come into reality alongwith the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Vacant SC/ST posts in Railways

†928. SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the vacant posts belonging to SC/ST category in Railways; and

(b) the efforts being made by Government to fill up these vacant posts and by when these would be filled up?

Incidents of crimes in trains

†929. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that incidents of looting, murder and rape are repeatedly taking place in trains for the last two-three years;

(b) if so, whether Government would fix responsibility for this; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to ensure safe journey for the passengers in trains?

Increase in frequency of Delhi-Ranchi Rajdhani train

930. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have any proposal for compulsory attachment of anti-accident coaches in all the trains across entire railway routes, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that there are complaints about old and dilapidated coaches in Ranchi-bound Rajdhani train; and

(c) whether Railways would consider

increasing the frequency of Delhi-Ranchi Rajdhani train, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

Derailment of Kalinga Utkal Express

931. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether derailment of Kalinga Utkal Express near Muzaffarnagar, U.P. resulted in death of several passengers on the 19 August, 2017 and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether derailment of this train was caused on account of negligence on part of those carrying out track maintenance work at Khatauli yard in Muzaffarnagar Distt., and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether senior officers of the Railway Board, who are generally concerned with the policy matter, have been suspended and junior officers, entrusted with the maintenance of railway line have not been touched and if so, the reasons therefor?

Installation of differently-abled friendly lifts at railway stations of Kerala

932. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of railway stations in Kerala where differently-abled friendly lifts and escalators are likely to be installed; and

(b) the status of work in each case?

Monetisation of assets

933. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(a) the steps taken by Railways to monetise the assets within the railways; and

(b) how much revenue does the Railways earn from non-fare sources such as advertisements at stations and on coaches, commercial exploitation of vacant land, hoardings on land alongside tracks, commercial farming along tracks, monetisation of soft assets, including revenue from advertisements on websites, among other things?

Discontinuation of trains

934. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some trains have been discontinued on account of poor passenger turn out;

(b) if so, the list of such trains which have been discontinued during the last two years; and

(c) whether feasibility report of concerned trains was prepared or not before starting such trains on those routes?

CCTV cameras in super fast trains

935. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to install CCTV cameras in the super fast trains as is being done in premium trains like Rajdhani, Duronto and Shatabdi, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) if not, the steps it has taken to ensure the safety and security of the passengers travelling in these trains?

Discontinuation of provision of blankets in AC coaches

936. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways are considering a pilot project to discontinue providing blankets to passengers in AC coaches in some trains, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that this was necessitated because of complaints of dirty and unhygienic blankets being served in trains, if so, the details thereof?

Mumbai suburban train services

937. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to increase/double the suburban train services in Mumbai in the next three years;

(b) if so, the details of new services to be launched across Western, Central and Harbour line of the Mumbai rail network; and

(c) whether Government is also planning to strengthen the Mumbai suburban rail network?

Development of suburban railway network of Central and Western Railways

938. DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total funds allocated for the development of suburban network railway services of Central and Western Railways;

(b) out of that, how much funds are for passenger amenities and how much funds for the rolling stock, etc.; and

(c) the long term approach of Government to improve the suburban railway services in Mumbai?

New railway route between Karad and Chiplun

939. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first Public Private Partnership (PPP) project of Railways to build a new railway route between Karad in western Maharashtra and Chiplun in Konkan faces an uncertain future;

(b) if so, the current position of this project and reasons for the delay; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government for early completion of the said project?

Free rail facilities to winners of military medals

†940. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government in November, 2017 has announced providing free rail facilities to the winners of Ashoka Chakra, Paramvir Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Vir Chakra and Mahavir Chakra;

(b) if so, the number and details of the beneficiaries thereof;

(c) whether this facility would also be extended to the winners of the Sena medals, Para-military medals and Police medals; and

(d) if not, the reasons for discrimination

with these medal winners along with the details thereof?

Dynamic fare in super fast trains

941. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have introduced dynamic fare in all super fast trains;

(b) if so, the details in this regard along with the purpose behind introduction of such system;

(c) whether the objectives have been achieved; and

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

Overburdened railway lines

942. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railway lines are not upto the mark due to non-repair and overburdened traffic, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the action Government has planned to take to construct new lines so that old lines are repaired?

Accident of Utkal Express

943. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has assessed the causes of Utkal train accident which took place recently at Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of the investigation made and the reasons for the lapses; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government is contemplating any safety measures to obviate any future accidents, if so, the details thereof?

Timely payment of compensation to accident victims

944. SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether train accidents have increased during the last two years and the current year and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the major reasons for surge in the recent train accidents;

(c) the steps taken to avert the accidents and ensuring safety of passengers;

(d) whether adequate and timely compensation has been paid to all the victims and if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the number of pending cases, Zone-wise, and action taken to expedite payment of compensation in such cases?

Separate body for rail safety

945. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether NITI Aayog has asked Railways to set up a separate body for rail safety; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Railway infrastructure for coal transport and other utilities

946. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending with Government to develop railway

infrastructure for coal transport and other utilities, viz., coal evacuation and coal supply to thermal power plants in the State of Tamil Nadu, if so, details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has earmarked any funds for this project and if so, the details thereof?

Investment for development of railway infrastructure

†947. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan to make huge investment for development of infrastructure of Railways during the next five years, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether an action plan has been prepared in this regard and is likely to be implemented soon, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the proposed investment includes expenditure on rail and passenger security related infrastructure, if so, the details thereof?

Charging of superfast fare

†948. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:
SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) number of trains, out of total for which superfast fare is being charged presently by Railways, how many trains have reached their destination with a delay of more than two hours during last 6 months;

(b) whether Ministry agrees with opinion of CAG after a review of excessive delay of superfast trains by CAG in month

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

of July, about the amount being charged unnecessarily in name of superfast; and

(c) the speed of which trains has been increased since November, 2017 and number of trains out of the same that reached their destination with a delay of more than one hour?

New railway zone for Andhra Pradesh

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

(a) whether the new railway zone promised for the successor State of Andhra Pradesh during the bifurcation has been found feasible, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the present position of its establishment; and

(c) whether there is any chance that it would be created in 2018?

Rail projects in Madhya Pradesh

†950. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the various rail projects being implemented in Madhya Pradesh and the current status thereof, project-wise;

(b) the number of projects that are running behind schedule and the reasons therefor, project-wise;

(c) the increase in cost of delayed projects, project-wise; and

(d) whether any action has been taken against anyone for non-completion of these rail projects within the stipulated or extended time, if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor?

Complaints and action taken regarding poor quality of food served in trains

†951. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of action taken on the complaints of poor quality of food served in railways during last three years and the number of complaints received from the Members of Parliament;

(b) whether it is a fact that some passengers fell sick after consuming the food provided by IRCTC in the Tejas Express running between Goa and Mumbai;

(c) whether poor quality food was served in the Ajmer-Hyderabad Express (12719) on Diwali; and

(d) the action taken against vendors/officers for providing poor quality food in the trains during the last three years?

Phasing out of diesel locomotives

952. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to completely phase out diesel locomotives in the next five years, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the amount that could be saved by Railways by switching all trains to electric-driven?

Food served on trains and platforms

953. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that the CAG in its report has stated that the food served by the Railway catering unit on the trains and the platforms is not fit for human consumption;

(b) the reason for the deterioration in the quality of food served by Railway catering unit on trains and stations; and

(c) whether any quality control check of the food items is done before being served to the passengers?

Vacancies in Railways

†954. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH
YADAV:
SHRI VISHAMBHAR
PRASAD NISHAD:
SHRIMATI CHHAYA
VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies at present in Railways and the steps taken to fill up the same;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is considering to re-employ the retired employees due to the excessive vacancies;

(c) whether Railways have found some kind of negligence in not filling the vacancies in time and if so, the action taken in this regard; and

(d) the information regarding the firms working under contract at present in Railways and employees appointed by them and the payments made for the contracts during the last three years?

Train accidents and renovation of rail tracks

†955. SHRI P.L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) total number of train accidents which took place in 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 due to shortcomings in railway tracks and negligence of officers and loco pilots and total loss of life and property therein, the details thereof;

(b) total budget allocated for renovation of railway tracks during last three years and target of renovation of rail lines fixed and achieved in kilometers, Zone-wise; and

(c) number of times when overload on railway tracks, crack and damage in rail lines and life span of railway lines was checked along with the details of proposals/suggestions in above checks?

Public sector obligation of Railways

956. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN:
SHRIMATI VIJILA
SATHYANANTH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the biggest challenge for Railways is to meet the Public sector obligation along with matching the performance of the Corporate sector;

(b) whether it is a fact that the revenue loss for meeting public service obligation is as high as ₹ 30,000 crore;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Railways were focusing on bolstering its freight and non-fare revenue; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the non-fare revenue rose 72 per cent this year and the target is to increase the same to around ₹ 35,000 crore in the next 10 years?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Railway projects in Tamil Nadu

957. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the ongoing/pending railway projects in Tamil Nadu, Zone-wise and division-wise;

(b) the total funds earmarked and allocated for execution of each of these projects, as-on-date;

(c) the details of funds spent thereon, so far;

(d) the list of projects getting delayed and the reasons therefor along with the escalation of cost due to delay in completion of these projects; and

(e) the time-frame set for the completion of these projects along with the steps taken or being taken by Railways in this regard?

Re-engagement of retired railway personnel

958. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL:
SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to the shortage of staff on safety-related positions, Railways have empowered Divisional Railway Managers to re-engage retired railway personnel for appropriate posts, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Railways have laid down some conditions for re-engagement, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other steps taken by Railways to recruit employees for railway safety purposes?

Diesel locomotive manufacturing unit in Marhaura, Bihar

959. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways plan to scrap the upcoming diesel locomotive manufacturing unit in Marhaura, Bihar, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government is planning to tweak its plan for complete electrification of Railways by 2022; and

(c) if so, how Government plans to utilise the newly-acquired 1000 diesel locomotives at the cost of \$ 2.6 billion from General Electric Co. (GE), after 2022?

Zonal railway headquarter at Ranchi, Jharkhand

†960. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a small State like Jharkhand is being managed by three railway zones and Government and various quarters have been making a demand to set up a zonal railway headquarters at Ranchi; and

(b) whether, Ranchi and Railway division falling under it fulfil the criteria with regard to operation of goods and passenger trains, legal mechanism and other possible criteria the reasons for delay on the part of Government towards developing Ranchi Division into a Railway zone?

NEW DELHI;
The 16th December, 2017
Agrahayana 25, 1939 (Saka)

DESH DEEPAK VERMA,
Secretary-General.

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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