

## RAJYA SABHA

### List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on  
Friday, December 29, 2017/Pausha 8, 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

#### Websites/portals managed and monitored by the Ministry

1281. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of websites or portals being managed and monitored currently by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, their URL details and the record of visitors' traffic in general and response mechanism for farmers' complaints received through these portals since 2014; and

(b) the number of Twitter handles and Facebook pages, if any, being maintained by the Department and its subsidiaries or undertakings, the performance of these Twitter and Facebook accounts in general since they were opened along with the

performance monitoring mechanism of these accounts, if any?

#### Reforms in crop insurance schemes

1282. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the increasing incidents of suicide by farmers in the country Government has brought in several reforms in the crop insurance schemes so as to benefit maximum number of farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the loss due to climate has also been included as one of the criteria for availing the benefit of crop insurance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Reforms in Agriculture sector**

1283. SHRI P.  
BHATTACHARYA:  
SHRI DARSHAN SINGH  
YADAV:  
SHRIMATI RAJANI  
PATIL:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that NITI Aayog has proposed various reforms in Agriculture sector, including liberal contract farming, direct purchase from farmers by private players, direct sale by farmers to consumers, and single trader licence among other measures, in order to double the farmers' income; and

(b) if so, the efforts made/being made by Government for conducting various consultations and seeking suggestions from numerous stakeholders in the Agriculture sector, in order to devise a strategy to double the income of farmers and improve their living condition?

**Post-harvest losses of fruits and vegetables**

1284. SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total losses of fruits and vegetables perishing post-harvest in the last three years; and

(b) the steps Government is taking to arrest these losses?

**Implementation of National Dairy Support Project in Andhra Pradesh**

1285. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National

Dairy Support Project, with assistance from the World Bank, has been taken up in Andhra Pradesh along with other States;

(b) if so, the present status of implementation of the Project in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the benefits that the State has got under the above Project?

**Production of foodgrains**

†1286. SHRIMATI CHHAYA  
VERMA:  
SHRI VISHAMBHAR  
PRASAD NISHAD:  
CH. SUKHRAM SINGH  
YADAV:

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

(a) the details of the increase in production of various foodgrains during the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that despite continuous increase in the production of foodgrains, many a foodgrains have to be imported in accordance to their demand;

(c) the details of the demand for foodgrains, the decrease in production and the dependency on import during the next one decade in the country; and

(d) the details of the steps taken by Government to encourage maximum production of foodgrains in the country?

**Registration certificate of NE and EC Railway Employees Primary Co-operative Bank, Gorakhpur**

†1287. SHRI VISHAMBHAR  
PRASAD NISHAD:  
CH. SUKHRAM SINGH  
YADAV:  
SHRIMATI CHHAYA  
VERMA:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

(a) whether investigation regarding financial irregularities in NE and EC Railway Employees Primary Cooperative Bank Ltd., Gorakhpur is going on;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof, till now;

(c) whether above Bank does not possess the registration certificate from Central Co-operative Registrar of Government in respect of registration of society under Multi State Co-operative Act, 2002; and

(d) the group to which the Secretary/ Chief Executive Officer of the Bank belongs to, the required qualification therefor and the basic pay fixed by the Board in accordance with the Seventh Pay Commission and whether it is approved by Registrar, Co-operative Society, Government of India?

**Coverage of Greater Yam crop under PMFBY**

1288. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government does not treat Greater Yam producers as farmers at all;

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

(c) the steps taken by Government to provide Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) coverage to Greater Yam producing farmers of East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh?

**Research on dry land cropping system**

1289. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made any efforts for research on dry land cropping system;

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

(c) the fresh steps taken by Government to improve the yield potential of land under arid and semi-arid zones of the country?

**Promoting animal husbandry among farmers**

1290. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has launched any special scheme to promote animal husbandry among farmers to earn additionally, which is also likely to consume crop residue productively and produce organic manure for the good health of soil;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of technical and financial assistance extended to farmers for domestication of cows, buffaloes, sheep and goats in Maharashtra, District-wise?

**Development of Horticulture sector under project CHAMAN**

1291. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has launched a project-CHAMAN for the development of Horticulture in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status and outcome of the project; and

(c) to what extent the said project will be helpful in the development of Horticulture sector of the country?

**Issuance of Soil Health Cards**

1292. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Soil Health Cards (SHCs) issued to farmers so far;
- (b) the details of total expenditure so far;
- (c) the details of SHCs issued in Kerala;
- (d) the details of sample collected for issuing SHCs in Kerala; and
- (e) the total number of mobile labs and mini labs started during 2014-15 to 2016-17?

**Decrease in nutritional value of foodgrains**

1293. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether, as per reports of National Institute of Nutrition, our foodgrains, vegetables and fruits are losing their nutritional food values sharply;
- (b) if so, the details of nutritional values of various food items recorded in evaluation study;
- (c) whether scientists have also suggested any corrective measures to improve the nutritional value of food products because it is very sensitive matter;
- (d) whether the Institute has also studied about nutritional values of grains, vegetables and fruits of other countries;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Issuance of SHCs to farmers in Odisha**

1294. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Soil Health Cards (SHCs) issued to the farmers in Odisha till date; and
- (b) by when the remaining SHCs will be issued to the farmers of Odisha?

**Promoting salt tolerant varieties of crops**

1295. SHRI MANISH GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether salinity levels have increased in the coastal States of the country on account of rising sea levels and whether this is a cause of concern to agriculture;
- (b) if so, the area of land rendered unfit for agricultural purposes due to rise in salinity in these coastal States during the last five years; and
- (c) the steps Government has taken to promote salt tolerant varieties of crops in general, with special reference to rice?

**Strategies for doubling the income of farmers by 2022**

1296. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has finalised a strategy to double the farmers' income by 2022; and
- (b) if so, the details of various strategies chalked out in conjunction with State Governments for the purpose?

**Promoting tribal students in agriculture related fields**

†1297. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Agricultural Universities in tribal areas of the country at present, location-wise and State/Union Territory-wise;

(b) the number of tribal category students passed out from the said universities during last three years and the current year;

(c) whether any affirmative steps are being taken by Government to promote tribal category students in agriculture related fields; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Allocation of funds for research in new farming techniques**

1298. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of funds allocated by Government for agricultural research to adopt new farming techniques;

(b) the initiatives taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) in what manner Government impart the knowledge about new farming techniques to farmers and what has been the role of the project for Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture (ARYA) in this regard?

**Bringing Gram products under the purview of NFSA**

1299. SHRI T.G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 10th Global Agriculture Leadership Summit 2017 had been convened at New Delhi by National Council of Food and Agriculture recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that during the deliberations of the Summit the members had endorsed to bring the Gram products under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), if so, the details thereof?

**Deployment of ICAR scientists for non-scientific works**

1300. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of scientists working in the research institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have been deployed for other non-scientific works;

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

(c) by when, such scientists are likely to be re-deployed for research work?

**Promoting milk production**

1301. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has implemented any schemes to promote milk production in the last three years;

(b) whether any measures have been taken to develop indigenous breeds in a focussed and scientific manner to enhance the production of milk; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Ill effects of chemical fertilizers on farmers and farm products**

1302. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no control over the chemicals and fertilizers that are sold over the counters as pesticides to farmers;

(b) whether excessive use of chemicals and fertilizers by farmers is having intense effect on the health of farmers as well as on the users of farm products; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to educate the farmers about their adverse effect on them, their products, the field on which farm products are cultivated and the users of the crops?

**Training programmes by Rajendra Agricultural University**

†1303. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether agriculture scientists used to train and provide necessary advice to farmers for advanced farming 30 years earlier;

(b) whether Government is contemplating to make this important scheme more effective;

(c) if so, details thereof;

(d) the number of districts of Bihar where training programme has been conducted by Rajendra Agricultural University during last three financial years and number of farmers benefited therefrom; and

(e) the land in acres of remote villages of 20 blocks of Samastipur district whose soil has been tested and advised for

appropriate crop thereafter by scientists of the above University along with the details thereof?

**Parameters for fixing of MSP for crops**

1304. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy during 2016-17 was ₹ 1550/- per quintal whereas the cost of production to the farmers worked out to be ₹ 1484/- per quintal and hence the margin of profit was just ₹ 66/- per quintal;

(b) whether it indicate that parameters fixed for arriving at MSP are just mechanical and not at all reasonable;

(c) whether Government proposes to review the parameters and fix MSP rationally so that the farmers get a minimum 25 per cent profit over and above their input cost; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Compensation to farmers affected by Ockhi Cyclone under PMFBY**

1305. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the farmers, covered under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), will be suitably compensated who were affected by recent Ockhi Cyclone in southern, coastal and other districts of Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Production cost and market price of vegetables**

†1306. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of cost incurred on production of easily perishable agriculture produces like onions, garlic, tomato, ginger, green peas and other vegetables, and the information about the prices thereof at time of production along with the maximum consumer selling price, per year, during the last three years; and

(b) the measures adopted to minimise the gap between the cost at the time of production and the cost at the time of selling the products in the market with reference to (a) above?

**MSP of crops**

†1307. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether many policy measures have been taken by Central Government with a view to double the income of farmers, which includes maximum increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Central Government has recently made record increase in the MSP of the Rabi crops for the year 2017-18; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Covering of crops under crop insurance schemes**

†1308. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various crop insurance

schemes implemented for the farmers of the country;

(b) the details of the crops covered under the above insurance schemes, State-wise;

(c) whether suggestions have been received from various States to include their crops under these schemes, if so, the details of the suggestions received, State-wise; and

(d) whether Government has taken any steps on the suggestions, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**Development of agricultural marketing infrastructure**

1309. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total expenditure of the sub-scheme, Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) during the XII Plan period (2012-17) along with the details thereof;

(b) the total number of projects accomplished under AMI sub-scheme during the last four years along with the details thereof;

(c) whether all projects are taken up for improvising the grading, standardization and quality certification of agricultural produces in the country during the last four years; and

(d) the total amount of funds flown *via* public private partnerships for the development of marketing infrastructure, along with the details thereof?

**Reasonable price for farmers' produces**

1310. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning a dynamic import duty on agriculture commodities based on price of commodity in wholesale market;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether such decision will help the farmers to get a reasonable price for the agricultural commodities produced by them?

#### **Chemical-free farming**

1311. SHRI BASAWARAJ PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) by when India will be a 100 per cent chemical-free agriculture country;

(b) the steps taken in this direction; and

(c) the details of private initiatives in this direction for less expenditure, no soil quality loss and more production by indigenous methods?

#### **Target for Agriculture credit**

1312. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any target has been fixed for Agriculture credit in 2017-18;

(b) whether farmers will be benefited from interest waiver; and

(c) the farmers benefited so far in the State of Kerala?

#### **Doubling the income of farmers**

1313. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government

has proposed to double the income from agriculture by 2022;

(b) if so, the details of major plans/schemes for achieving this; and

(c) the basis on which the year 2022 was fixed for this?

#### **Inclusion of all tillers under crop insurance scheme**

1314. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the per cent of farmers in the country under crop insurance; and

(b) by when all the tillers are likely to be brought under the crop insurance scheme?

#### **Compensation to farmers under PMFBY**

1315. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plans to change the unit of insurance for major crops from village to plot/individual farm level, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government plans to compensate farmers even if the whole village has not paid the premium as various studies have shown the impracticality of this measure, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether pay-out to farmers for Kharif crops in 2016 was just 45 per cent out of the total claims made under the PMFBY; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?



#### **Linking of mandis with NAM**

†1316. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of mandis in the country, including Maharashtra, and the total number of mandis from where purchase is made through Minimum Support Price (MSP);

(b) whether there are several mandis in the country from where purchase is not made due to lack of basic infrastructure, if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the details of the total number of mandis in the country, including Maharashtra, which have been linked to National Agriculture Market, State-wise?

#### **MSP for agricultural produces**

†1317. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under National Farmer Policy-2007 it has been provided to make payment of fifty per cent of the cost also incurred by the farmers to grow the produce in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of the foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether the number of farmers' suicides is not decreasing owing to the reason because they are not getting full value for their produce; and

(c) if so, by when would the Government implement the same and empower the farmers?

#### **Doubling the income of farmers**

1318. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures taken by Government during the last three years for doubling the farmers' income;

(b) the amount of budgetary allocation made for the purpose during the last three years and the actual utilization of these funds;

(c) whether there is any proposal for further rationalization of agrarian subsidy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Agricultural credit to farmers**

1319. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of target given to the PSU banks to give agricultural credits to the farmers during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) the details of funds dispersed for agricultural credits to the farmers during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) whether the target has been achieved, if not, the reasons therefor, year-wise and State-wise during the last five years?

#### **Steps to control prices of medicines and medical equipments**

1320. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken some fresh initiatives to control the prices of medicines and medical equipments;

(b) if so, whether due to such initiatives the prices of several medicines has come

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

down but many medicines have become costlier also; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the steps being taken to control such rising prices of medicines?

**Plan to make drugs affordable for common man**

1321. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:  
SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL:

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

(a) whether Government has made any plan to make drugs affordable for the common man, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) by when the above plan is likely to be implemented?

**Re-operationalizing closed fertilizer plants**

1322. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of fertilizer plants closed during the last five years;

(b) whether Government has any plan to re-operationalize these fertilizer plants, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the operational fertilizer plants are working to their capacity, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government has any plan to increase the level of production of fertilizers, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**Sale of lands and assets of closed PSUs**

1323. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to sell assets and lands of the sick/closed PSUs;

(b) if so, the details of assets and lands of closed Central PSUs;

(c) whether Government has received any proposal under PPP model schemes to sell or to lease the said lands and assets;

(d) if so, the details of the proposal and the Government's initiatives therefor; and

(e) the details of the proposal of Government to pay the dues of the State Governments which the States are bearing towards cost of maintenance and other expenses related thereto till date?

**Irregularities in sale of fertilizers**

1324. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a huge amount is annually provided as fertilizer subsidy to manufacturers for selling nutrients at cheaper rates to farmers;

(b) whether any irregularities have been brought to the notice of Government in the last one year in this regard; and

(c) if so, the corrective steps taken to streamline the system?

**Bringing more medicines under NPPA**

1325. SHRI A. U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA)

is considering to bring in more medicines under its control as part of measures to provide relief to patients, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the NPPA has taken any decision on bringing new medicines under its ambit in its meeting held in March this year, if so, the details thereof?

**Profit margin on imported implants**

1326. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that on some imported implants for knees and hips the profit margin is between 300 per cent and 600 per cent;

(b) whether Government is also aware that profit margin in case of balloon catheters ranges between 25 per cent to 475 per cent and that of guided catheter ranges from 50 per cent to 529 per cent and MRP for urine bags is 500 per cent higher than the cost as supplied to hospital; and

(c) if so, the efforts Government is making to stop this loot by hospitals, distributors and importers?

**Opening of Generic Medicine Stores**

1327. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any initiatives for opening of Generic Medicine Stores as a special drive in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) if so, whether pharma companies are against opening of Generic Medicine Stores in the country, if so, the reasons therefor?

**Opening more Jan Aushadhi Kendras in Odisha**

1328. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras which are providing affordable medicines to the people across the country, State-wise;

(b) whether Government is planning to open more such Kendras in Odisha and other neighbouring States; and

(c) the measures taken by Government to encourage opening up of the Jan Aushadhi Kendras by youths?

**Mass removal of CCL workers**

1329. SHRI SANJIV KUMAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently 324 Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) workers have been removed from service by an Industrial Tribunal in Dhanbad;

(b) if so, the reasons/circumstances thereof; and

(c) whether the Ministry has examined how such a large number of persons inducted by CCL in the first instance, were subsequently found to be ineligible for employment?

**Loss of lives in coal mine accidents**

1330. SHRIMATI THOTA SEETHARAMA LAKSHMI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of people who have lost their lives during the course of their work in coal mines and coal fields in the last five years, State and Union Territory-wise;

(b) the steps taken by Government in all these accidents to compensate the families affected by these deaths, alongwith the details thereof; and

(c) whether there is any mechanism to put checks and balances on the owner/promoter/operator of the coal mine where accidents take place and whether they are held liable?

#### **Decontrol of coal prices**

1331. SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is contemplating on decontrol of its authority on coal prices and giving free hand to the coal companies to fix the coal prices; and

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

#### **Steps to boost domestic production of coal**

1332. SHRI SANJIV KUMAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the projected requirement of coking coal for the country by 2022;

(b) the existing mix of domestic production and imports of coking coal; and

(c) the steps, if any, being taken to augment domestic production of coking coal?

#### **Shortage of coal for power plants**

1333. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no

shortage of coal and that the power plants should adhere to the guidelines for stocking of the dry fuel;

(b) whether it is also a fact that pit head stock of Coal India Ltd. was at 30.3 million tonnes; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that many State Governments have brought to the notice of Central Government about the shortage of coal at power plants, if so, the details thereof?

#### **Grading and notification of coal mines by CCO**

1334. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Coal Controller's Organisation (CCO), a Coal Ministry outfit, has been tasked with grading and notifying the mines of Coal India Ltd. from April, 2017, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of findings by the said organization?

#### **Production in re-allocated coal blocks**

†1335. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large scale allocations of coal blocks have been made afresh keeping in view the interests of power plants after the cancellation of allocation of 204 coal blocks by the Supreme Court in the year 2014, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that, out of those coal blocks, production has not yet started in many such blocks, if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Casual and contract labourers in  
BSNL, Uttarakhand**

‡1336. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has taken cognizance of the fact that the labourers working on casual and contract basis in Uttarakhand, BSNL, have not been paid their labour charges;

(b) if so, the details of action taken by the Ministry, if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) total number of labourers working on casual and contract basis in the State in the financial year 2016-17 and details of payments made to them; and

(d) whether Government would consider to provide permanent appointment to labourers, working on casual and contract basis for a long time in the State, if not, the reasons therefor?

**Mobile telephone connectivity in  
Punjab and Haryana**

1337. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of villages and some urban areas in Punjab and Haryana are yet to be connected with mobile telephones;

(b) if so, the details of such villages and urban areas;

(c) the details of mobile towers and telephone exchanges working in both the States, Circle-wise;

(d) the details of mobile towers and telephone exchanges likely to be installed in these States; and

(e) the action taken by Government to

provide telephone connectivity to the left out villages/areas in the States?

**Free internet data for rural users**

1338. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether TRAI has recommended to offer 100 MB free data to rural users;

(b) if so, whether any consultations have been held with telecom companies and other stakeholders in this regard;

(c) the manner in which funds collected under Universal Service Obligation Fund will be used for meeting these expenses;

(d) whether TRAI has also commented on the poor quality of internet offered by telecom companies to rural area users presently; and

(e) if so, how the Ministry will ensure the best quality of telecom services in rural areas as well?

**Offices and godowns of ITI Limited**

1339. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the rented/on lease offices and godowns of Indian Telephone Industry (ITI) Limited in Delhi and Kolkata;

(b) the details of offices and godowns of ITI Limited which are being used without any authority or consent of the owners in Kolkata;

(c) the reasons therefor, case-wise;

(d) whether Government has received representations in this regard from MPs during November-December, 2017;

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‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(e) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken thereon, representation-wise; and

(f) by when such premises would be vacated by ITI Limited?

**Promoting the hobby of Philately**

1340. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has initiated move to promote the hobby of philately among children under Deen Dayal SPARSH Yojana, offering scholarships for meritorious children;

(b) whether the volume of postal traffic has steeply declined with the advancement of telecom channels and with less and less number of people opting for sending letters through post; and

(c) whether Government would devise plans to promote the art of letter writing among children (students) as a medium of communication?

**Installation of mobile towers across North-East India**

1341. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry will install around 6000 towers across North-East India under the comprehensive telecom development plan for North-East India;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise;

(c) the number of mobile towers to be installed along Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Bangladesh border; and

(d) the budget allocated and the timeline fixed for completion of the project?

**Complaints regarding inability to make online transactions**

1342. SHRI K. T. S. TULSI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of complaints received and the total number of complaints resolved satisfactorily by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and mobile service providers regarding basic connectivity issues and inability to make online transactions through mobile phones by the consumers in the country; and

(b) the steps taken, if any, by Government to resolve basic connectivity problems, such as, call drops and network outages, faced by mobile phone users in the country?

**Funds from USOF**

1343. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that BSNL has alleged that the delays in some of its key projects were because of the indecisiveness from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF);

(b) whether it is also a fact that the funds are not released to BSNL by the USOF;

(c) whether the USOF has been set up to fund projects to boost connectivity in rural and remote areas and the money for this fund comes through a levy that is charged from the telecom operators as a percentage of various licence fee being paid by them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Linking of Aadhaar with mobile SIM cards**

1344. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware about serious apprehensions among the people in linking Aadhaar with mobile SIM Cards;

(b) if so, the steps taken to prevent the possible misuses;

(c) the protective measures taken, if any fraud etc., happens; and

(d) the section of the Act under which notifications for these are being issued?

**Broadband services in Gram Panchayats**

1345. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to start broadband services with about 1000 megabit/second (1gbps) across one lakh Gram Panchayats of the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has also allocated ₹ 3700 crore for providing Wi-Fi cover to 5.5 lakh Gram Panchayats all over the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the latest status of the progress made in this direction?

**Wi-Fi connectivity at small railway stations**

1346. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have requested BSNL to start Wi-Fi connectivity facilities at small railway stations in the country by using USO funds; and

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

**Non-working of landline connections of BSNL in Sarguja, Chhattisgarh**

†1347. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the landline connections of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in the rural areas of Sarguja division of Chhattisgarh are not working;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for this problem along with the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) by when this work is likely to be completed by Government?

**Improving quality and quantity of postal and telecommunication services**

1348. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to improve quality and quantity of postal and Telecommunication services;

(b) how much money has been spent on them in the last three years;

(c) whether there was increase in handling of postal articles and telephone or internet services;

(d) how does Government agencies in these fields compare with private ones;

(e) whether number of employees have increased/decreased in the said services during this period; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Dismal service by MTNL, Delhi**

1349. SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the service provided to the customers by MTNL, Delhi has gone down;

(b) if so, the remedial measures that have been taken to improve the same;

(c) the number of complaints received at Jor Bagh exchange during the last six months and the number of complaints attended so far;

(d) whether Government is aware that the complaints registered by the customers are disposed off without attending the same; and

(e) if so, the action taken against the erring officials of that exchange for dereliction of duties?

**Malware attack on MTNL broadband connections**

1350. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several broadband connections of MTNL have been impacted after a malware attack;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by MTNL to prevent such impacts on account of malware attacks; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the MTNL has provided free replacement of equipments to affected customers?

**Process for next round of spectrum auction**

1351. SHRI N. GOKULA-KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has kick-started the process for the next round of spectrum auction;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that TRAI has issued a consultation paper on key issues for sale of airwaves, including for offering 5G services; and

(d) whether in the last auction, 2, 355 megahertz of spectrum worth ₹ 5.6 lakh crore across seven bands was put up for bids and fetched Government revenue of ₹ 65,789 crore only?

**Subsidy on essential food items**

1352. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government is providing rice, wheat, pulses, edible oil and kerosene at subsidized price to Tamil Nadu to extend the coverage to all priority households;

(b) if so, details thereof and details of supply provided monthly and subsidy provided per kgs./unit to each item;

(c) whether the subsidy rates were fixed a long back and was not increased for a long time, till date;

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



(e) the measures taken by Government to increase supply of these essential food items to Tamil Nadu and also the subsidy given to them?

**Allocation of funds to Kerala under NFSM**

1353. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of production of rice under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) during 2014-15 to 2016-17; and

(b) the details of funds allotted to Kerala for rice cultivation under NFSM during 2014-15 to 2016-17?

**Denying of ration due to lack of Aadhaar number**

1354. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA:  
SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:

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

(a) the recourse available to BPL families denied rations due to lack of the Aadhaar number;

(b) whether the High Court of Delhi recently directed the Government of Delhi to pay compensation to the affected families who have been denied rations either on account of not possessing Aadhaar numbers or biometric authentication issues;

(c) whether Government plans to incorporate the directive nation-wide; and

(d) whether Government has taken any steps to tackle the problem arising out of improper or failed capture of biometrics of aged people and their inability to register for Aadhaar, if so, the details thereof?

**Enrolment of Aadhaar for availing PDS subsidy**

1355. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made Aadhaar compulsory for availing PDS subsidy, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of leakages from PDS likely to be plugged by this measure;

(c) the other steps taken to make PDS more effective; and

(d) whether households living in remote areas, such as Jaisalmer and Bikaner in Rajasthan, not having Aadhaar are being given more time for enrolment of Aadhaar to avail PDS subsidy?

**Aadhaar-based biometric authentication**

1356. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the imposition of Aadhaar-based biometric authentication (ABBA) has derailed the Public Distribution System in Jharkhand resulting in several starvation deaths of marginalised people such as single women, manual labourers and elderly persons due to denying them ration for their failure to link their ration card to Aadhaar; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Central Government to see that the Government of Jharkhand puts in place the safeguards prescribed by the Central Government in its 24 October, 2017 order?

**Rise in prices of vegetables**

1357. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of onion and other seasonal vegetables have increased manifold in the last three months;

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

(c) whether the production of onion and other vegetables have come down causing such price rise;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the quantity produced by the country during the last year and the current year so far; and

(e) the effective steps taken/being taken by Government to discourage speculative and unscrupulous trade activities in procuring/trading/selling of onion and other vegetables with heavily inflated prices?

**Shortage of storage capacity**

1358. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large quantum of foodgrains is lost due to non-availability of proper storage facilities;

(b) if so, the shortage of storage capacity identified by Government, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to minimize and bridge the gap between availability of foodgrains for storage and the storage space?

**Digitization of FPSs in the country**

1359. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has failed to take primary steps to digitize the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the country;

(b) if so, FPSs in the country, State-wise, and those which have been digitized in the country till October, 2017; and

(c) the number of ration cards linked with the PDS and comparative study with reference to number of digitized FPSs;

**Closure of Fair Price Shops**

1360. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Fair Price Shops in the country under the Public Distribution System, for each year since 2010, State-wise;

(b) the number of persons employed by Fair Price Shops, State-wise;

(c) whether representatives of Fair Price Shops have expressed concerns over the closing of shops with the proposed shift to cash transfers in the Public Distribution System; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken by Government to address these concerns?

**Release of pending funds for the State of Telangana**

1361. SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has received any request from the Government of Telangana seeking release of funds amounting to ₹ 1,680 crore pending for the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Central Government has taken any action on the request, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

#### **Deaths due to starvation**

1362. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that India is still suffering from starvation and people are dying due to starvation;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of deaths during the last two years, State-wise, and the reasons for starvation deaths despite Government's implementing various schemes;

(c) whether Government is also aware that proper ration and grains are not being provided through Public Distribution System;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether Government has any plan to prevent such deaths?

#### **Supply of pulses through PDS**

1363. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India Pulses and Grain Association (IPGA) has written a letter to

Ministry seeking inclusion of pulses in PDS as this would have a beneficial impact on India's farm sector and economy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has studied the suggestion of IPGA which practically prove to be the best method as in such cases FPS would act as collection and distribution centres and avoid middlemen/agents interference and also the Government would be relieved of from burdensome collection/distribution to and from the same FPS; and

(d) if so, the stand of Government in this regard?

#### **Publication of Aadhaar details on Government websites**

1364. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: SHRI MANISH GUPTA:

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

(a) whether as per an RTI information, 210 Government websites and web portals had published the Aadhaar details of the beneficiaries of Government schemes; and

(b) if so, the list of websites who published those details and the steps taken/ to be taken by Government to prevent such publication of Aadhaar details in future and penal/legal action taken against persons/Government agencies under the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 and other relevant laws?

**Deadline for linking of Aadhaar number**

1365. DR. T. SUBBARAMI  
REDDY:  
SHRIMATI AMBIKA  
SONI:

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

(a) whether Government has extended deadline for linking Aadhaar number up to 31 March, 2018;

(b) if so, the services for which the deadline has been extended, along with the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also gave an assurance to the Supreme Court that no coercive steps would be taken on Aadhaar card holders till the Court takes a final decision; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Ban on mobile internet services**

1366. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the State/UT-wise details of ban on mobile internet services, since 2014 till date;

(b) whether banning of internet services is a decision of State or Central Government or taken-up jointly, the details thereof; and

(c) the details regarding the reasons for banning of mobile internet services?

**Loss to IT sector**

1367. SHRI MANISH GUPTA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian IT Industry has been severely affected by increased levels of protectionism in the US and other developed countries' markets during the past one year;

(b) if so, the estimated level of losses to the Indian IT sector in terms of revenues, profits and employment during this financial year and in the coming two years; and

(c) the steps being taken by IT companies, industry bodies and Government to minimize these negative effects?

**Blacklisting of Aadhaar operators**

1368. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Aadhaar operators which have been blacklisted by Government till date along with the details thereof;

(b) the status of the Aadhaar cards issued by such operators; and

(c) the initiatives taken by Government to ensure that no malpractices are indulged into by existing operators?

**Gram Panchayats under CSC network**

1369. SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government aims to establish self sustaining network of 2.5 lakh Common Service Centres (CSC) at Gram Panchayat level under 'Digital India-Pillar 3-Public Internet Access Programme—National Rural Internet Mission' to deliver various citizen centric services;

(b) the details of the total number of Gram Panchayats covered under the CSC network till now, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) the details of the funds allocated for the same, State-wise; and

(d) by when, Government assures to complete its promise of creating at least one CSC per Gram Panchayat, the details thereof?

**Unauthorized use of e-KYC to open payments bank accounts**

1370. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has opened payments bank accounts to private players;

(b) whether it is a fact that UIDAI has complained against some companies who have allegedly opened payments bank accounts without the consent of customers;

(c) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) the proposal of Government to stop misuse of e-KYC being used in this regard?

**Grievances made to UIDAI**

1371. SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of grievances that have been made to the Grievance Redressal Mechanism run by the UIDAI, since 29 September, 2010, month and State-wise, in the format in which it is held by UIDAI; and

(b) the details of the categorisation of all grievances made to the UIDAI and how many were related to technology issues/ or related to registrars, etc., in the format in which it is held by UIDAI?

**Falling prices of farm produces**

1372. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of farm produce have become prone to falling; and

(b) if so, the step proposed to check the phenomenon?

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines**

1373. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Government websites and apps, as a proportion of the total, that are compliant with the Guidelines for Indian Government websites and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)'s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which are mandated by the former;

(b) whether steps are being taken to make special provisions for Persons with Disabilities under the National Digital Literacy Mission;

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

#### **Increase in cyber crimes**

1374. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that during the last three years, cyber crimes have increased manifolds;
- (b) if so, the details of crimes reported, State-wise and category-wise;
- (c) the details of Government plan to curb cyber crimes in the country; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

#### **Audit of Aadhaar enrolment centres**

1375. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has decided to conduct an independent audit of all 50,000 odd Aadhaar enrolment centres and inspect them in person;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the aims and objectives behind the move;
- (c) by when audit of Aadhaar centres will commence and be completed;
- (d) whether UIDAI is launching a major information drive to impress upon people the benefits of linking their Aadhaar with their bank account, PAN and mobile number; and
- (e) if so, the response of the people thereto?

#### **Suicide by children due to online games**

1376. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the Blue Whale challenge game that has led many children to suicide in various parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the number of victims during the last four months; and
- (c) whether Government has taken up the matter with Google India, WhatsApp, Yahoo India and other internet giants to remove the links of the killer online game and if so, the details thereof?

#### **Schemes for employment in Food Processing sector**

1377. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) the names of schemes framed by Government recently in order to increase employment through Food Processing Industry;
- (b) the details of schemes being implemented at present;
- (c) the amount of budget provided by Government for Food Processing sector during the current year; and
- (d) the details of the grants/subsidy released by Government for various schemes?

**Investments in Food Processing sector**

1378. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has received good response for investments in the Food Processing sector in the recently held World Food India 2017 event, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether such investments will boost agri income and employment in the Food Processing sector?

**Irregularities in cold chain centres**

†1379. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has developed any mechanism to monitor the irregularities against responsible agencies in the functioning of cold chain storages, if any report is received against them;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Ministry has received any complaint or report against overcharging of fees and careless handling of produce by entrepreneurs of cold storage centres, if so, the action taken by Government thereon?

**Potential of FPIs to enhance farm productivity**

1380. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that Food Processing Industries (FPIs) have the potential to increase farm productivity for the farmers; and

(b) whether Government has initiated any work with the intention to enhance farm productivity, which in turn can enhance the farmers' income, if so, the details thereof?

**Status of finalization of MoP for appointment of Judges**

1381. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI  
REDDY:

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

(a) whether Government has finalized the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for appointment of Judges to the Supreme Court and the High Courts;

(b) if not, the reasons for the delay;

(c) whether the Supreme Court has also made observations on the delay in finalizing MoP;

(d) if so, the response of Government and by when the MoP would be ready; and

(e) how many High Courts are having Acting Chief Justices at present and by when regular incumbents would be appointed?

**Legislation on Triple Talaq**

1382. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI  
REDDY:

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

(a) whether Government proposes to bring in a draft legislation making instant Triple Talaq a non-bailable offence, with imprisonment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government has consulted State Governments also to seek their views on the proposed legislation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response of each State Government?

**Complaints of sexual harassment at workplace by women working in Judiciary**

1383. SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN:

SHRI A. U. SINGH DEO:

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

(a) whether Government maintains a State-wise record of complaints of sexual harassment at workplace by women working in Judiciary as per the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women in its Action Taken Report (2014) on the "Working Conditions of Women in Police Force"; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the number of such complaints received, disposed of, and the action taken against the implicated officials?

**Filling up of vacancies in High Court of Tamil Nadu**

1384. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has initiated any action to fill up the vacancies that are existing in High Court of Tamil Nadu, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has formulated any plan to fill up the vacancies in the High Courts in a time-bound manner, if so, the details thereof?

**Post offices under Rural Business and Access to Postal Network scheme**

1385. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Posts has proposed to open a number of sub-post offices and Branch post offices during the current financial year under the scheme "Rural Business and Access to Postal Network";

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of sub-post offices and Branch Post Offices opened so far, particularly in the State of Odisha;

(c) the time by which the number of remaining sub/Branch post offices are likely to be opened; and

(d) the details of funds sanctioned, released and utilised so far for the above purpose?

**Centralised recruitment of Judges for lower judiciary**

1386. SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sanctioned posts of Judges in the lower judiciary in the country;

(b) the number of posts which are lying vacant and since when, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether Government is considering evolving a centralised selection mechanism to recruit Judicial Officers for the lower judiciary to expedite and rationalize the process of selection; and

(d) the opinion of the Supreme Court and various State Governments in this regard?



**Sharing of expenditure on Fast Track Courts**

1387. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the present number of Fast Track Courts (FTCs) in each State and the policy regarding sharing of expenditure between the Centre and State Governments; and

(b) whether a large number of FTCs in various States have been closed due to issues related to sharing of expenditure, if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

**Appointment of Judges**

1388. SHRID. RAJA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 2.5 crore cases are pending in the courts across States as nearly 23 per cent of posts in lower judiciary remain vacant;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Supreme Court's time-frame for appointments in lower judiciary is not being followed by many States delaying the appointment of Judges;

(c) if so, the details of pending cases, the vacant posts of Judges and the time-frame fixed to fill up the vacancies, State-wise; and

(d) the measures being taken by Central Government to improve the situation?

**Pendency of cases and strength of Judges**

1389. SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending in the Supreme Court and various High Courts along with the details thereof;

(b) the total shortfall of Judges *vis-a-*

*vis* sanctioned strength in the Supreme Court and High Courts along with the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any time-line/policy for Government to process the names of Judges approved by the Collegium, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of such recommendations of the Collegium for appointment/transfer in the Supreme Court or High Courts which have not been processed further or withheld for more than a month along with the details thereof with names?

**Registration of Armed Forces' Service voters**

1390. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Armed Forces' Service voters registered as ordinary voters;

(b) the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the number of Armed Forces' Service personnel who voted during the last Assembly elections in Punjab, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Goa; and

(d) the number of Armed Forces' Service personnel registered and voted in the Assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat?

**Plan of action for disposal of pending cases**

1391. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending in courts for more than five years and ten years respectively;

(b) whether Government intends to reduce their number substantially within next few years;

(c) if so, the plan of action therefor; and

(d) if not, whether it would lead to justice delayed and thereby justice denied to people?

#### **Allowing proxy voting for NRIs**

1392. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to allow proxy voting for the NRIs but not for internal migrant voters, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) in what manner the Government plans to secure the secrecy of vote and ensure that there is no inducement of voters in case of proxy voting by NRIs;

(c) whether it is also a fact that, as per some media reports, a large number of overseas voters preferred for the secret postal ballot over proxy voting; and

(d) whether Government would consider seeking suggestions from overseas voters also before amending the Act?

#### **Setting up Independent Emoluments Commission for Salaries and Allowances of MPs**

1393. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Independent Emoluments Commission was recommended in 2015 for recommending salaries of MPs;

(b) if so, whether it has been set up; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and if so, the recommendations made by the Commission in its latest report regarding the hike or revision in salaries of MPs along with the details thereof?

#### **Cancellation of trains due to fog and cold**

1394. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:  
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of trains cancelled due to cold waves and fog during the last two years and in the current winter season, separately;

(b) the alternative arrangements made, in view of prior cancellation of certain trains;

(c) whether it is a fact that the trains from New Delhi to Punjab, South and Northwest India reached their destinations too late during the winter season;

(d) the details of such trains running late for more than two hours; and

(e) the steps taken by Railways considering the problems being faced by passengers due to late arrival and departure of trains?

#### **New railway projects in Himachal Pradesh**

1395. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the work done in Himachal Pradesh regarding laying of new railway lines, gauge conversion and electrification of railway lines during the last three years;

(b) the details of the sanctioned works for Himachal Pradesh which have not been started till date;

(c) the details of the work in the State running as on date but not completed yet; and

(d) whether Government has taken any concrete steps to complete the said works on time and if so, the details thereof?

**RoBs and RuBs in Himachal Pradesh**

1396. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of under construction/ pending Road over Bridges (RoBs) in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether implementation of these projects is being carried out as per schedule;

(c) if not, the reasons for delay, project-wise;

(d) the details of Road under Bridges (RuBs) and manned and unmanned level crossings in Himachal Pradesh;

(e) the number of sanctioned and operational RoBs/RuBs in Himachal Pradesh and the present status thereof; and

(f) the time by which the above said projects are likely to be completed?

**Upliftment of railway stations**

1397. SHRI SHWAIT MALIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the details of the proposed, sanctioned and on-going projects for the upliftment of railway stations at Amritsar, Attari, Chheharta, Khasa, Verka and Bhagtanwala?

**Conditions of old railway bridges**

1398. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has undertaken any survey to find out the conditions of railway bridges in the country, especially

in Punjab, which are hundred years old or more;

(b) if so, the details thereof, location-wise; and

(c) whether Government has identified such bridges to re-build on priority basis, if so, the details thereof?

**Electrification of railway network**

1399. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total railway network in the country that is yet to be electrified;

(b) whether Railways have prepared a plan to electrify its entire network;

(c) if so, by when the electrification of the entire network will be completed;

(d) whether Railways will involve State-run companies along with private companies to implement the electrification plan;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) whether Railways have taken any step to bring down its energy bill and if so, the details thereof?

**Status of track renewal**

1400. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the target of track renewal and actual renewal since 2014 onwards, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) the funds allocated for track renewal since 2014 onwards, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) the estimated time required to clear the backlogs; and

(d) in addition to track renewal for ensuring safety, whether the Ministry plans to replace all Lever-Frames and Semaphore signalling systems with Multiple Aspect Colour Lighting Systems or other advanced systems; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the estimated time by when Government expects to complete the process?

#### **Decline in number of train accidents**

1401. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there had been a decline in the number of train accidents over the last three years after Railways took a series of measures to improve safety;

(b) whether in 2014-15 the number of accidents were 135 which decreased to 107 in 2015-16 and 104 in 2016-17;

(c) whether safety measures including speedy track renewal, ultrasonic rail detection system, elimination of several unmanned level crossings have been undertaken on priority basis; and

(d) whether a special safety fund along with sophisticated LHB coaches with anti-climbing features have additionally helped to make train travel safer?

#### **Increase in investments for safety**

1402. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that investment for safety have increased by over 60 per cent during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the average vacancy in safety positions has dropped to 16.86 per cent in 2017 despite the 55 per cent increase in sanctioned strength from 2014 to 2017; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Revenue loss due to train accidents**

†1403. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of train accidents has increased after 2014;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if not, the details of revenue loss incurred due to train accidents during the last three years; and

(d) the steps taken to prevent train accidents?

#### **Increasing unreserved passenger coaches**

†1404. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the measures taken to increase the unreserved railway passenger coaches in passenger trains, commencement of new train services and to facilitate safe travel for the common train passengers travelling above 500 kilometres in the country; and

(b) with reference to (a) above, by when weekly Express rail service on every Sunday would be started for the convenience of pilgrims visiting Jyotirlinga at Mahakaleshwar, Ujjain and Omkareshwar, Indore from Delhi and Northern India?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Pit line at Kannur railway station**

1405. SHRI K.K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for pit line at Kannur railway station is under consideration; and

(b) whether any time-frame has been fixed for construction of the pit line?

**Backlog of SC, ST and OBC vacancies**

†1406. SHRI P.L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of staff employed in Group "A", "B" and "C" posts and the vacancies in different categories in Railways;

(b) the details of backlog vacancies in SC, ST and OBC categories;

(c) the details of the action plan to fill up backlog and regular vacancies to prevent train accidents from happening frequently and to run railways smoothly; and

(d) the details of the number of employees retired from Railways and the number of newly recruited employees during the last three years?

**Problems in booking of Tatkal tickets**

†1407. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH  
YADAV:  
SHRIMATI CHHAYA  
VERMA:  
SHRI VISHAMBHAR  
PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IRCTC

website of Railways got hung or became unreachable for few minutes at the time of issuing Tatkal tickets around Dussehra and Deepawali and by the time it became reachable, all the Tatkal tickets got booked;

(b) the step taken by the Ministry to solve such problems; and

(c) whether such problems are related to touts of Tatkal tickets?

**Real time monitoring of railway tracks**

1408. SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Railways is undertaking real-time monitoring of railway tracks across the railway network, if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) the details of train accidents and derailments due to faults in track alignments and gaps in tracks during the last three years and the current year; and

(c) the details of steps taken by the Ministry to stop these kind of accidents?

**Train accidents due to faulty method of laying tracks**

†1409. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that train accidents are happening on daily basis due to faulty method of laying tracks;

(b) if so, whether Government has given it any thought to remove the technical faults so far; and

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Vacant Group 'C' and 'D' posts**

†1410. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH  
YADAV:  
SHRIMATI CHHAYA  
VERMA:  
SHRI VISHAMBHAR  
PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacant group 'C' and 'D' posts in the security grade in the Railways;

(b) the details of breakup of these posts, Zone-wise; and

(c) by when the process of filling up of the above posts will be completed?

**Railway University in Andhra Pradesh**

1411. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh has sought establishment of one of the new Railway Universities in the State;

(b) if so, the response of Railways thereto; and

(c) by when these new Railway Universities will start functioning?

**Return of extra fare charged from passengers**

†1412. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Express, Superfast, Rajdhani, Duronto and Shatabdi trains, etc., in which Government charges more fare in comparison to other trains, that are reaching their destinations late, from April, 2017 to 15 November, 2017;

(b) whether Government proposes to return extra fare charged from the passengers owing to its failure;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government would consider to make such a provision for the trains reaching late in future in the interest of the passengers?

**Construction of manned and unmanned level crossings**

1413. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects for construction of manned/unmanned level crossings, Road over Bridges and Road under Bridges taken up across the country during the last three years;

(b) the details thereof, Zone-wise, and the present status of such crossings/bridges;

(c) the amount of cost escalation for the delay in the construction of said crossings/bridges during the said period and the details thereof, Zone-wise; and

(d) the other steps taken by Government to ensure timely construction of such crossings/bridges in the country?

**Allotment of rakes to Coal sector**

1414. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether preferential allotment of rakes to Coal sector by Railways has badly affected sectors like Cement, Steel and Iron Ore;

(b) whether this preferential allotment of rakes for movement of coal to power plants is to avoid power outage during winter/festive months;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether captive power producers, which are categorised under non-power category, are also feeling the impact of non-availability of rakes; and

(d) how soon the rake availability to all sectors will be restored?

#### **Operational diesel and electric locomotives**

†1415. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of diesel and electric locomotives operational in the country, Zone-wise;

(b) whether the diesel locomotives have been replaced with the electric locomotives on the recently electrified rail routes, if so, the details thereof, Zone-wise and State-wise;

(c) if so, whether it would reduce the travelling time of such trains; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Accidents at unmanned level crossings**

1416. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of innocent people are dying due to accidents at unmanned level crossings;

(b) the details of number of unmanned level crossings that have been converted into manned level crossings during the last three years, State and region-wise;

(c) the details of the number of deaths occurred in such accidents during the last three years, State-wise; and

(d) the preventive measures taken by

Government to stop such accidents leading to deaths of innocent people?

#### **Development of modern stations in Punjab**

1417. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of each railway station in Punjab which has been taken up to be developed as a modern station; and

(b) the details of each station?

#### **Cost and expenditure of Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet train**

1418. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bullet train project between Ahmedabad and Mumbai has commenced;

(b) if so, the total cost of the project and the expenditure incurred thereon, so far;

(c) the progress made in the project during the last three years ending 31 March, 2017;

(d) the targeted period of completion of this mega project;

(e) whether Railways, as announced, are considering to set up a separate rural network; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Food served in Mumbai-Goa Tejas Express**

1419. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

passengers of Mumbai-Goa Tejas Express train fell ill due to food poisoning after consuming food served by Railways recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that IRCTC gave clean chit to itself and instead, blamed the passengers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reasons for not conducting an impartial probe in the matter?

#### **Train from Ranchi to other major cities**

‡1420. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no train, so far, from Ranchi to Lucknow, Dehradun, Bhopal (Ujjain-Indore), Ahmedabad, Nagpur and Jaipur; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government will provide direct train services from Ranchi to all above-said major cities of the country, if so, by when?

#### **Alternate fuel for locomotives**

1421. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have speeded up plans to shift towards gas-fuelled locomotives;

(b) if so, the number of Diesel Electric Multiple Units (DEMU) currently running on CNG and planned conversions, Division-wise;

(c) the running cost to be saved by implementing alternate fuels and carbon footprint reduction target; and

(d) the details of target set for solar power and wind energy capacity and the timeline fixed by Railways?

#### **Websites/portals of Ministry of Railways**

1422. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many websites or portals are being managed and monitored currently by the Ministry of Railways, their URL details and the record of visitors' traffic in general and response mechanism for passenger complaints received through these portals since 2014; and

(b) how many Twitter handles and Facebook pages, if any are being maintained by the Ministry of Railways and its undertakings, the performance of these Twitter and Facebook accounts in general since they were opened and the performance monitoring mechanism of these accounts, if any?

#### **Provision of lower berths for senior citizens**

1423. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether senior citizens are provided lower berths in trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is no such provision for passenger booking tickets under dynamic fare system;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken to ensure availability of lower berths for citizens under all long distance superfast trains, including Duronto Express trains?

‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.



**Bullet train on overcrowded routes**

1424. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether 40 per cent of seats in trains on Mumbai-Ahmedabad route go vacant;
- (b) if so, the reasons for proposing Bullet train on the said route;
- (c) whether Government will introduce Bullet train on overcrowded New Delhi-Varanasi/Mughalsarai-Howrah route instead of Mumbai-Ahmedabad;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Low rates for goods transportation**

1425. SHRI SHANKARBHAI N. VEGAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry plans for low rates for the goods transportation; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

**Change in land possession policy**

1426. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has made major change in land possession policy for railway projects it proposes to undertake;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the reasons for arriving at this conclusion, which is considered as a major and important one?

**Generation of electricity from solar and wind energy**

1427. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ:  
SHRI R.  
VAITHILINGAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Railways plan to generate a total of 1000 MW of electricity through solar and 200 MW through wind energy in the coming years;
- (b) whether it is a fact that Railways will play an important role for the country to achieve reducing 35 per cent of its carbon emissions under the Paris Agreement; and
- (c) whether it is also a fact that Railways are also aiming to reduce its no traction use of electricity through efficient electrical usage at stations and offices, if so, the details thereof?

**Availability of bio-toilets in all trains**

1428. SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the bio-toilet facilities are available in all types of passenger trains and all coaches of trains, including general class coaches;
- (b) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Railways had given responsibility to private agency/agencies to clean the coaches of trains, including toilets; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

**Cleanliness at Sagauli railway station**

1429. DR. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether lack of cleanliness and sanitation at railway stations have been the biggest area of concern for railway passengers;
- (b) if so, whether, according to a survey by the Ministry, Sagauli railway station in

Bihar is among the top ten dirtiest stations in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof and measures taken to upgrade/modernise passenger amenities at the station;

(d) whether the Ministry has developed any monitoring mechanism to gauge improvement in cleanliness across stations;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

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

#### **Arbitrary charging by vendors**

†1430. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that railway vendors are charging arbitrarily from railway passengers;

(b) if so, whether Government has taken any step in this regard so far; and

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

#### **Category-wise vacancies in Railways**

1431. SHRI SHAMSHER SINGH DULLO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are large number of vacancies in Railways, including Northern Railway;

(b) if so, the details of vacant posts during the last three years, category-wise, and Zone-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that this is the main cause of frequent train accidents, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by Railways to fill up these vacancies on priority basis?

#### **Complaints against private catering companies**

†1432. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received by Railways against the catering companies for collecting excess prices than the prescribed ones and violation of guidelines during last three years till date, year-wise;

(b) whether any investigation is going on against such catering firms;

(c) if so, the names of such companies against which investigation is being carried out;

(d) whether some catering agencies are not serving the eatables as per approved contract; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and action taken against such agencies?

#### **Late running of trains**

1433. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 99 per cent of trains in the country are running late by over one hour;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that inadequate infrastructure and shortage of staff are the reasons for not meeting the new challenges of a fast developing economy;

(c) if so, the comparative employment study for the last five years and the vacancies during the last three years; and

(d) the proposal of Government to maintain on time schedule of trains in the country?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Wi-Fi facilities at railway stations of Karnataka**

1434. SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the list of stations that are provided with Wi-Fi facilities in the State of Karnataka during the last two years;

(b) whether it is a fact that Wi-Fi facilities are not only extended to 'A-1' and 'A' category railway stations but also to 'B' category stations; and

(c) if so, the details of 'B' category stations in Karnataka and by when Wi-Fi facilities at 'B' category stations are going to be provided?

**Decline in accidents at unmanned level crossings**

1435. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of train accidents as well as casualties at unmanned level crossings have come down during the last five years;

(b) whether as many as 6,169 unmanned level crossings have been eliminated during the last five years;

(c) whether as on April, 2017, the total number of unmanned level crossings under broadgauge were 4,943 and Railways intend to remove them in three years;

(d) whether Railways have set the target of elimination of 1,500 unmanned level crossings in 2017-18, 1500 in 2018-19 and 1943 in 2019-20; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

**Train between Thiruvananthapuram and Bengaluru**

1436. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the launching of a new train between Thiruvananthapuram and Bengaluru, declared in 2014 railway budget, is pending; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**Mechanized cleaning system at railway stations**

1437. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have decided to use a state-of-the-art mechanized cleaning system at railway stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the said system will now be used for comprehensive cleaning of all platforms, circulating areas and foot over bridges in the station premises; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Quality of food served in Tejas Express**

1438. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways' internal inquiry report has concluded that the quality of the food served on-board the Tejas Express was satisfactory;

(b) whether more than 25 passengers were hospitalized due to food poisoning

after consuming breakfast on the Tejas train between Goa and Mumbai;

(c) whether an omelette sample was not sent for testing and the omelette served to the passengers on-board the Tejas Express was the epidemic centre of the incident which led to hospitalization of more than 25 passengers; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

**Bulk purchases by Railways**

1439. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have decided to opt for bulk purchases and disburse payments within 30 days of all work orders;

(b) in the above context, whether the railway network needs at least 2000 escalators and each escalator costs Rupees one crore;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Railways propose to install CCTV cameras in all coaches and at railway stations; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Best and worst performing trains and zones**

1440. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE:  
DR. K. V. P.  
RAMACHANDRA  
RAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways are planning to let its passengers know about the best and worst performing trains and zones by giving them ranks based on their performance and service standards; and

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

NEW DELHI;  
*The 23rd December, 2017*  
*Pausha 2, 1939 (Saka)*

DESH DEEPAK VERMA,  
*Secretary-General.*

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