

enhanced the central assistance for non-recurring expenditure and made a provision for an additional amount of Rs. 8.60 lakh per court being given to the States for the first two years after 31.3.2005.

Central assistance to the States under the scheme is provided on the basis of the approved norm *i.e.* Rs. 4.80 lakh per court per annum towards the recurring expenditure. Some of the States have reported expenditure in excess of the assistance provided to them.

There is no proposal at present to increase the rate of Central assistance to the States for the Fast Track Courts.

High Court Bench at Thiruvananthapuram

1713. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI K.E. ISMAIL :

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

(a) whether the Kerala Government has been demanding, for a long time the establishment of a Bench of Kerala High Court at Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of that State;

(b) whether Government is aware that advocates of that city have been on an indefinite strike for more than a year on this demand; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government on this demand?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has received reports that the advocates of that city have been agitating for the establishment of a High Court Bench at Thiruvanthapuram.

(c) The Governor of Kerala has recommended establishment of a Bench of the Kerala High Court at Thiruvananthapuram. However, the then Chief Justice of Kerala High Court had intimated that the High Court does not approve the establishment of such a Bench as it is not suitable or feasible. Should the High Court be agreeable to change its stand, the matter would be reconsidered.

Corruption in judiciary

1714. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:

SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

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

(a) whether Government proposes to bring a legislation to tackle issues relating to accountability and corruption in the judiciary;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has received a large number of representations in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action contemplated by Government on such representations and its reaction to root out corruption from judiciary?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (e) Allegations of corruption in the higher judiciary have come to the notice of the Government from time to time. As for the subordinate judiciary, the administrative control over its members vests with the concerned High Courts and the State Governments as per the provisions of Article 235 of the Constitution of India.

The Government is in the process of preparing a road map for judicial reforms in the country. Consultations in this regard have already begun. Accountability in the judiciary is also one of the components of the judicial reforms. A decision in the matter will be taken on completion of the process of consultation.

Amendments in MMDR and MCR

†1715. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to bring amendments in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation), Act (MMDR) and Mining Concession Rules (MCR), for speedier and timely development of mineral resources available in States;

(b) if so, in which rules and sections;

(c) whether Government proposes to delegate all rights related to minerals mentioned in parts 'A' and 'C' of the MMDR Act to the States; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) The Government is considering a proposal to bring the legislative framework of the mineral and mines sector in consonance with the National Mineral Policy, 2008. Since the matter is at an interim stage, it is not possible at present to specify the nature and extent of changes in the legislative framework.

Illegal mining

1716. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of illegal mining detected during the last three years and the action taken against the culprits;

(b) whether the minerals and areas prone to illegal mining have been identified; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to stop illegal mining?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The number of cases of illegal mining detected in the last three years by State Governments is given below:-

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.