

(b) As per the data compiled by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), the total number of jails in the country at the end of 2007 was 1276. The total authorized capacity of these jails is 277304.

(c) With a view to reduce the overcrowding in jails, the Government of India has taken following measures:

- (i) Amendment in Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 by inserting a new article viz 436A on 23.6.2006 which provide that where an undertrial prisoner other than the one accused of an offence for which death has been prescribed as one of the punishments, has been under detention for a period extending to one-half of the maximum period of imprisonment, provided for the alleged offence, he should be released on his personal bond, with or without sureties. It also provides that in no case will an undertrial prisoner be detained beyond the maximum period of imprisonment for which he can be convicted for the alleged offence. Further, Section 436 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 has also been amended on 23.6.2006 to make a mandatory provision that if the arrested person is accused for a bailable offence and he is an indigent and cannot furnish surety, the Court shall release him on his execution of a bond without sureties.
- (ii) Setting up of Fast Track Courts for disposal of long pending cases.
- (iii) Introduction of scheme of Plea Bargaining from 5.7.2006.

Apart from the above steps, the Government of India has also initiated the process of formulating second phase of the scheme of Modernisation of Prisons after consultation with the States/UTs in the All India Conference of jail Ministers/Principle Secretaries (Prison)/DG/IG (Prisons) held in April 2008. Apart from other components being proposed in the second phase, the emphasis shall be laid on construction of new jails/additional barracks so as to address the problem of overcrowding.

Villages captured by Maoists in West Bengal

484. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV:

SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Maoists have captured hundreds of villages in West Bengal;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, Maoist activities and violence were recently reported in West Midnapore district of West Bengal. State Government has been dealing with the situation successfully and Central Government has supplemented the resources of the State Government in terms of deployment of Central Para-Military Forces, funds under Modernization of State Police Forces and Security Related Expenditure Schemes.