

elections even when trial is pending, provided charges have been framed against him by a competent court.

The Government then requested the Parliamentary Standing Committee to give its recommendations on the proposal of the Election Commission of India. The Committee in its Eighteenth Report on the subject *inter alia* disagreed with the aforesaid proposal as it is a major departure from the law of the land that a person is not guilty until he is convicted by the highest court of the land. The Committee, however, recommended that proclaimed absconders under section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 be disqualified from contesting polls. The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee was examined in consultation with other concerned Ministries and it was decided not to pursue the matter.

Assets of Members of Parliament

3308. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Members of Parliament who are multi-millionaires, at present, and enjoying all facilities as privileged persons, party-wise; and
- (b) the steps Government proposes to take against this distortion in the parliamentary democracy?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Funds for judicial reforms

3309. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether in an effort to initiate its judicial reforms agenda, his Ministry has sought funds for appointing approximately 15000 judges on contractual basis and setting up of additional judicial infrastructure in the country;
- (b) whether the Minister had met the Finance Minister and had discussed this ambitious judicial mission;
- (c) if so, whether his Ministry has got assurance for obtaining funds; and
- (d) if so, what are the total allocations made and what are the steps taken by his Ministry to utilize funds for judicial reforms?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (d) The Ministry had organized a National Consultation for Strengthening the Judiciary, Towards Reducing Pendency and Delays on 24-25 October, 2009 which was, among others, attended by the Union Finance Minister. In that Consultation, a Vision Statement was deliberated upon that included a component of Efficient utilization of the judicial system and existing infrastructure through effective manning, effective planning and timely management by increasing the use of technology and management methods suggesting the creation of fifteen thousand judge positions for a period of two years on contractual basis.

To realize the objectives set out in the Vision Document, the Ministry proposed to set up a National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms that would undertake several strategic initiatives to (i) outline policy changes (ii) re-engineer procedures (iii) focus on Human Resource Development and (iv) leverage Information and communication Technology and tools for better justice delivery. The Ministry also proposed the creation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to service the Mission. The proposal was also discussed with the Finance Minister, after which the Ministry sought and obtained 'in principle' approval, without any specific financial commitment, of the Government for commencing action on the various aspects of setting up the National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms and a SPV.

Increase in retirement age of judges

3310. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government would consider increasing the retirement age of judges by atleast three years in view of the huge backlog of cases pending in courts;
- (b) if so, whether this requires a constitutional amendment; and
- (c) whether Government would also consider curtailing long vacations for judges, considered a relic from colonial times, to make them dispose of more cases?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (c) Government, at present, is not considering to increase the age of retirement of Judges. Increasing the age of retirement of Judges would require amendments in Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India in accordance with the procedure laid down in article 368(2) of the Constitution of India.

Government does not have under consideration any proposal to curtail vacations in courts.

Independent legislation for CBI

3311. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether CBI has prepared any draft of an independent legislation for the consideration of his Ministry;
- (b) whether the draft has been examined;
- (c) the essential features of the provision in the draft; and
- (d) whether Government has decided to introduce an independent legislation to govern CBI instead of relying on an old archaic law?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) No draft of an independent legislation prepared by CBI has been received for the consideration of Ministry of Law and Justice.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.