

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Payment of wages to Mahamta Gandhi NREGA workers has been made mandatory through their accounts in banks/post offices by making an amendment in para 31 of Schedule-II of the Act. To cover gaps in financial services and outreach, Rural ATMs, hand held devices, smart cards, biometrics and business correspondent models have been initiated by some State Governments.

Assistance under IAY Scheme

1015. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE:

PROF. ANIL KUMAR SAHANI:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has finalised the definition of dwelling unit under Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) suitable for a healthy living in consultation with the Ministry of Health;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the enhanced amount of assistance under IAY is too low as per the existing cost of materials and construction;

(d) if so, the steps taken to enhance the assistance amount; and

(e) the number of persons provided assistance under IAY and those still awaiting assistance under IAY in Gopalganj district, Bihar and by when the remaining persons will be provided assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) and (b) The IAY guidelines provide that the plinth area of a IAY house should not be less than 20 square metres. The layout, size and type design of IAY dwelling units depend on the local conditions and the preference of the beneficiary. The houses are to be designed in accordance with the desire of the beneficiaries, keeping in view the climatic conditions and the need to provide ample space, kitchen, ventilation, sanitary latrine facilities, smokeless chulhas etc. Although Ministry of Health has not been consulted in the matter, a Task Force set up in the Ministry in July, 2009 for examining various issues related to construction of houses under IAY, had recommended, *inter alia*, that efforts should be made to ensure that the house is a pucca one with permanent walls and permanent roofing, the permanent nature of the walls and roofing to be determined in a manner that the house is:—

(i) able to withstand the weather conditions of the place throughout the year;

- (ii) It should have minimum level of disaster resistant technology to be able to withstand minor earthquakes, cyclone, flood etc.; and
- (iii) the walls are plastered at least externally.

It is also desirable that the house should have adequate space for pursuing livelihood activities, a verandah, a stair case to go to the top of the house and a rain water harvesting system.

The recommendations of the Task Force have been forwarded to all the States/UTs on 3rd February, 2010.

(c) and (d) The grant provided under IAY is the unit assistance and not the actual unit cost. The beneficiary is expected to put his own labour for construction of the house. The beneficiary can avail loan upto Rs. 20,000/- from a nationalized bank at an interest rate of 4% per annum under Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme. In addition, an IAY beneficiary can avail funds to the tune of Rs. 2200/- from the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) for construction of sanitary latrine. The Government has enhanced the unit assistance for IAY houses with effect from 1.4.2010 from Rs. 35,000/- to Rs. 45,000/- in plain areas and from Rs. 38,500/- to Rs. 48,500/- in hilly/difficult areas.

(e) According to the estimates made by the Registrar General of India based on 2001 Census, the housing shortage of Gopalganj district was 1,28,827 houses. Against this housing shortage, 1,10,589 houses have been constructed under IAY in the district since the year 2001-02. Targets under IAY are set on year to year basis depending upon the availability of funds.

Use of waterways to boost economic activities

1016. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the use of waterways is capable of generating employment, both directly and indirectly also trade and other economic activities which will enhance the economy of the North Eastern Region significantly; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI MUKUL ROY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. According to a study on "Economic gains of Cargo Movement through Inland Water Transport mode in National Waterway — 1 and 2" carried out by National Council of Applied Economic Research during 2006, the development of inland waterways have the potential for creating additional and other economic activities. However, no such specific study for North Eastern Region has been conducted.

Ports under consideration in the east coast of India

1017. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state: