

has also been constituted under the Chairmanship of Union Finance Minister to consider the issue of making a legal provision to deal with honour killings.

Funds granted for upgrading NRC in Assam

*483. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the present status, progress made as well as the steps taken by Government to upgrade the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, alongwith the total funds granted for the same;

(b) whether Government has proposed to introduce Unique Identification Number (UIN) in the State of Assam and other North Eastern States in parallel with NRC update; and

(c) if so, the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Clause 5 of the Assam Accord dated 15th August, 1985 mainly deals with the foreigners issue including detection of foreigners in Assam. Pursuant to the above, it was decided to take up a project on a pilot basis for updation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) 1951 in one Revenue Circle each of Barpeta and Kamrup Districts in the State of Assam. However, due to law and order problems in Barpeta, the work of updating the NRC was stopped. The State Government constituted a Cabinet Sub-Committee to look into the issues and to give recommendations on the guidelines/procedure to be followed for updation work. The Cabinet Sub-Committee is yet to submit its report. An amount of Rs. 5.02 crore was released to the Government of Assam during the period 2005-06 to 2008-09 for this purpose.

(b) and (c) Unique Identification Number is a separate project. Government of India has decided to create a National Population Register (NPR) for the whole country. All usual residents who are included in the NPR would be issued a Resident Identity Card. The Unique Identification Number for each resident would be incorporated in the Resident Identity Card issued to that person.

Status of India-GCC FTA

*484. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the present status of India-Gulf Cooperation (GCC) Free Trade Agreement;

(b) whether Government has evaluated the impact of India-GCC FTA; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) India is negotiating a Free Trade Agreement with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). So far, two rounds of negotiations have been held with GCC countries in Riyadh during 2006 and 2008, The third round of negotiations are to be held in India for which India has sought convenience of GCC for holding the meeting. The response from GCC is awaited.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has initiated the FTA negotiations after the study on feasibility of India-GCC FTA indicated that it will be in the interest of India to enter into FTA with GCC which is an important regional block in our neighbourhood. The study showed that there exists a large market in GCC countries for both industrial and agricultural products from India. Non diversified Industrial base in GCC offers trade complementarities between India and GCC which will result in increased trade. India will meet its long term energy requirement through secured economic relationship with GCC and GCC will gain in food security by its close association with India.

Claims pending with EPFO

*485. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that retired workers are subjected to inhuman sufferings due to inordinate delay in the settlement of their claims by the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO);

(b) if so, the State-wise detailed list of claim cases pending for settlement in the country;

(c) whether Government has made any study to ascertain the causes of the delay;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government proposes to take some special measures to expedite the settlement claims of retired workers;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) by when settlement claim cases would become normal?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE): (a) Representations/complaints/suggestions are being received from individuals/various forums regarding delay in settlement of claims by the Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO).

(b) The list of pending cases of claim settlement as on 30.08.2011 is given in the Statement (See below). A total of 21,66,935 claims are pending for settlement as on 30.08.2011.