

or imprisonment for life for the offence of murder. At present, there is no proposal to amend either the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 or the Indian Penal Code, 1860 for providing capital punishment to contract killers.

**Home guards grossly underpaid**

1776. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Home Guards in the country are grossly underpaid and under utilized;
- (b) if so, the average salary paid to them; and
- (c) what steps are proposed to be taken to strengthen the Home Guards organization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Home Guards in States/Union Territories are governed, employed and administered under the respective State Home Guards Acts and Rules. The organization of Home Guards has two component viz. permanent staff and volunteers. The permanent staff is paid salary by the State Governments where as the volunteers of Home Guards are paid training/duty allowance at varying rates fixed by the State Government.

The extent of utilization of the Home Guards is the prerogative of the State Governments as it is a State subject. Central Government usually requisition the services of Home Guards during Lok Sabha/Vidhan Sabha Election to assist administrative authorities of the State Governments for conduct of peaceful and fair elections.

(b) The average salary paid to Permanent Staff of Home Guards is same as other Government employees of equivalent grade depending upon State to State. The training/duty allowance paid to Home Guard Volunteers varies from Rs. 45/- to Rs. 300/- per day depending upon the State as Home Guards is a State subject.

(c) In view of the reply to part (a) above, it is for the State Governments to address this issue.

#### Modernization of fire services

1777. DR. K.V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the fire services in various States are out dated and do not have state of the art technology besides facing financial crunch; and

(b) if so, what steps are proposed to be taken to modernize the fire services across the country and provide the necessary grants to the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is a gap between the demand and supply of fire service across the country. 'Fire Services' is a State subject. As such, it is the primary responsibility of the State Governments/Municipal bodies to allocate sufficient resources for strengthening and equipping Fire Services.

The Government of India is supplementing the efforts of the States to modernize and strengthen the fire & rescue service in the country. The details of monetary assistance are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

(i)	Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Strengthening of Fire & Emergency Services (2009-2012)	200.00
(ii)	XIIIth Finance Commission grant (2010-2015) State-wise	
	• Andhra Pradesh	17.00
	• Haryana	100.00
	• Mizoram	20.00
	• Orissa	150.00