

(d) if so, the action taken by Government so far on the recommendations of the Review Committee?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) As per University Grants Commission (UGC) (Minimum qualifications required for the appointment and Career Advancement of teachers in Universities and Institutions affiliated to it) (3rd Amendment), Regulation 2009, National Eligibility Test (NET)/State Level Eligibility Test (SLET) shall remain the minimum eligibility condition for recruitment and appointment of Lecturers in Universities/Colleges/Institutions, provided that candidates, who are or have been awarded Ph.D Degree in compliance of the University Grants Commission (minimum standards and procedure for award of Ph.D. Degree), Regulation 2009, shall be exempted from the requirement of the minimum eligibility condition of NET/SLET for recruitment and appointment of Assistant Professor or equivalent positions in Universities/Colleges/Institutions.

(b) UGC has issued instructions in August, 2009, keeping in view the public interest, that, as an *ad-hoc* measure, the concerned Universities, colleges and institutions may decide at their level, as to whether the Degree of Ph.D. awarded to various candidates (prior to 11th July, 2009) was in compliance to the provisions of University Grants Commission (Minimum Standards and Procedures for Award of M.Phil/Ph.D. Degree), Regulation 2009, so as to exempt them from requirement of NET/SLET.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Certification of telecom towers

*344. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been increasing concerns over emissions by telecom towers and their adverse implications on people's health;

(b) whether despite missing several deadlines, telecom companies have still not been able to certify over one lakh telecom towers on radiation emission levels; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Sir, Government of India has adopted the basic restriction and limiting reference levels of Electromagnetic radiation from Mobile towers prescribed by International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). *Vide* letter No. 800-15/2010-VAS dated 8th April, 2010, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed all the Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS)/Unified Access Service (UAS) licensees for compliance of the reference limits/levels prescribed by ICNIRP by way of self certification of their Base Transmitting Station (BTS) for meeting the EMF radiations norms.

World Health Organization in its Fact Sheet No. 304, May, 2006 on Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) and Public Health (Base Stations and Wireless Technologies) has concluded that considering the very low exposure levels and research results collected to date, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak RF Signals from base stations and wireless networks caused adverse health effects. From all evidence accumulated so far, no adverse short or long term health effects have been shown to occur from the RF Signals produced by based stations.

However, based on media reports and growing concern about the radiation from mobile towers, DoT had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee consisting of officers from DoT, Indian Council of Medical Research, Ministry of Health, Department of Biotechnology and Ministry of Environment and Forests on 24.08.2010 to examine, *inter-alia*, the effect of EMF Radiation from base stations.

Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) in its report has indicated that most of the laboratory studies were unable to find a direct link between exposure to radio frequency radiation and health; and the scientific studies as yet have not been able to confirm a cause-and-effect relationship between radio frequency radiation and health. The effect of emission from cell phone towers is not known yet with certainty. Further, the committee has suggested certain safeguards including lowering the BTS Radio Frequency (RF) exposure limits to 1/10th of the existing level. The recommendations of the Committee have been accepted for implementation.

(b) and (c) As on 30.09.2011, there are 6,80,465 Base Transmitting Stations (BTS) in the country and self certifications have been submitted for 6,64,825 BTS by the telecom service providers. For delay in submission of self certification, the action against the defaulting telecom service providers is under consideration in the Department.

Railway projects in Maharashtra

*345. DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government of Maharashtra has submitted 35 railway projects for releasing funds for the ongoing and new works in the State;
- (b) whether any budgetary provision has been made for these projects; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): (a) No, Sir. However, a reference was received from Chief Minister, Maharashtra in December, 2009 regarding 12 new lines, 2 gauge conversion and 4 doubling projects. Out of these, Miraj-Latur gauge conversion has already been completed and works are in progress on 7 more projects as per the availability of resources. Out of the remaining works, surveys have been completed for 5 proposals and surveys are in progress for 3 proposals.