

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.

(b) During 2011-12, an outlay of ` 421.19 crore has been provided for all 8 sanctioned projects as mentioned in (a) above. However, for all the projects falling fully/partly in Maharashtra, an outlay of ` 696.17 crore has been provided.

(c) Does not arise.

#### **Suicides by farmers in Vidarbha**

\*346. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, despite Government's announcement for two relief packages for Vidarbha, suicides by farmers still continue in the region;

(b) if so, how many suicides took place in the last three years upto November, 2011;

(c) the details of those who committed suicide, district-wise, caste-wise and religion-wise;

(d) whether Central Government has any alternative policy to check the crisis effectively as the malaise lies deeper; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Details regarding number of suicides by farmers due to agrarian reasons, year-wise and district-wise in last three years upto November, 2011 in Vidarbha region districts monitored under Rehabilitation Package, as furnished by Government of Maharashtra, are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) Government of Maharashtra has informed that from 2001 to November 30, 2009, proportion of suicide by farmers due to agrarian reasons among various castes works out to 11.39% (Scheduled Caste), 8.02% (Scheduled Tribe), 16.60% (Vimukta Jati Nomadic Tribe), 52.74% (Other Backward Class) and 11.25% (Open).

(d) and (e) Government of India implemented Rehabilitation Package comprising immediate and medium-term measures to alleviate agrarian distress in identified districts of Vidarbha region for which Rs. 4388.88 crore has been released as on 30.06.2011. Benefits on account of implementation of Package include interest waiver, creation of irrigation potential, coverage under micro-irrigation, construction of check-dams, watershed development, etc.

Central Government has approved National Policy for Farmers (NPF), 2007, which seeks to address comprehensively various constraints faced by farmers. Provisions of NPF, 2007 are being implemented through various ongoing programmes and schemes of Government to revitalize agriculture and allied sectors and ameliorate condition of farmers, which, *inter-alia*, include:—