

effective implementation of the Act. The Ministry has also been issuing guidelines/clarifications in this regard.

### **Splitting of OBC into Sub-Groups BC and MBC**

\*225. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Planning Commission constituted a Working Group on 7 April, 2011 on empowerment of Other Backward Classes and one of the sub-groups has suggested that legal measures may be taken to categories OBCs into two sub-groups – Backward Class (BC) and Most Backward Class (MBC) – on the basis of their social, economic and educational status;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's decision thereon;

(c) the reasons advanced for splitting of OBC into sub-groups; and

(d) whether a similar splitting is contemplated amongst SCs and STs as well?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The working Group has not provided any further details in regard to the recommendation mentioned in part (a) of the question, and no decision has been taken on it.

(d) Views of the State Governments/Union Territories have been invited on the question of sub-categorising Scheduled Castes. As regards Scheduled Tribes, there is no such proposal.

### **Brahmaputra Waterways Project**

\*226. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of Brahmaputra waterways project; and

(b) by when this waterways would be commercially operative?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN) : (a) and (b) The Dhubri to Sadiya stretch of River Brahmaputra has been declared as National Waterway and the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is developing and maintaining various inland water transport infrastructure such as (i) navigational channel with targeted depth and width in various sub-stretches of the waterway, (ii) navigational aids for day and night navigation and (iii) fixed and floating terminals at different locations to facilitate navigation thereon. Various types of vessels are already plying on this waterway carrying different types of cargo. Besides, some inland vessels carrying tourists also ply on the waterway from time to time.