

Drought in Bihar

†2983. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a condition of drought in most parts of Bihar due to scanty rainfall; and

(b) whether Government would declare Bihar as a drought affected State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) As per the India Meteorological Department (IMD) report, as on 3rd September, 2012, Bihar has received 59.68 cm of rainfall as against the normal rainfall of 82.46 cm which is deficient by -28 %.

(b) As per the established procedure, drought affected districts/talukas is declared/notified by the State Government.

Evasion of service tax by pharmaceutical companies

2984. SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has noticed several cases where manufacturers of pharmaceutical products did not pay the applicable service tax worth hundreds of crores of rupees;

(b) if so, the action taken to recover the dues from such unscrupulous manufacturers; and

(c) the steps taken to check evasion of service tax by pharmaceutical companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per information provided by Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue necessary action to safeguard the Government revenue has been taken as per the provisions of Finance Act, 1994 (as amended) and Service Tax Rule, 1994. Show Cause Notices have been issued to such manufacturers for recovery of Service Tax invoking deterrent penalties and interest.

(c) In order to check evasion, more focus is being provided towards collection of intelligence, intensive audits and anti-evasion checks. Resources have also been taken to educate the tax payers to increase level of compliance. The Audit wing has been directed to thoroughly verify the records of pharmaceutical companies during their visit so as to detect evasion if any, by the concerned companies.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.