

- (c) the role of the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA DEO):

- (a) and (b) Information is being obtained.

(c) Instructions are issued from time to time for the implementation of the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. Under a plan scheme administered by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, financial assistance is provided to State Governments of provision of barrier free access in public buildings at State and major District headquarters.

Education loans by nationalised banks

*82. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a time-frame has been prescribed for the sanctioning of education loans by nationalised banks;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether complaints have been received regarding delay in sanctioning of educational loans across the country;
- (e) if so, the number of complaints that have been received in the last year; and
- (f) the course of action that has been recommended for the same?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Model Educational Loan Scheme of Indian Banks' Association (IBA) provides that applications for educational loans received by the banks are disposed off, in the normal course, within a period of 15 days to 1 month.

(d) to (f) Public Sector Banks received 5199 complaints during 2011-12, out of which 5017 were disposed of and 182 are pending. Complaints regarding delay in sanction of educational loans, as and when received by the concerned banks, are taken up for corrective measures.

Starting of Mini Passport Seva Kendras

*83. SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any Government scheme to start Mini Passport Seva Kendras;
- (b) if so, whether Government has received any application/proposal for starting Mini Passport Seva Kendra in Bhavnagar; and

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has received a number of requests from representatives of the public and other forums to establish Passport Seva Kendras/Mini Passport Seva Kendras (Passport Seva Laghu Kendras) in several locations, including Bhavnagar. The National Institute for Smart Government (NISG) who had earlier done the detailed Project Report for the Passport Seva Project, has been approached to examine all such proposals and advise the Government in this regard.

Survey of destitute women

†*84. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of widows, deserted and destitute women in Uttarakhand and other States, State-wise;

(b) whether Government has made or proposes to make any new survey about such destitute women who are living separately from their husbands even though they were not given divorce;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of such women in the country, State-wise; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for the welfare of such women by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) As per 2001 census, there are 34.29 million widows and 2.34 million divorced/separated women in the country. Economic status of such women is not reflected in the census. State-wise number of widows, divorced/separated women including Uttarakhand as per 2001 census is given in Statement (*See below*).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

(e) The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing following three schemes for welfare of women including destitute women:—

(i) Swadhar scheme to provide primary need of shelter, food, medical care, counseling etc to women in difficult circumstances.

(ii) Short Stay Homes to rehabilitate women who are facing social, economic and emotional setback due to family problems, social ostracism etc being implemented by the Central Social Welfare Board.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.