

Wagon requirement by Railways

*16. SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have chalked out plans to meet its future wagon requirement;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the expected number of wagons to be required by the end of 2012-13 and 2013-14;

(c) whether there is any shortfall in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard to mitigate this shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. For the year 2012-13, Railways have planned to acquire 16000 wagons (vehicle units) for commercial use. The requirement for the year 2013-14 has also been provisionally planned as 16000 wagons.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Fee hike in IITs

*17. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the premier Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Council has decided to raise academic fee from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 90,000 a year, a rise of 80 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the decision to raise the fee has come at a time when the budget for higher education has been slashed and the existing fee covers barely 20 per cent of the cost; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Council of IITs in its 46th meeting held on

7th January, 2013 has decided to revise the fee for Under Graduate (UG) students of IITs to Rs. 90,000 per annum from Rs.50,000 per annum. The revised rates would be applicable for the new entrants for UG programmes from the academic year 2013. The fee structure would be reviewed every year.

(c) and (d) Decision to raise the fee for under graduate students of IITs do not have any link with the decrease of budget for higher education at Revised Estimate (RE) stage of the current financial year. As per the analysis made by the report of Dr. Kakodkar Committee on "Taking IITs to Excellence and Greater Relevance", the fee covered only 7.5% of the revenue expenditure during the year 2010.

Miserable condition of farmers in Assam

*18. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the condition of farmers in Assam is very miserable;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken by Government for improvement of their financial condition;

(c) whether heavy floods are a major factor for poor financial condition of farmers in Assam;

(d) if so, whether Government has any plan for tackling such natural calamities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Disproportionate pressure of population on agriculture resulting *inter-alia* in low per capita income in farm sector, disparity between per capita income in farm sector and non-farm sector and other constraints such as preponderance of small and marginal holdings, imperfect market conditions and lack of backward and forward linkages adversely affect income levels of farmers, including farmers in Assam.

In addition to various developmental interventions such as National Food Security Mission, National Horticulture Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Technology Mission on Horticulture for North Eastern States, Bringing Green