

Delivery of speed posts and parcels

*457. SHRI A.U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is taking steps to curb the delay in delivery of speed posts and parcels in rural parts of the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has any plan to reduce the rates of speed posts, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) A majority of Speed Post and Parcel articles is delivered within the norms prescribed by the Department. However, occasional delay in delivery of mail occurs. In order to curb the delay in delivery of Speed Post articles, the network for Speed Post operations in both urban and rural areas has been restructured and the processes streamlined. Mail arrangements between mail offices and post offices in rural areas have been strengthened for expeditious delivery of mail. An online monitoring system has been developed to monitor the entire spectrum of mail operations from booking to delivery. Reasons for delay are regularly analyzed and remedial action taken. Performance of Post Offices and mail offices with respect to mail services is also reviewed through fortnightly video conference. Online tracking service of Speed Post articles has been made available for facility of customers. Computerized processing of parcels at mail offices is being introduced, and an online tracking facility is being extended for parcels both in urban and rural areas.

(b) There is no plan to reduce the rates of Speed Post.

(c) Due to cost of operations, reduction in the current rates of Speed Post is not viable.

Budgetary provision for women farmers

*458. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to make special budgetary provision for women farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The guidelines of various schemes including Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture, Extension Reforms Scheme, National Food Security Mission, National Mission on Oilseeds & Oil-Palm and National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture stipulate that States and other Implementing Agencies are required to incur at least 30% expenditure on women farmers. 'Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana' (MKSP), which is a sub-component of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), has special budgetary provisions to meet the specific needs of women farmers and help them achieve socio economic and technical empowerment.

Delhi-Dibrugarh Rajdhani train accident

*459. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Delhi-Dibrugarh Rajdhani train accident that took place in the last week of June, 2014;
- (b) whether it is mandatory that every Rajdhani train is preceded by a pilot engine;
- (c) if so, whether it is a fact that there was no pilot engine before Delhi-Dibrugarh Rajdhani train; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI D. V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) On 25.06.2014 at 02.12 hours, while the Train No.12236 Dn New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express was running between Chhapra Kacheri and Goldenganj stations on Chhapra-Sonepur Section of Sonepur Division of East Central Railway, its locomotive alongwith 12 coaches next to train engine derailed, out of which 5 coaches capsized.

(b) No, Sir. Indian Railways do not operate pilot engines ahead of important trains including Rajdhani Express services under normal situations. However, these are required to be run, as and when advisories regarding security threats, are received by the Railways, from the State Authorities/Government Railway Police, to run the same on sectors and for durations, indicated therein.

(c) and (d) Pilot Engine/Goods train was not run before 12236 New Delhi-Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express on 25.06.2014 between Chhapra-Hajipur section, as there was no