

in respect of offences specified in section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, a person gets disqualified for being chosen as and for being a member of Parliament or State Legislatures.

(b) As per the provisional data issued by the Election Commission, total of 8251 candidates have contested on a party ticket in general elections to Lok Sabha-2014 and the only mechanism to check their criminal antecedents is to go through all the affidavits filed before the concerned returning officers which itself is a gigantic task and cannot be completed in a given time-frame. There is no compilation available with the Government containing the details of persons having criminal background being elected in recent parliamentary election.

(c) Recently, the Law Commission of India submitted its 244<sup>th</sup> Report on Electoral Disqualification which *inter alia* includes disqualification for being chosen as and for being a member of Legislature on framing of charges by a competent court prior to one year from the date of scrutiny of nominations in cases concerning any offence punishable with imprisonment of five years or more. The said report is being examined.

#### **Law colleges**

447. SHRI BASAWARAJ PATIL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of law colleges functioning in the country and the details thereof;
- (b) the system of extension of renewal of permission/approval of law colleges;
- (c) the authority which accords such permission/approval; and
- (d) the steps Government proposes to take to control such authority, which is not working properly?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Central funding for setting up of Fast Track Courts**

448. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any plan to restart Central funding for setting up of Fast Track Courts (FTCs) in States which was done away in the year 2011; if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether Government would extend strategic and financial help to States to set

up Fast Track Courts particularly when States have been asked to set up such Courts for trial of rape cases as well as offences against women, children, differently abled persons, senior citizens and marginalized sections of the society; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has decided to provide funds on a matching basis upto 31.03.2015 from the Thirteenth Finance Commission Award for salaries of the 10% additional positions of Judges being created in the subordinate Judiciary following the direction of Supreme Court in the case of *Brij Mohan Lal Vs. Union of India*. The State Governments and Chief Justices of High Courts have been requested that they may utilise these positions for creation of Fast Track Courts also.

In the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices held in New Delhi on 7th April, 2013, it has been resolved that the State Governments shall, in consultation with the Chief Justices of the respective High Courts, take necessary steps to establish suitable number of Fast Track Courts relating to offences against women, children, differently abled persons, senior citizens and marginalized sections of the society and provide adequate funds for the purpose of creating and continuing Fast Track Courts.

#### **Vacancies of Supreme Court Judges**

449. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies of judges that exist in Supreme Court of the country;

(b) whether Government has taken any steps to fill these vacancies, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the collegium has submitted any panel of lawyers and High Court Judges for elevation to the Supreme Court;

(d) if so, whether Government has accepted these proposals; and

(e) if not, the reasons for rejecting any of these names?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Against a sanctioned strength of 31 judges including that of Chief Justice of India,