Amendment in the Disability Act

*330. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is contemplating to amend the existing Disability Act, if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor;

- (b) whether Government had held any discussions with the NGOs, State Governments etc., if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the likely time by which amendments would be made in the Act, for the sake of visually-impaired and physically challenged?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT): (a) A Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Sudha Kaul was set up by the Central Government on 30.01.2010 consisting of experts in disability sector, representatives of various stakeholders, Central Ministries, State Governments, Non-Governmental Organizations etc. to prepare a draft legislation in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) to replace the existing Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) (PwD) Act, 1995.

- (b) Before submitting its report alongwith the draft Bill on 30.06.2011, the said Committee held meetings that included National Consultation with Civil Society representatives and consultation with Legal Experts; and State Consultation in 28 States and two Union Territories across the Country to seek the views of Stakeholders. The Ministry placed the draft Bill in public domain in its website inviting comments/ suggestions of the general public. Thereafter extensive consultations were held with Central Ministries/Departments, State Governments and UTs.
- (c) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2014 was introduced in Rajya Sabha on 07.02.2014. Subsequently, certain Disability Associations expressed their views for making changes in the said Bill. The Government also gave Notice for moving amendments to the Bill, but these amendments could not be moved as Parliament had adjourned *sine die*. Meanwhile the Bill was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee for examination and report.

Time-frame for enactment of the proposed legislation dealing with various disabilities including physical and visual impairments cannot be envisaged at this stage.

Non-Government members in NBWL panel

- *331. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:
- (a) whether it is a fact that the National Board for Wild Life (NBWL) under the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972 has been reconstituted without the mandatory non-Government members in the panel;