

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is considering to set up over 1,000 ATMs in three months for the convenience of post office savings bank customers, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Government is digitally connecting all 1,29,323 Gramin Dak Sewak Post offices in rural areas.

(b) The Rural Information and Communication Technology (RICT) segment under the IT Modernization Project of Department of Posts, which is under implementation phase, will digitally connect 1,29,323 Gramin Dak Sewak Post Offices in rural areas across the country by March, 2017.

Core Banking Service (CBS) is being implemented in all 25,297 Departmental Post Offices of the country. The progress so far made in migration of post offices to CBS platform is as below:

As on 31st May, 2014	:	236 POs
June, 14 to 29-02-16	:	17995 POs
TOTAL	:	18231 POs

The RICT project is in its implementation phase. The software is under development. Once RICT is deployed in Gramin Dak Sewak Post Offices, in rural areas, they will be connected to CBS also. Hence, all the post offices in the country (Departmental and Gramin Dak Sewak Post Offices) will work on common Core Banking platform.

(c) Yes, Sir. Department of Posts is also setting up ATMs (Automated Teller Machine) with the Core Banking Services for the convenience of post office customers. By March, 2016, One thousand ATMs are planned to be installed. The progress made so far in installation of ATMs is as below:

As on 31st May, 2014	:	04 ATMs
June, 14 to 29-02-16	:	572 ATMs
TOTAL	:	576 ATMs

Sponsoring agriculture extension personnel/farmers abroad

*103. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has sponsored Agriculture Extension personnel/farmers outside the country for their exposure and capacity building; and

(b) if so, the number of farmers/ personnel sponsored to different countries during

the last three years and the current year, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Farmers'/technical staff were sponsored for exposure visits under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) programme and under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) have sponsored visits under ASEAN-India Farmers' Exchange Program organized from Indian side during the period from 14th to 23rd April 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Indian Farmers' Delegation to Malaysia was organized by Agricultural Extension Division of the ICAR in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Agro-based Industry, Malaysia and the ASEAN Secretariat located at Jakarta, Indonesia.

The delegation visited various agricultural projects in Malaysia including interaction with successful farmers' in agricultural projects in Malaysia. The Delegation comprised 18 farmers' from 17 States namely Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar, Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Farmers also visited countries outside India under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH). MIDH is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme being implemented during Twelfth Plan *w.e.f.* 2014-15, for holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo.

Details of State-wise and year-wise number of farmers' exposure visit outside inputs/training/study tour of Technical staff/field functionaries under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) is given in the Statement.

Statement

Details indicating State-wise and year-wise number of farmers' exposure visit outside and inputs/training/study tour of Technical staff under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)

Sl. No.	State	No. of Farmers/Field Functionaries			
		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Gujarat	4	5	6	-

1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Haryana	10	20	2	-
3.	Punjab	2	16	7	1
4.	Rajasthan	-	2	-	-
5.	Assam	3	1	-	-
6.	Goa	-	-	4	-
7.	Maharashtra	9	-	-	-
8.	Telangana	-	-	-	1

Separate Ministry for pharma and medical devices sector

*104. DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government recognizes the pharma sector as a sunshine industry having a tremendous potential for growth;

(b) whether Government is considering to set up a separate Ministry for pharma and medical devices sector in the next one year; and

(c) whether Government is considering to implement the recommendations of the Katoch Committee to cut bulk drugs import from China to help pharma industry in the country, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI ANANTHKUMAR):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Considering the potential of the Pharmaceuticals Sector, Government is contemplating a proposal to have a separate Ministry for Pharmaceuticals Sector.

(c) The Government is examining the recommendations of the Katoch Committee, which had the mandate to carefully study the whole issue of APIs of critical importance by identifying important APIs and then working out a package of interventions/concessions required to build domestic production capabilities and examine the cost implications. The Committee has since submitted its recommendation which *inter-alia* mentions establishment of Mega Parks for APIs with common facilities such as common