

employment of 50 days over and above the 100 days per household in the areas affected by natural calamities including drought during 2015-16. During 2015-16 and 2016-17, ₹ 18715.011 crore and ₹ 9367.196 crore have been released respectively to the drought hit states under MGNREGA.

- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DW&S) has also released ₹ 2622.53 crore during 2015-16 to the above 11 drought affected States under National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) and allowed the States to use flexi funds to the extent of 10% of NRDWP for provision of water at the onset of the summer season.
- In order to protect farmers against crop failure due to natural calamities, pests and diseases, weather conditions, Government of India recently introduced the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for implementation from Kharif 2016.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has also issued Standing Guidelines for Relief Measures to be provided by respective lending institutions in areas affected by natural calamities which, *inter alia*, include identification of beneficiaries, restructuring of existing loans, extending fresh loans, relaxed security and margin norms, moratorium, etc. The Guidelines have been so designed that the moment calamity is declared by the concerned District Authorities they are automatically set in motion without any intervention of RBI, thus saving precious time. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.
- The Central Government has released the 1st installment of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) 2016-17, amounting ₹2551.875 crore, in advance to the drought affected States, *i.e.* Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan).

Opening of seed bank at Panchayat level

2269. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR SWAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any plan to open Seed Bank at Panchayat level; and

- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) and (b) The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare has no plan to open Seed Bank at Panchayat level. However, National and State seed producing agencies are opening seed banks at regional level for easy movement of seeds in case of calamities/unforeseen conditions.

Setting up of new KVKs and ATRIs

2270. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has decided to set up new Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and new Agricultural Technology Research Institutes (ATRIs), if so, the details thereof; and

- (b) how many of these are proposed to be set up in Maharashtra with details of their location?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has approved for setting-up of 109 new KVKs in the country. Three new Agricultural Technology Research Application Institutes (ATRIs) have also been approved for setting up at Patna in Bihar; Guwahati in Assam; and Pune in Maharashtra. The location-wise and State-wise details of districts for setting up of new KVKs including Maharashtra are given in the Statement.