

(b) the details of countries to which India offered e-Visas and whether there are any plans to extend it to other countries;

(c) whether any consultations have been held with Ministry of Tourism about extension of e-Visas to other countries, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) to what extent introduction of e-Visa scheme helps in increasing tourism in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJJU): (a) The e-Visa Scheme will facilitate entry of foreigners for tourism, business and medical purposes.

(b) to (d) The e-Visa facility has been extended to 161 countries. Review of visa policy to include more countries under e-visa regime is a continuous process and decided in consultation with all the stake holders on the considerations of reciprocity, security and national interests. E-tourist visa entitles the foreigner to undertake recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends/relatives and attending a short term Yoga programme. More than 15 Lac E-visa have been issued till 2016 since introduction of e-tourist visa regime in Nov, 2014.

#### **Vacancy of IPS officers in Telangana**

1499. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of the 112 total authorized strength of IPS officers in Telangana, there are 16 vacancies as on January, 2016;

(b) if so, the reasons for such huge vacancies and does it not hamper running administration and law and order problem; and

(c) what efforts Government is making to fill the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJJU): (a) Yes, Sir. As on 01.01.2016, total 96 IPS officers are in position against sanctioned strength of 112 in Telangana.

(b) and (c) Vacancies in the service are caused due to factors such as retirement, resignation, death, removal from service etc., which are recurring in nature and relative with the rate of recruitment. To fill up the vacancies of IPS officers, the batch-size of IPS (direct recruit) has been increased from 88 to 103 from CSE, 2005, to 130 from CSE, 2008 and to 150 from CSE, 2009. Besides the above, the process of appointments to the Indian Police Service by promotion from State Police Service has been accelerated.