

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (d) The Government of India does not implement any plan scheme for setting up of Special Benches of High Courts in various States and therefore no funds are earmarked for the same.

In its report, the Jaswant Singh Commission suggested the broad principles and criteria to be followed while deciding the question of expediency and desirability of establishment of a Bench of the High Court away from the principal seat and the factors to be kept in view in selecting the venue of the said Bench. The report of the Commission was placed in the Parliament Library on 15.10.86 and was laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha on 20.4.87 and 21.4.87 respectively, which may be referred to.

Setting up of a Bench of a High Court away from its principal seat is considered in the light of these principles and criteria as and when a complete proposal is received from the concerned State Government with the consent of the Chief Justice of that High Court.

Electoral reforms

2037. SHRI T.S. BAJWA.
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRIDATTAMEGHE:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has sent a report to Government recommending a series of measures for effecting electoral reforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to initiate the process of a national consensus in the matter and take further follow-up action in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Election

[23 August, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

Commission of India has recently forwarded to the Government a set of 22 proposals on electoral reforms, the details of which have been made available for general information of the public by the Commission's Press Note No. ECI/PN/26/2004 dated 2.8.2004.

(c) and (d) The Government is committed to continuing the process of reform of electoral laws and shall consider the proposals of the Election Commission in this regard in proper perspective. The process of reform of electoral laws is, however, a continuous and ongoing process and can be carried out only through consensus among political parties, which is a time consuming process.

Ban on entry of criminals in politics

†2038. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has requested Government to check the entry of criminals in politics;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken a decision to take action in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when the same is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has received a set of proposals on electoral reforms from the Election Commission of India, which, *inter alia*, includes the proposal for checking the entry of criminals in politics. A Statement containing the said proposal is enclosed (See below).

(c) and (d) The said proposal is under consideration of the Government.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.