

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The Election Commission has informed that there is no proposal to make it mandatory to link all Voters' I Cards with Aadhaar number.

Election Commission's recommendations on electoral reforms

1555. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any set of recommendations from the Election Commission on electoral reforms and other related matters; and

(b) whether these recommendations have been examined, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Electoral Reforms is a continuous and ongoing process. The Election Commission has been taking up such proposals at different points of time in the past. However, in the year 2013, the issue of electoral reforms in its entirety was referred to the Law Commission of India. The Law Commission has submitted its 244th and 255th Reports containing various recommendations on electoral reforms, which are under consideration of the Government.

Deadline to declare party funding sources

1556. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has extended the deadline to declare party funding sources, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government has, so far, not issued any Show Cause Notices to political parties in this regard; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that whatever communications sent to political parties were just a routine practice, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) The deadline to declare party funding source has not been extended.

(c) The Election Commission has informed that they have instructed all political parties to submit their Annual Audited Accounts before 31st October of each year. The recognized political parties are required to file their Contribution Reports in Form 24A by 30th of September of each year as per section 29C of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The Commission also issued reminders to concerned political

parties to submit their Annual Audit and Contribution Reports in case the same are not filed within the time prescribed.

National level examination for selection of Judges

1557. SHRI K.C. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court is planning to conduct NEET-like All India test to select Judges in the country;

(b) whether views from States have been sought by the Supreme Court regarding this;

(c) whether States are opposing an All India Judicial Service since, 1990; and

(d) if so, the manner in which the Ministry plans to go ahead?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) It is observed that number of vacancies of Judges and Judicial Officers in District and Subordinate Courts has increased from 4,589 in 2014 to 5,875 in 2016. The large number of vacancies is hampering reduction in pendency of cases in District and Subordinate Courts to a large extent. Though appointment of Judges and Judicial Officers in the District and Subordinate Courts falls within the domain of the High Courts and State Governments concerned in which the Central Government has no role, in order to facilitate regular filling up of these vacancies in a smooth and time-bound manner, the Department of Justice *vide* its letter dated 28th April, 2017 suggested certain options to the Hon'ble Supreme Court for creation and operation of the Central Selection Mechanism. The Hon'ble Supreme Court *suo motu* converted the Government's letter dated 28th April, 2017 into a *writ* petition on 9th May, 2017 and directed all State Governments (including Union Territories) to file their responses and suggestions by way of affidavits. The above matter is *sub-judice* at present.

(c) A comprehensive proposal was formulated for the constitution of an All India Judicial Service (AIJS) and the same was approved by the Committee of Secretaries in November, 2012. The proposal was included as an agenda item in the Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of the High Courts held in April, 2013 and it was decided that issue needs further deliberation and consideration. The views of the State Governments and High Courts were sought on the proposal. There was divergence of opinion among the State Governments and among the High Courts on the constitution of All India Judicial Service. While some State Governments and High Courts were not in favour of creation of All India Judicial Service, some other