

necessary, as per law. Various policy related measures taken in this regard are as under:—

- (i) There are legal provisions in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Cr.P.C.) to resolve the plight of under trial prisoners (UTPs). Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 05.09.2014 in the Writ Petition No.310 of 2005 - *Bhim Singh versus Union of India & Ors.* had directed judicial officers to hold sittings in jails for effective implementation of section 436A of the Cr.P.C.

Minister of Law and Justice, *vide* a letter dated 3rd February 2017, had requested the Chief Justices of all 24 High Courts to advise the district judiciary to ensure effective implementation of section 436A of Cr. P.C and ensure periodic monitoring of the associated Under Trial Review Committee Mechanism.

- (ii) Under Trial Review Committees (UTRCs), headed by the District and Session Judges, who are also the Chairperson of the District Legal Services Authorities, have been established in all the districts. The said Committees holds quarterly meetings. The areas which are primarily looked into by the UTRCs include UTPs covered under section 436A Cr.P.C; UTPs who have been released on bail by the court, but have not been able to furnish sureties; UTPs accused of compoundable offences; UTPs eligible under section 436 of Cr.P.C; convicts who have undergone their sentence or are entitled to release because of remission granted to them; UTPs who are imprisoned for offences which carry a maximum punishment of 2 years; UTPs who are sick or infirm and require specialized medical treatment; UTPs women offenders.
- (iii) Further, Hon'ble Supreme Court of India *vide* its order dated 31.10.2017 in W.P. (Civil) No.406 of 2013 titled *Re-Inhuman Conditions in 1382 prisons*, directed the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) to draft a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for smooth functioning of UTRCs right from the identification of UTPs, processing the data, passing of recommendations, and moving of Bail Applications of the recommended UTPs. NALSA has since prepared the SOP and has submitted the same to the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Fast Track Courts to try rape cases

2033. DR. BANDA PRAKASH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has come up with a proposal to set up special Fast Track Courts (FTCs) across the country to try rape cases as part of a larger scheme to strengthen infrastructure for better investigation and swift prosecution in such cases;

(b) whether the Ministry has prepared a draft scheme for setting up of such special FTCs to try rape cases; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has decided to formulate a Scheme for creation of Fast Track Special Courts for expeditious trial and disposal of rape cases involving women and children.

Pending cases in various courts

2034. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of cases are pending in various courts across the country;

(b) if so, details thereof, including number of cases pending in Supreme Court and High Courts during each of last four years, court-wise and reasons therefor;

(c) sanctioned strength and vacancies of Judges in such courts and action taken by Government to fill these vacancies at the earliest;

(d) whether Government has taken note of delay in delivery of justice to litigants for various reasons; and

(e) if so, details thereof along with corrective measures taken by Government for expeditious disposal of cases pending in various courts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Data on pendency of cases in the Supreme Court and High Courts is maintained by the Supreme Court and High Courts respectively. As per information available, details of cases pending in Supreme Court during last four years are given below:-

| Year | Number of Cases pending |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| As on 31.12.2015 | 59,272 |
| As on 31.12.2016 | 62,537 |
| As on 31.10.2017 | 55,259 |
| As on 04.05.2018 | 54,013 |