

conditions in the State or other relevant conditions. The Union Government does not have a role under the Constitution in the selection and appointment of judicial officers in district/subordinate judiciary.

(c) to (e) Initiation of proposal for appointment of Judges in the High Courts vests with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court. As per the existing Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for appointment of Judges of High Courts, the Chief Justice of the High Court is required to initiate the proposal for filling up of vacancies of a Judge in a High Court six months prior to the occurrence of vacancies. However, this timeline is rarely adhered to by the High Courts.

Filling up of vacancies is a continuous process, as it requires consultation and approval from various Constitutional Authorities. Hence, the time-frame for filling up of the vacancies cannot be indicated. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges.

Based on the proposal received from the High Court Collegium, during the year 2016, 126 fresh appointments of Judges in High Courts were made and 131 Additional Judges were made permanent, which is the highest number of appointments made in a given year. In addition, the tenure of 22 Additional Judges of High Courts was also extended. Besides, based on the proposal received from the Supreme Court Collegium, 4 judges were appointed in the Supreme Court in 2016. During the year 2017, 05 Judges have been appointed in the Supreme Court, 08 Chief Justices have been appointed in the High Courts, 115 Judges have been appointed in the High Courts and 31 Additional Judges have been made Permanent. During the current year, 3 Judges have been appointed in High Courts and 7 Additional Judges have been made permanent.

Shortage of Judges in courts is one of the reasons for pendency of cases in High Courts.

Stopping of train services on certain routes

916. SHRI MANAS RANJAN BHUNIA:

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have decided to stop services at the eight train routes of Bardhaman-Katwa, Sonarpur-Canning, Shantipur-Nabadwip Ghat, Barasat-Hasnabad, Baruipur-Namkhana, Ballygunge-Budge Budge, Kalyani Simanta-Sealdah and Bhimgara-Palasthali in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Ministry is aware that these routes are availed by lakhs of common commuters daily; and

(d) if so, the reasons for stopping the routes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. At present, there is no proposal for discontinuation of services of trains on Barddhaman-Katwa, Sonarpur-Canning, Shantipur-Nabadwip Ghat, Barasat-Hasnabad, Baruipur-Namkhana, Ballygunge-Budge Budge, Kalyani Simanta-Sealdah and Bhimgara-Palasthali sections in West Bengal.

(d) Does not arise.

Employees in various cadres of Railways

917. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees, in officer and other cadres, in Railways at present in executive, technical and other sectors;

(b) the number of vacancies in administrative and technical sectors at present;

(c) whether the total number of employees working in Railways has increased or decreased during the last three years;

(d) the changes in numbers; and

(e) whether vacancies are affecting efficiency and quality of services in Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) As on 01.04.2017, Zonal Railways employed 11,541 Gazetted officers and 12,32,760 non-gazetted staff.

(b) As on 01.04.2017, over Zonal Railways, total number of vacancy of Group 'C' and erstwhile Group 'D' staff in Administration Department and in Technical Department is 1,53,589.

(c) and (d) Over Zonal Railways, total number of employed non-gazetted staff during the last three years is as under:—