

(b) the details of findings of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development 2017-18 Report on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION (SHRI RAMESH CHANDAPPA JIGAJINAGI): (a) Government had launched Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) [SBM(G)] with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2014 with the aim to achieve universal sanitation coverage by 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2019 by providing access to toilet facilities to all rural households in the country. The programme covers all the rural areas of the country. The rural sanitation coverage in the country which was 38.7% as on 2.10.2014 has now increased to 98.5%. As a result, out of the total 6,00,677 villages, 5,41,748 villages have become Open Defecation Free (ODF) as on 4.1.2019.

(b) As per Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development 2017-18, the performance under SBM (G) in some of the big States *i.e.* Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir etc. was dismal. The Report pertains to the period 2017-18. Since then, a lot of progress has been made and the sanitation coverage in the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir have increased to 98.97%, 100%, 77.81% and 100%) respectively as on 04.01.2019.

#### **Project proposal for fostering research collaborations**

2756. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry had called research proposals in paleoclimates, sea level changes, CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration, reactive nitrogen, phosphorus and carbon cycles, coral reefs and ocean acidification with reference to climate change during June, 2018;

(b) if so, total number of proposals received, approved, rejected, field-wise;

(c) if so, whether a project entitled 'Climate change database for impact assessment and development, adaption and mitigation options for Kerala : a multidisciplinary simulation and modelling' has been received on 11 June, 2018; and

(d) if so, the present status and steps taken to process the project, in the light of recent floods which occurred in the State at Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): (a) Yes Sir. Through a Nation-wide call by publishing an advertisement on the Ministry's website.

- (b) Total proposals received - 53  
Total approved proposals - 08  
Total rejected proposals - 45 (Some of the research proposals were not submitted under above programme)

(c) Yes the said proposal was received under the above call. However, as the proposal doesn't fall under the Paleo-climate program, it was not considered and the PI was informed accordingly with a suggestion to revise or submit the proposal under the relevant program.

- (d) Does not arise.

**Remote sensing satellite based research projects**

2757. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has initiated any specific remote sensing satellite-based projects, in the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the total amount allocated in the last three years for the project;
- (d) whether Government has initiated any satellite-based project to predict occurrence of cyclones, earthquakes and Tsunami;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken by Government for effective search operations to trace missing persons during the cyclones?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) NIOT has already established ocean observation system comprising of ocean moored buoys, tide gauges, tsunami buoys etc in adjoining seas for making *in-situ* measurements of met-ocean data and transmission in real time through satellite connectivity.

(c) In this regard, ₹ 22 crore, ₹ 25 crore and ₹ 19.97 crore were allocated to NIOT for the year 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively.

- (d) Yes, Sir.