

Target achievement of MIDP

†1517. SHRI RAM SHAKAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Media Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP) is operated by Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the target fixed for year 2018-19 has been accomplished;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The Media Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP) scheme aims to augment and improve infrastructure of the Media Units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting including Bureau of Outreach and Communication(BOC), Press Information Bureau (PIB), Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI), Publications Division and opening of new Regional Centres of Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC).

(c) to (e) During 2018-19, several activities have been undertaken under the MIDP Scheme including upgradation of the Photo Division of PIB, completion of construction of Regional Centres of IIMC at Kottayam and Aizawl, upgradation of infrastructure of Publications Division, etc.

Action against paid news

1518. SHRI RAJMANI PATEL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is taking any action to tackle the paid news which is a huge media crisis in today's media world; and
- (b) action taken by Government for the freedom of press and to make them more independent and politically neutral, if not, the reasons therefor to check this huge media crisis?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Election Commission of India has a well structured mechanism at the national, state and district levels to receive complaints relating to 'Paid News' and take necessary remedial action. The expenditure involved in these cases is included in the election expenditure of the candidates against which the paid news cases are confirmed.

Press Council of India (PCI) a statutory autonomous authority has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 with twin objectives to preserve the Freedom of the Press and to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India.

UN study on impact of SBM

1519. DR. ASHOK BAJPAI: Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per a United Nations (UN) study, impact of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), in reducing open defecation is highly satisfactory;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, during 2014 to 2019, State-wise;
- (c) whether Government would continue SBM with the same speed and spirit;
- (d) if so, the details of the further plans; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): (a) Government of India had launched Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) on 02.10.2014 with the aim to attain Open Defecation Free (ODF) India by 2nd October, 2019. As per the United Nations Children Funds (UNICEF) study (2017), it was estimated that ₹50, 000 is saved every year on average by a household in an ODF village due to health costs avoided. Another study of UNICEF undertaken on environmental impact of SBM in 2019 revealed that the relative risk of faecal contamination of groundwater traceable to human is 12.7 times less likelihood in ODF villages. Further, as per the World Health Organisation (WHO) Study released in 2018, it was estimated that Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) would result in averting more than 3, 00, 000 deaths (diarrhoea and protein-energy malnutrition) between 2014 and 2019.

(b) State/UT-wise percentage of sanitation coverage as on 02.10.2014 and the percentage of ODF declared villages as on 02.10.2019 are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) to (e) Government is now focusing on ODF-Plus activities *i.e.* sustainability of ODF status and to cover the villages with Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM).