

(c) to (e) Disaster Management and Rehabilitation in the aftermath of the disaster are the responsibility of State Government. Government of India does not maintain State specific records of implementation of rehabilitation projects centrally.

Protection of witnesses

1791. SHRI RAJMANI PATEL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action has been taken by Government for protection of witnesses in various cases and keep the witness identity a secret;

(b) if so, the details of action taken; and

(c) whether any advancements has been done to make use of in-camera hearings where the witness does not come face to face with the accused?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI NITYANAND RAI) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Home Affairs prepared a “Witness Protection Scheme, 2018” in consultation with the National Legal Service Authority, Bureau of Police Research and Development and the State Governments. The Hon’ble Supreme Court of India in its Judgement dated 05.12.2018 in Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 156 of 2016 has endorsed the Scheme. The Hon’ble Supreme Court has also directed that the Union of India as well as States and Union Territories shall enforce the Witness Protection Scheme, 2018 in letter and spirit and that it shall be the ‘law’ under Article 141/142 of the Constitution, till the enactment of suitable Parliamentary and/or State Legislations on the Subject.

This scheme provides various measures for protection of witnesses based on the threat assessment including holding of in-camera trials.

Citizenship Amendment Bill

1792. PROF. M. V. RAJEEV GOWDA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the reason why Government plans to extend benefits offered under the Citizenship Amendment Bill to minorities of only three neighbouring countries namely, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan while leaving out other neighbouring countries like Myanmar; and

(b) the reason why other persecuted minorities like Jews, Atheists and Muslim religious minorities like the Ahmadis in Pakistan are not included in the proposed Bill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI NITYANAND RAI) : (a) and (b) As per the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955, a legal migrant can acquire Indian Citizenship under Section 5 by registration or under Section 6 by naturalization in case he fulfills the laid down criteria. Migrants who do not possess valid travel documents are not eligible to apply for Indian citizenship.

The objective of The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was to facilitate acquisition of Indian Citizenship by migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian communities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who have taken shelter in India due to persecution on grounds of religion or fear of such persecution in their countries and who have entered India on or before 31st December, 2014 without valid travel documents or validity of their documents has expired.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 had been referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee who presented its report to Parliament in January, 2019. The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was considered and passed by Lok Sabha in January, 2019. However, consequent to dissolution of 16th Lok Sabha, the Bill has lapsed.

Custodial deaths

1793. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that custodial deaths in the country are unacceptable as India is signatory to the UN Convention against torture;

(b) the number of custodial deaths reported from each State during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) whether Government proposes to have a legislative framework to stamp out criminal behaviour in custody?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY) : (a) The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment prescribes that each State shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measure to prevent acts of torture. The offences of causing hurt or grievous hurt to extort confession are punishable under Sections 330 and 331 of the Indian Penal Code.