

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for ORAL ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Thursday, the March 6, 2003/Phalgun 15, 1924 (Saka)*

(Ministries: Prime Minister; Agro and Rural Industries; Atomic Energy;
Communications and Information Technology; Consumer Affairs,
Food and Public Distribution; Development of North Eastern
Region; Disinvestment; External Affairs; Labour; Planning;
Road Transport and Highways; Small Scale Industries;
Space; Statistics and Programme Implementation)

Total number of questions—20

National Highways in Assam

*221. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned any amount for construction and widening of various National Highways in Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the funds likely to be released for the purpose?

Separate account for different services

*222. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has ordered phone companies to maintain separate account for different services they provide;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether TRAI has taken any steps to ensure prevention of cross-subsidisation by phone companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Status of SSIs

*223. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the small scale industries, so far as production and employment generation are concerned;

(b) whether the reforms process has weakened the small scale industry sector; and

(c) if not, how the structural reforms have strengthened these industries so far as their economic viability is concerned?

Assistance to Singapore in combating terrorism

*224. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Singapore has sought India's assistance in effectively combating terrorism; and

(b) if so, the mutual facilitation of the security services proposed to contain the threat of terrorism?

Issuance of passports

*225. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passports issued by the Regional Passport Offices in the country during the last five years and till date, Regional Passport Office-wise and State-wise;

(b) the average time taken by passport offices in issuing passports;

(c) the number of applications pending for issuance of passports in the different passport offices during the last one year; and

(d) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by Government to dispose these applications expeditiously?

National Highways in Himachal Pradesh

*226. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the nature of the development works undertaken on various National Highways in Himachal Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) the time schedule for completion of each such work; and

(c) the details of the funds sanctioned/ released/utilised for the purpose during the above period, work-wise?

US officials' suggestions to Pakistan

*227. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report which appeared in the 'Times of India' dated the 31st January, 2003 mentioning about US officials suggestions to Pakistan to take steps that could lead to talk with India, controlling cross-border infiltration, respecting sanctity of the LoC and also responding to India's suggestion of normalising trade relations;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that Pakistan was also called into account for its nuclear proliferation activity, particularly its ties with North Korea; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

Kamreda-Warki NH in Gujarat

†*228. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of construction of the National Highway from Kamreda to Warki in Gujarat;

(b) whether the progress of construction work of the highway is very slow;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) by when the construction work of the above highway is likely to be completed; and

(e) the estimated expenditure to be incurred on this work?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

U.S. help in space research

*229. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.S. was eager to help India in all ways in space research; and

(b) if so, the new programme proposed in space technology with co-operation of the United States?

Kailash Mansarover Yatra via Kathmandu

*230. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
SHRI BHAGATRAM
MANHAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some NRIs are luring the Indians for taking Kailash Mansarover Yatra via Kathmandu route;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some Indians have already undertaken Mansarover Yatra during the last two years through some NRIs via Kathmandu route;

(d) if so, the number of such pilgrims and whether Government's permission was obtained; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

DDA flats for EPF subscribers

*231. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has offered to purchase 10,000 flats lying

vacant with DDA for want of buyers to allot them to the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) subscribers under "Shramik Aawas Yojana";

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these flats had no takers due to lack of amenities; and

(d) if so, what remedial measures have been taken in this regard?

Import duty on palm oil

†*232. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that import of the palm oil, which is mainly used by the poor, is duty free even in the less developed country like Nepal, while in India it is out of reach of the poor people due to the imposition of import duty @ 65 per cent; and

(b) if so, whether Government would consider reduction in import duty on palm oil from 65 per cent to 25 per cent, so that the poor people buy it easily?

Telephone facilities in villages of U.P.

*233. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in Uttar Pradesh which have not been provided with telephone facilities as yet; and

(b) by when this is likely to be provided?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Maintenance of NH-57

†*234. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether road from Darbhanga to Jhanjharpur, particularly from Sakri to Jhanjharpur on National Highway-57 is in a dilapidated condition and not suitable for transport;

(b) whether any funds have been allocated for repair and strengthening of the road;

(c) if so, the details of the amount allocated/spent, so far; and

(d) the steps Government are taking for strengthening the road from Sakri to Jhanjharpur at the earliest?

Assistance for improving IT services

*235. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an imminent shake-out among the mid-sized IT services and business process outsourcing companies;

(b) if so, whether at least five to ten mandates are doing the rounds of investment banking circles where mid-sized IT services companies are seeking to consolidate among themselves;

(c) whether the banks have also been asked to help these IT companies by providing loan, etc. so that they would be able to improve the IT services in the country; and

(d) if so, what are the other help and assistance his Ministry is considering to provide to these companies to grow further?

Review of disinvestment policy

*236. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to review its policy towards disinvestment of PSUs, globalization and privatization in view of the fact that these measures have proved to be anti labour and failed to generate new avenues;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the justification for disinvestments of profit earning PSUs?

Antyodaya Anna Yojana

*237. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a massive expansion of the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, which was launched by the Prime Minister two years ago, is being considered by Government;

(b) if so, the existing population under below poverty line category;

(c) whether the scheme has so far been fully implemented to help the families living below poverty line; and

(d) if so, the details of expansion programmes being considered in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Speed post services

*238. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether speed post services recorded largest revenue share in the business mail segment during the year 2001-02;

(b) how many stations are presently covered by the speed post network in the country;

(c) whether air connectivity is the prime requisite for setting up a speed post centre; and

(d) what are the plans to add the industrial towns and commercial/trading urban areas, which have no air connectivity, to the speed post network?

Decline in foodgrains stock

*239. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrains stock has dropped below the 50 million tonne mark;

(b) whether it is expected to further dwindle to 38 million tonne in the next two months;

(c) whether this would be the lowest in the last three years;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the procurement made, so far;

(f) to what extent it is short of target; and

(g) the efforts being made to improve the food stocks during the year 2003-04?

Demands of Indian Sugar Mills Association

*240. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Sugar Mills Association has demanded tax concessions and a two-year tax holiday in order to help the Sugar Mills pay Rs. 5 per quintal increase in the price of sugarcane announced by the Prime Minister; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

NEW DELHI;
The 27th February, 2003
Phalguna 8, 1924 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

I N D E X
(Ministry-wise)

Prime Minister	: —
Agro and Rural Industries	: —
Atomic Energy	: —
Communications and Information Technology	: 222, 233, 235, 238,
Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	: 232, 237, 239, 240,
Development of North Eastern Region	: —
Disinvestment	: 236,
External Affairs	: 224, 225, 227, 230,
Labour	: 231,
Planning	: —
Road Transport and Highways	: 221, 226, 228, 234,
Small Scale Industries	: 223,
Space	: 229.
Statistics and Programme Implementation	: —