

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for ORAL ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the April 26, 2005/Vaisakha 6, 1927 (Saka)*

**(Ministries : Civil Aviation; Company Affairs; Finance; Panchayati Raj;
Petroleum and Natural Gas; Tourism; Water Resources)**

Total number of questions — 20

Strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions

*441. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ
be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been or are
being taken by the authorities of various
States to demarcate the functional areas
of the different tiers of local bodies in
order to strengthen the Panchayati Raj
Institutions;

(b) if so, the details of such steps taken
as on date, State-wise, category-wise and
year-wise;

(c) whether any steps have been or are
being taken to transfer the Institutions and
staff under Government to the Panchayati
Raj Institutions;

(d) if so, the details of such steps taken
as on date, State-wise; and

(e) other steps taken to strengthen
Panchayati Raj Institutions and the present
status of such institutions as on date State-
wise?

World Bank's assessment of projects under DPIIP in Madhya Pradesh

†*442. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased
to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that
the World Bank has inspected and assessed
the ongoing projects to uplift the standard
of living of the villagers of backward
districts of Madhya Pradesh under District
Poverty Initiatives Programme (DPIP) and
World Bank has appreciated the success of
the projects;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction
thereto;

(c) whether Government are considering
to seek more assistance from the World
Bank for extending the projects in Madhya
Pradesh and in other States; and

(d) if so, the details of the steps taken/
proposed to be taken in this regard?

Guidelines on use of helicopters by civilians/VVIPs

*443. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to prepare guidelines for the choppers to be used by civilians specially VVIPs in the light of recent tragic accidents;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Promotion of tourism in J&K

*444. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian and foreign tourists who visited Jammu and Kashmir during last three calendar years ending with 2004;

(b) whether Government have any plan to promote and safeguard tourism in Jammu and Kashmir;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Conference of District Magistrates/Collectors

*445. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Prime Minister is planning to convene a conference of District Magistrates/Collectors with a view to giving impetus to various Central schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government had received objections to the said proposal from various corners; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken by Government in this regard?

Income tax exemption to private hospitals

*446. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether under the existing law, private hospitals get huge amount of income tax exemption for incurring expenses on medical research activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount of tax exemption granted to such hospitals during the last three years in the four metropolitan cities in India, year-wise and hospital-wise together with the details of research conducted?

Allocation of funds to check declining ground water table

†*447. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise total amount allotted during the last year by Government to check the declining ground water level in the country;

(b) the details of the ratio of declining ground water level during last three years, State-wise; and

(c) the amount allocated to different NGOs State-wise during the last one year for this purpose?

Levy of tax on salt

†*448. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that imposition of 4 per cent tax on salt has created a crisis for over 25 lakhs of farmers and labourers engaged in production of salt;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government are considering or propose to remove tax on salt by amending the salt policy;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government would also consider taking any steps for betterment of farmers and labourers engaged in production of salt; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and by when these steps will be taken?

Measures taken by the CGWB to create awareness on water conservation

*449. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has a scheme to create awareness amongst rural people about the need to conserve ground water resources;

(b) what was the method used by the Central Ground Water Board to create such awareness;

(c) whether it is a fact that the CGWB collaborated with universities to hold camps and seminars on this subject;

(d) the details of work done by the Board in this regard;

(e) whether it is also a fact that this work has been stopped; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

Restoration of water bodies

*450. SHRI RUDRANARAYAN PANY: SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to revive and restore

15 million water bodies in the country with a view to conserve and store water;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is its source of funding; and

(d) the details of the bodies that would be revived in the State of Orissa?

Recovery of NPAs

*451. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of loan accounts in the slabs of Rupees one crore to five crore, Rupees six to ten crores, Rupees fifty crores and above and Rupees hundred crores and above, PSU Bank-wise and IFI-wise, which became their Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) as on 31st December of the year from 1993 to 2004;

(b) the details of book values of assets mortgaged/pledged by borrowers as collateral against these loans slab-wise;

(c) virtual mortgage to loan ratio obtained by lenders in these years; and

(d) the details of mortgaged assets auctioned/traded, if any, by lenders for recovery of NPAs, year-wise since 1993?

Protest against privatisation of airports

*452. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousands of employees of Airport Authority had undergone on fast to protest the decision to privatise major airports; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

New bilateral air agreements

*453. DR. KARAN SINGH:

DR. T. SUBBARAMIREDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to sign a plethora of new bilateral agreements in regions spanning Middle East, Europe and US, which would throw open more capacities on these routes;

(b) whether his ministry has identified the Middle East packages in Europe like UK and Germany and the use for entering into new bilaterals;

(c) if so, whether any agreement has been reached;

(d) to what extent Government have been able to open its arm to sky policy;

(e) what are total agreements reached with countries so far; and

(f) to what extent such agreements have been helpful as far as India is concerned?

Share of Plan Budget of Ministries and Departments for development of North Eastern Region

*454. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as envisaged by Government all Ministries and Departments have allocated 10 percent of their Plan Budget during 2004-05 for development of North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the amount, department-wise; and

(c) if not, which are the defaulting departments and the reasons therefor?

Harassment of export units by the Income Tax department

*455. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether many small and medium export units are on the verge of closure due to harassment by Income Tax Authorities on account of tax on DEPB and in case of negative profits under Section 80 HHC of the IT Act; and

(b) if so, whether Government would take corrective measures to address the grievances of the exporting community especially on the application of Section 80 HHC?

Change in timings of Hyderabad-Delhi IA flights

*456. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines has changed the timings of the Hyderabad-Delhi-Hyderabad flights every three months;

(b) if so, the causes for changing the flight timings every three months on the Hyderabad-Delhi sector;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is a good commercial return from flights on this sector;

(d) if so, what steps will be taken to try and have such flights on a more convenient timing schedule;

(e) the specific difficulties which Indian Airlines faces in scheduling the Hyderabad-Delhi flight at a very early hour; and

(f) the steps proposed to review the present timings on this sector?

Setting up of Farmers' Training Centre

*457. SHRI B.J. PANDA:

MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Punjab National Bank propose to set up a Farmers' Training Centre at Bhubaneswar to educate farmers about the latest agricultural developments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Bank would fund the entire process on infrastructure development to help the beleaguered farmers of the cash-strapped State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Annual audit of ministries

*458. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to make annual audit of all the ministries and departments of Government, including the offices of the constitutional authorities, mandatory so as to keep a check on the wasteful expenditure all around; and

(b) if so, by when a decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

Accelerating irrigation benefits

*459. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA
SONI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite spending Rs. 13,823.05 crores in 24 States during 1996-2003, Government failed to achieve the intended objective of accelerating irrigation benefits due to inadequate planning and lack of co-ordination with the State Governments;

(b) if so, the the details thereof and the steps taken to achieve the desired objectives; and

(c) the details of the irrigation projects pending as on date, State-wise, indicating their financial and physical progress?

Uniform tax rates for tourists

*460. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has realised that the fundamental problem plaguing the tourism sector of the country is multitude of Central and State-level taxes resulting in loss of number of tourists to other countries such as China, Thailand, Singapore, Hongkong, Malaysia, etc.;

(b) if so, what the Ministry proposes to do in co-ordination with the Finance Ministry and the State Governments to have a uniform taxation or single tax for tourists in the country;

(c) whether the issue had come up before the recently held State Tourism Ministers' Conference in March, 2005; and

(d) if so, what is the outcome of the discussions?

NEW DELHI;
The 20th April, 2005

Chaitra 30, 1927 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

I N D E X
(Ministry-wise)

Civil Aviation	: 443, 452, 453, 456,
Company Affairs	: —
Finance	: 442, 446, 448, 451, 454, 455, 457, 458,
Panchayati Raj	: 441, 445,
Petroleum and Natural Gas	: —
Tourism	: 444, 460,
Water Resources	: 447, 449, 450, 459.