

## RAJYA SABHA

### List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on  
Tuesday, the March 1, 2005/Phalguna 10, 1926 (Saka)*

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

**Total number of questions — 155**

#### **Modification of Terminal 2B of the International Airport at Mumbai**

1. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India is examining a proposal to modify terminal 2B of the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal;

(c) whether the Ministry has sanctioned a substantial amount for the project; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when the work will start?

#### **Open skies agreements**

2. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether following the decision to allow private airlines to fly from India to foreign destinations, Government have signed/negotiated open skies agreements with different countries;

(b) if so, the names of the countries with whom such agreements have been negotiated/signed; and

(c) the details of the agreements indicating the bilateral/multilateral obligations arising therefrom?

#### **Maintenance of Hyderabad airport**

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

(a) whether Government are aware that the flooring at Hyderabad airport is slippery and dangerous and a number of elderly passengers have been hurt;

(b) the reasons for the poor management at Hyderabad airport;

(c) whether there is any linkage between the recent arrests of airport managers of Hyderabad airport and the poor maintenance of the airport; and

(d) what steps will be taken by Government to ensure that the entire airport and its maintenance comes under active and expert scrutiny immediately?

#### **Air service agreement with US**

4. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and US have reached an Air Service agreement for increasing the bilateral air traffic between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the list of destinations made available to the Indian carriers; and

(c) the policy for the utilization of new routes and the allocation of slots among national and private carriers?

#### **Acquisition of A-380 aircrafts**

5. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to acquire the new Air Bus-380 aircraft under Indian Airlines and/or Air India's fleet acquisition and augmentation programme;

(b) if so, the details including the cost thereof; and

(c) what steps have been and are being taken to provide facilities for landing, take-off and allied matters?

#### **Handing over of Surat Airport to AAI**

6. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:  
PROF. ALKA BALRAM  
KSHATRIYA:  
DR. A.K. PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Gujarat has signed an MoU with the Airports Authority of India and

handed over Surat Airport to AAI for further development and operation;

(b) if so, the likely time of its completion;

(c) by when it is going to be operated; and

(d) whether any plan for expansion of the runway has been finalized?

#### **Naresh Chandra Committee Report**

7. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Naresh Chandra Committee has submitted its 2nd part of the report;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Committee on improving the aviation infrastructure and security;

(c) in what manner the Committee has advised restructuring of AAI;

(d) whether Government have studied the Report and initiated steps to formulate the civil aviation policy; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Haj pilgrims stranded at Jeddah**

8. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that hundreds of Haj pilgrims were stranded at Jeddah due to cancellation of scheduled flights to India;

(b) if so, what alternative arrangements were made to bring back the pilgrims; and

(c) the details of period the pilgrims had to remain in Jeddah and the date by which they were brought to India?

### **New European regulations for Airlines**

9. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that European regulations have come into effect from the 17th February, 2005 whereby airlines can be forced to pay compensation to passengers for flight delays and cancellation of flights originating from European airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how far this would affect the operations of Air India and other international airlines; and

(d) what are the provisions in the regulations for delays on account of natural calamities and causes like fog, etc.?

### **Fire accident at Bangalore airport**

10. SHRI K.B. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the flights at Bangalore airport were disrupted following a fire which broke out at the Airport Terminal building on the 2nd February, 2005;

(b) if so, the causes for the fire accident;

(c) the action taken by the Airports Authority of India in this regard so far; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to avert such fire accidents in future?

### **Encroachment near airports**

†11. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether many a habitation located illegally on encroached land near several

airports in the country are creating a lot of problems for air traffic;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps Government are going to take with regard to above habitations?

### **Induction of Saras Aircraft**

12. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) how long it will take for Saras (14 seats indigenous) aircraft to take to its wings on regular passenger flight; and

(b) whether the earlier test flight on August 22, 2004, was successful, if so, to what extent and for how many passengers and crew it is considered fit for passenger flight and the progress made in that direction so far?

### **Catering services at airport**

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

(a) whether Government are aware that middleclass people and other service personnel also use airports in India;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the Airports Authority of India has not encouraged any shops or catering places to be set up for people who cannot afford high prices eatables at our airports;

(c) the reasons for the Airport Authority of India not inviting the Coffee Board, the Tea Board and other such experienced organization to run some shops and catering places at our airport in the country; and

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) what steps will be taken by Government to ensure that all categories of passengers are catered to by the AAI?

#### **Reconsideration of Indo-American Open Sky Policy**

† 14. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is thinking of re-considering the recent Indo-American open sky policy; and evolving a consensus thereon;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made, so far, in this regard?

#### **Corporatisation of non-metro airports**

15. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to corporatise around 50 non-metro airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details of such airports, State-wise;

(c) the reasons for corporatising these airports; and

(d) the special fiscal incentives to be offered to private sector partners in order to encourage modernization of these airports?

#### **Modifications in air agreement with US**

16. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central

Government and United States have signed an open sky agreement similar to those the US signed with other countries;

(b) whether Government have sought certain modifications to ensure that the benefits should not go to the US Airlines alone;

(c) whether the US has agreed that the benefit will be given to the Indian Airlines also; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Modernisation of international airports**

17. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since reconsidered the question of modernisation of International Airports at Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore etc., through private participation and the terms for such participation;

(b) if so, what decisions have been taken in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken for implementation thereof?

#### **Introduction of A-320 service in the Raipur sector**

† 18. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the average number of passengers per flight during the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 on air routes of Raipur-Delhi-Raipur and Raipur-Mumbai-Raipur sectors;

(b) the number of passengers per year during the years from 2000-2001 to 2003-2004 in these sectors;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the reasons for not flying an Air Bus A-320 in place of Boeing 737 in case the traffic volume in these sectors is increasing; and

(d) whether there is any plan to press A-320 airbus into service in these routes in future?

**Revenue implications of air routes given to private airlines**

19. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new international connectivity will arise out of the recent initiative of Government to allow private airlines to operate on international routes;

(b) whether it is a fact that almost all the routes that have been granted to the private airlines are already being operated by Indian Airlines or Air India or both; and

(c) if so, whether the permission given to the private airlines will result in reduction in revenues of the public sector airlines from these routes and if so, to what extent?

**Competition Act**

20. SHRI MANOJ BHATTA-CHARYA: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have put in place Competition Act recently and if so, its basic aims and objectives;

(b) whether a Competition Commission as envisaged in the Act has been set up and if so, when; and

(c) the work done by the Commission so far and impact, if any, made in creating competition awareness in the country?

**Registered Companies**

†21. SHRI PYARELAL KHAN-DELWAL: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of registered companies in the country;

(b) the number of inactive companies out of the registered companies;

(c) whether there is any scheme under consideration of Government to close those companies which are not operating; and

(d) if not, the scheme formulated by Government for the operation of all the registered companies and the details in this regard?

**Serious fraud investigation office recommendations on violation of company law**

22. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) has recommended to the Government to file criminal cases against several companies for violation of Company Law and breach of IPC provisions; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the action taken on the recommendations of the SFIO?

**Turnover of industrial institutes**

†23. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified 20 big industrial institutes of the country

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

whose turnover has been calculated to be maximum during the year 2004;

(b) if so, the names of such institutes; and

(c) the number of institutes in public and private sector out of the above and the profits made by each institute during the current year as compared to the profits made during the last year?

#### **Introduction of Company Bill**

24. SHRI R.K. ANAND:  
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:  
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government propose to introduce the New Company Bill; and

(b) what will be the salient features of the proposed bill?

#### **Project of e-governance**

25. SHRI G.K. VASAN: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a project of e-governance initiative has been launched by his Ministry; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Pending cases against companies**

26. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of cases pending against companies involved in corruption that find mention in fraud list;

(b) what are the general complaints and charges against such erring companies; and

(c) the details of remedial measures taken or proposed to be taken against such erring companies?

#### **Approach towards exit law for sick companies**

†27. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Company Affairs has announced to have a lenient approach towards exit law in relation to closure of sick companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) its likely impact on the workers working in these companies?

#### **Investment of Non-Government provident funds in stocks**

28. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Non-Government provident funds will be permitted to invest in stocks from April, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any minimum return has been stipulated to ensure agreed return on PF; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Loans extended to Industrial sector by banks**

29. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the loans extended to the customers in the industrial sector by the Nationalised Banks;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether any study has been conducted by the Ministry to know the problems being faced by the customers, both small and big, in getting loans sanctioned from Nationalised banks;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

#### **Functioning of Tamil Nadu Mercantile Bank**

30. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Tamil Nadu Mercantile Bank is recognised and registered with the RBI;

(b) if so, whether RBI monitors its functions to some extent;

(c) whether it is also a fact that over the last three years, there has been instability in the functioning of bank;

(d) whether RBI has noted the various problems plaguing the management of this Bank; and

(e) what steps RBI proposes to take to upgrade the managements of all such banks, which are registered with the RBI?

#### **Financial assistance to Karnataka for cleansing of balance sheets of co-operative structure**

31. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Finance has received any proposal from the State Government of Karnataka for sanction of financial assistance required to cleanse the Balance Sheet of the co-operative structure; and

(b) if so, the status of the same and the reasons for delay, if any?

#### **Devolution of funds to States from Central taxes**

32. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount fixed for devolution to States from Central Taxes as per the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission from 1st April, 2001 to 31st March, 2005;

(b) the State-wise and year-wise amount paid from Central taxes during 1st April, 2001 to 31st March, 2004;

(c) whether it is a fact that the target set to devolve funds for five years ending on 31st March, 2005 shall fall short to a great extent; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

#### **Fiscal reforms for States**

33. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:  
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank has laid down certain guidelines on fiscal reforms for States and the Centre to achieve developmental goals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that our States are among the most indebted in the world; and

(d) if so, what is the action plan of Government to rein in the States to help them to reduce their deficit?

**Change in rate of interest on  
provident fund**

34. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have not been able to change the rate of interest on provident fund belonging to State agencies and public institutions;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what is the provisional rate of interest being allowed at present; and

(d) by when a final decision in the matter is likely to be taken?

**Permission to Private Provident Fund  
Trusts to tap equity markets**

35. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:  
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to allow Private Provident Fund Trusts to tap equity markets and corporate debt for the benefit of the workers;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to secure and promote the interests of the workers and to shield it against risks of equity trading?

**Collection of income tax**

36. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:  
SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:  
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:  
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of income tax collected during the last five years from 1999-2000

to 2003-2004 from all income tax payers, year-wise;

(b) the number of assessee as on 31st October, 2004 and the classification of such assessee as Corporate and Non-Corporate Assessee; State-wise;

(c) what steps taken to bring more citizens in the income tax net and increase income tax revenue;

(d) whether the surcharge and special surcharge during the last five years from 1999-2000 was levied on Income tax; and

(e) if so, at what rate, for what purpose and in which year such surcharges were levied and withdrawn?

**Permission to PSUs to raise foreign  
currency funds**

37. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed the Public Sector Undertakings to raise foreign currency funds through the External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) route;

(b) if so, the details of such PSUs and the limits of the funds that can be raised by the PSUs;

(c) whether it would lead to a rise in rupee liquidity; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

**Sale of non-monetary gold in  
domestic market**

38. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:  
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to sell non-monetary gold and silver from its holding stocks in the domestic market; and



(b) if so, the quantity of gold and silver that is likely to be sold and the purpose for the sale?

**Separate regulator for pension sector**

39. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a separate regulator for pension sector called Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Government have disbanded the existing Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority; and

(c) if so, the reasons for disbanding the same?

**Appointment of Sixth Central Pay Commission**

40. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some political parties have asked him to set up the Sixth Pay Commission for Central Government employees; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

**Education Cess**

41. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:  
SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount collected, so far, by Government as Education Cess which was introduced in the last year's budget to fund primary education sector;

(b) the details of the expenditure made, so far, on this account together with its *modus operandi*, State-wise; and

(c) whether any guidelines for its utilisation and reimbursement by the State Governments have been laid down and if so, the details thereof?

**Insurance cover for marginalised tribals**

42. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government propose to extend insurance cover to the marginalised tribals in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the action plan;

(c) the details of tribal communities in Orissa that would be covered under this scheme; and

(d) whether it is a 100 per cent Centrally funded project or the States would also be required to fund the project?

**Decline in profits of banks**

†43. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:  
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that either the comparative profits have declined in the Public Sector Banks of the country during the third quarter (from October to December) of the financial year 2004-2005 or they have incurred losses;

(b) if so, the names of those banks and estimated amount of their respective losses; and

(c) the reasons for this decline?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Assessment of per capita income**

†44. DR. MURLI MANOHAR  
JOSHI:  
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER  
SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that per capita income has been assessed at Rupees 11,799/- in the country during 2003-04;

(b) if not, what are the facts in this regard and whether Government have assessed minimum and maximum income of citizens in the country; and

(c) if so, the minimum and maximum per capita income assessed in the country during the said period?

**World Bank aid for poverty alleviation programmes**

45. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank propose to focus on poverty ridden States in India and to collaborate with Government of India to achieve the poverty alleviation targets under the millennium development goals;

(b) whether World Bank would aim at accomplishing the Tenth Plan objectives by giving financial support to reform oriented States that would simultaneously change ways to engage with the largest and poorest States too;

(c) if so, whether the World Bank has also identified poverty ridden States in India; and

(d) if so, which are the States and by

when World Bank is likely to provide help and assistance to these States?

**Measures to reduce debt servicing burden of States**

46. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:  
SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI  
BARUPAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of States such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab and West Bengal have decided to approach the Central Government to reduce their debt servicing burden;

(b) if so, what is the total debt position of these States;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh has an interest burden of about Rs. 8,443 crores against the State loan of Rs. 57,151 crores and loans worth about Rs. 46,000 crores were borrowed during the previous nine years;

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take to help the State Governments in the debt servicing; and

(e) whether he has considered the request of Andhra Pradesh?

**Policy on investment in domestic corporate bonds**

47. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:  
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has suggested to the RBI to frame a comprehensive policy on investment in domestic corporate bonds by foreign institutional investors;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether this has been done considering overall implications of this issue on interest rate management in the country;

(c) if so, whether any concrete policy in this regard has been formulated by the RBI; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(e) by when final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

#### **Reduction of interest rates on debts in Gujarat**

48. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Gujarat is taking major steps to improve its public finances by reduction of average interest rate on debts;

(b) whether the State Government has made any proposals to the Central Government in this regard; and

(c) if so, whether any decision has been taken by the Central Government?

#### **Refund of excess recovery of taxes to senior citizens**

49. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of senior citizens in the Capital who filed income-tax return during the last two years, year-wise; and

(b) whether it is a fact that a large number of senior citizens have not been refunded their excess amount of tax deducted at source and if so, what is the number of such persons and by when they are likely to get their refund?

#### **Filing of income tax returns by nursing homes**

50. SHRI AMAR SINGH:

SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Medical Practitioners and Nursing Homes in the Capital who have filed income-tax return during the last two years;

(b) how much income-tax has actually been paid by them;

(c) whether Government are aware that a large number of Medical Practitioners/ Nursing Homes are not filing any income-tax return; and

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

#### **World Bank aid to Tsunami affected States**

51. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

SHRI R.P. GOENKA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently a formal request has been made to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to consider providing assistance to the Tsunami affected States in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including broad requirements indicated for re-building the infrastructure, for rehabilitation of livelihoods of those affected and assistance for developing disaster prevention and management systems for the future;

(c) whether the two multi-lateral financing agencies have assessed the needs and developed a programme of support for reconstruction and recovery; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and its present status?

### **Preparation of annual budget**

†52. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Governments have been taken into confidence while preparing annual budget for the year 2005-06 and if so, how much it has helped the Central Government in the preparation of budget; and

(b) whether Government would consider the local requirements of States while completing the budget making process and if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Non-utilisation of budget allocations**

†53. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Ministries that have not utilised the prescribed budget allocations for the year 2004-05;

(b) the names of such Ministries along-with the details of budget amount not spent by them; and

(c) whether his Ministry has taken any penal action against such Ministries and if so, the details thereof?

### **Terms of appointment of Chairman of IDBI**

54. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the terms of appointment of the Chairman of IDBI;

(b) whether a new Chairman of IDBI has taken over;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have the power to revoke the appointment of a Chairman of IDBI;

(d) if so, whether it is also a fact that

there has been adverse newspaper reports on the recent style of functioning of the Chairman of IDBI; and

(e) if so, what steps will be taken to revoke the appointment to set an example to all PSU appointees?

### **Means employed by banks for recovery of loans**

55. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the RBI has given a free hand and total freedom to all banks to offer attractive consumer loans;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the RBI for not laying down any guidelines;

(c) whether the RBI is aware that the banks have engaged agents on a contractual basis to recover such loans from the consumers;

(d) whether the RBI has allowed banks to hire strong arm agents to recover loans through highly questionable ways; and

(e) if so, whether RBI will review its policies on these matters?

### **Outstanding loans of banks**

†56. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of Nationalised Banks outstanding against big and medium industrial houses and since when;

(b) what steps Government have taken for its recovery and when such steps were taken; and

(c) by when the said amount is likely to be recovered?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**SC's ruling on power of States to levy luxury tax**

57. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent Supreme Court ruling that States cannot impose luxury tax on goods like cigarettes, ghutkas, etc.;

(b) if so, how the loss being suffered by the States by non-mopping up of luxury tax amounting to about Rs. 2500/- crores is likely to be offset;

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(d) whether a revision petition is proposed to be filed?

**S & P remarks on growth potential of Indian economy**

58. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the remarks of the International rating firm, Standard and Poor (S & P), that "Indian Government runs larger fiscal deficits and has accumulated more debt as a share of GDP, and is unlikely to attain very rapid growth rate over a prolonged period of time";

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

(c) what is the estimated GDP for the year 2005-06 and what is the rate of GDP during the last three quarters of 2004-05, i.e., from 1st April, 2004 to 31st December, 2004?

**Lack of transparency by banks in issuance of credit cards**

†59. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received complaints regarding lack of transparency in the services provided by banks issuing credit cards to its subscribers and whether subscribers are harassed by these banks by adopting various tactics;

(b) if so, whether Government have any proposal to formulate any code of conduct for such banks which issue credit cards; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

**Micro credit regulating system for loans to poor people**

†60. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are seriously considering to introduce shortly a micro credit regulating system for granting the loans to the poor people;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the said system is likely to be introduced?

**Kelkar Committee Report**

61. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Kelkar panel on restructuring of the Finance Ministry has recommended separating functions of the tax policy makers from tax administrators and collectors;

(b) what are the other recommendations made by the panel;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government have studied those recommendations; and

(d) if so, what decision Government have taken on the report?

#### **Revenue collected from Gujarat**

62. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of revenue collected from the State of Gujarat directly and indirectly during the last two years;

(b) the share of Gujarat out of this revenue collected during the said period; and

(c) the allocation made by the Central Government to Gujarat during the said period?

#### **New roadmap for banking reforms**

63. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are shortly going to unveil the new road map for banking reforms;

(b) if so, whether this policy is also going to address the issues of the co-operative banking sector;

(c) whether Government are considering to set up a separate regulator for co-operative banks; and

(d) if so, by when?

#### **Exemptions enjoyed by private colleges under the Income Tax Act, 1961**

64. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private

colleges and coaching centres can avail of income tax exemptions under three separate clauses providing exemption under Sections 10 (23c) and 11 and 12 of the Income Tax Act, 1961;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these clauses overlap each other;

(c) what is the justification for providing exemption under separate clauses of Sections 10 (23c) and 11 and 12; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that these are being misused by educational institutions?

#### **Loans to farmers**

65. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are reports of incidents of suicide among farmers exploited by private money lenders through high rate of interests;

(b) whether financial institutions and banks are providing crop loan and other credit facilities to those poor farmers who do not have Pattadar Pass Book, and are agriculture tenants; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, what plans have been made to do it?

#### **Re-structuring of co-operative banks**

†66. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal for re-structuring of co-operative banks of the country is under consideration of Government;

(b) whether Government have constituted any task force in this regard;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, what are the contents of its Report and what action Government propose to take thereon;

(d) the number of co-operative banks of the country which are sick from financial point of view; and

(e) the details of efforts being made for promoting co-operative sector?

#### **Special economic package for States**

†67. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government has received requests from various States for providing special economic package on different grounds for their development and to rid them of their miserable economic condition;

(b) if so, the States which have requested for the same alongwith the amount sought as special economic package and the amount sanctioned by the Central Government; and

(c) whether the State Government of Himachal Pradesh has also requested for special economic package and if so, when and the amount sought therefor?

#### **Status of implementation of infrastructure projects by financial institutions**

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

(a) the specific infrastructure projects started and completed by the financial institutions which were allowed to float Infrastructure Bonds, during the last three years, institution-wise and year-wise;

(b) the names of such projects started during the above period but not yet completed;

(c) the normal time taken by the institutions to complete such projects;

(d) the reasons for delay, if any, in completing the pending projects; and

(e) the steps taken to expeditiously complete such pending projects?

#### **Abolitions of the posts of Development Officers in LIC**

69. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is pursuing a vision of abolishing the posts of Development Officers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons and justification therefor as Development Officers are considered to be the backbone of LIC and play the greatest role in procuring business?

#### **New Incentive Bonus Scheme for Development Officers of LIC**

70. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Development Officers in the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) throughout the country;

(b) whether the LIC has introduced a New Incentive Bonus Scheme-2004 for these Development Officers;

(c) if so, the salient features thereof;

(d) whether the LIC has received representation from the National Federation of Insurance Field Workers of India, against the New Incentive Bonus Scheme- 2004; and

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(e) if so, the details thereof including the Government's reaction thereto?

**Report of Empowered Committee on VAT**

71. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the empowered Committee on State Finance Ministers on VAT has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the salient features of the recommendations;

(c) whether the Central Government would withdraw the financial support to the States who do not implement VAT with effect from April, 2005; and

(d) by when the Central Sales Tax would be phased out?

**Sale of NSCs in U.P. and Bihar**

†72. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of National Savings Certificates sold in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during the last three years and the year-wise and district-wise details of amount earned through the sales of the said Certificates;

(b) whether Government have received information regarding frauds being committed in managing the National Savings Certificates; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard, district-wise and the details of action taken to avert such risks in future?

**World Bank Projects in Bihar and U.P.**

†73. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of projects primed with the aid of World Bank and Asian Development Bank in the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the details of the amount allocated as a grant by the above banks, project-wise; and

(c) the details of work carried out in the above States so far with the aid of the above banks, project-wise and region-wise?

**World Economic Forum Meet on Davos**

74. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Economic Forum met in January in Davos;

(b) if so, how the Central Government and trade was represented therein; and

(c) what strategy was adopted by the Indian team to promote Indian economic and trade interests and what was the response and consensus reached in regard thereto?

**Shifting of Headquarters of SIDBI**

75. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Headquarter, other than that in Lucknow, of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) in Mumbai or in Delhi;

(b) what is the strength of the management and other staff of the said Bank in Lucknow, Delhi and Mumbai in each place separately;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.



(c) whether there is any proposal to gradually shift the Headquarters of SIDBI from Lucknow to Delhi or Mumbai; and

(d) whether the Chairman and other senior officers of SIDBI operate from Lucknow or elsewhere?

#### **Abolition of customs duty on LPG and kerosene oil**

†76. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to abolish the customs and excise duties on LPG and kerosene oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

#### **Industry friendly tax structure**

77. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are working on an industry friendly tax structure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have appointed a committee for streamlining the duty structure of petroleum products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Irregularities in banks**

78. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the complete details of irregularities in various banks during the last three years;

(b) the steps taken against such banks; and

(c) what corrective steps have been

initiated to stop recurrence of such irregularities in future?

#### **Foreign exchange reserves**

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

(a) the amount of India's total foreign exchange reserves as on 1st January, 2005;

(b) whether it is proposed to withdraw a part of the forex reserves to fund the infrastructure development;

(c) if so, whether any guidelines have been laid down in this regard;

(d) if answer to (b) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor; and

(e) in what ways it is proposed to utilise huge forex reserves?

#### **Structural adjustment loan for Maharashtra**

80. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Maharashtra has submitted a proposal of 10 thousand crores as a structural adjustment loan from World Bank through Government of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in this regard?

#### **FDI limit in private banks**

81. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are moving towards allowing 74 per cent FDI in private banks;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether any consultations with the Reserve Bank of India have been made in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the RBI circulated guidelines for this purpose to ascertain the views of the people, institutions etc.; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Inclusion and exclusion error in provision of subsidies**

82. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the subsidies provided in India suffer from both inclusion error and exclusion error; and

(b) whether it is a fact that in case of food subsidy, Government provides price support to only farmers of wheat and rice at a time when consumption pattern is moving away from foodgrains?

#### **Lending by banks to farmers**

83. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the RBI has asked all banks to increasingly lend directly to farmers and other priority sector borrowers; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that in the light of these instructions by the RBI, the investments which have already been made/ to be made by banks upto March 31, 2005, in the special bonds issued by specified institutions (except NABARD) will not be eligible for classification under priority sector lending with effect from April 1, 2006 and the details thereof?

#### **Setting up of co-operative banks**

84. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up co-operative banks in the different States of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, location-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the effective measures initiated by Government in this regard?

#### **Implementation of Centrally sponsored schemes for rural development in Panchayati Raj Institutions**

†85. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any suggestion for handing over the Centrally sponsored schemes meant for the rural development and the resources related to them to the Panchayati Raj Institutions directly;

(b) if so, by when the final decision is likely to be taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) whether Government would also consider providing the amount directly to Panchayats so that they can get money on time?

#### **Devolution of powers to Panchayati Raj Institutions**

86. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) when the Mahatma Gandhi's dream of Poorna Swaraj, as envisaged through

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

the historic Panchayati Raj Legislation passed in the Parliament about twelve years ago, would result in devolution of powers to Panchayati Raj Institutions at grassroot level;

(b) whether the present persuasive methods being adopted during the last one decade through conferences/meetings with State Level Ministers/functionaries would help in achieving the purpose;

(c) if so, what is the time-frame; and

(d) whether a constitutional amendment will have to be resorted as seemed to be the general feeling in the December, 2004 Panchayati Raj Conference held in Jaipur?

#### **Implementation of Panchayati Raj system in States**

87. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI:  
SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Panchayati Raj system is not implemented so far in many States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any plan or proposal to ensure the implementations of Panchayati Raj system in such States;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether there is any proposal to give such authority to panchayats so that they can develop resources and manage funds on their own and if so, the details thereof?

#### **Conditions for Indo-Iran gas pipeline project**

†88. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are reconsidering to start Indo-Iran gas pipeline project and if so, the names of the countries through which this pipe line will pass;

(b) the extent to which India will be benefited by the said project; and

(c) whether neighbouring countries have laid down any conditions for setting up the said project and if so, the details thereof?

#### **Allotment of dealerships of LPG/ petrol outlets in Uttar Pradesh**

†89. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps and gas agencies allotted by Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum, Hindustan Petroleum and IBP in Uttar Pradesh during the last financial year;

(b) whether Government are aware that allotment is not being made in an appropriate manner to the applicants belonging to the reserved categories; and

(c) whether Government are also aware that irregularities are being committed by the officials of Government companies in allotment of the petrol pumps and gas agencies?

#### **Performance of petronet LNG**

90. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Petronet

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

LNG is registered as a private company;

(b) if so, the details of the Board Members of this company including the purpose for which this company was formed;

(c) whether the company has achieved the targets set by Government or its Board since its inception;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to relax the eligibility criteria for appointment of CEO of Petronet LNG; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

#### **Diversification of its activities by ONGC**

91. SHRIT.T.V.DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC is exploring the option of diversification of its activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ONGC has signed any MoU for such diversified activities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Private companies in gas and oil sector**

†92. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private gas and oil companies granted permission to operate in various States during the last three years; and

(b) the quantum of revenue Government have earned thereby?

#### **Measures to meet growing demand of natural gas**

93. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the natural gas is fast emerging as the most preferred fuel in the country;

(b) if so, the quantum of natural gas required by the country to meet the growing demand of natural gas during the coming years;

(c) the steps Government have taken or propose to take to meet the growing demand of natural gas;

(d) whether a demand has been made to set up a Regulatory Framework for attracting more investments in this sector; and

(e) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard?

#### **Supply of ATF by private firms**

94. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to dismantle the monopoly of state-owned oil firms in the supply of aviation turbine fuel at Indian Airports;

(b) whether the increased competition with the entry of private players will bring down the ATF prices and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have assessed the loss to be caused to the oil firms and if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

### **Discussions on Iran-India gas pipeline project**

95. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he discussed the long pending India-Iran gas pipeline project with the Prime Minister of Pakistan during his recent visit; and

(b) if so, what is the result thereof?

### **Deal for supply of gas from Myanmar**

96. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have concluded a deal with Myanmar for supply of gas to India;

(b) whether a pipeline is needed to bring this gas to India;

(c) whether Bangladesh has given transit rights for this pipeline;

(d) if so, the details of the entire deal including cost of pipelines, and other fiscal benefits to Bangladesh;

(e) whether this deal is worth in the long run to India; and

(f) if so, the gains from this pipeline?

### **Profits of oil companies**

†97. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:  
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the consumer

sales prices of petrol and diesel were, last time, fixed in November 4, 2004 in the country;

(b) if not, on what date they were fixed;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the average profits of the oil companies have increased in the country after the above period; and

(d) if so, the details regarding the increase in the profits of oil companies belonging to public and private sector?

### **ONGC's power plants**

98. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the major power plants under ONGC in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether there is any plan to set up new plants in Andhra Pradesh in the current year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Crude oil prices in international market**

†99. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:  
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of crude oil in international market were all time high during October and November, 2004;

(b) if so, what was the highest price and when this prevailed;

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is also a fact that the prices of crude oil in international market have declined since then; and

(d) if so, the lowest prices in international market recorded since first week of November, 2004 to February, 2005 and the average price assessed during November, 2004 to February 15, 2005?

#### **Introduction of Euro-II and Euro-III fuels**

100. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the various oil companies in the country have been asked to adhere to April, 2005 for introduction of Euro-II and III fuels;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these companies are facing some operational problems and may have to seek extension of the fixed deadline;

(c) if so, the details of any fresh review undertaken recently to coordinate with the oil companies to help them resolve their genuine problems; and

(d) the details of fresh strategy drawn up, if any, to meet/revise the original deadline?

#### **Iran-India gas pipeline project**

101. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMIREDDY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a sealing of \$ 49 billion LNG deal with Iran, India achieved another breakthrough in getting Bangladesh to agree on passing of Myanmar-India natural gas pipeline through its territory;

(b) whether India, Pakistan and Iran have agreed to prepare feasibility report in regard to the proposal of 18000 crore Iran-India gas pipeline project;

(c) if so, whether a high level delegation from Iranian Petroleum Ministry visited New Delhi during the month of January, 2005 to give proposal a concrete shape; and

(d) if so, to what extent this will be helpful for India?

#### **Gas Pipeline Policy**

102. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:  
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of a new Gas Pipeline Policy to put up a National Gas Grid;

(b) whether the representation to have a two-tier regulatory structure has been received from the State Government of Gujarat;

(c) whether Government are agreeable to leave transmission part to a State level regulator exclusively; and

(d) by when, the new Gas Pipeline Policy shall be finalised?

#### **Allocation of natural gas to Gujarat**

103. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:  
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken to allocate 3.65 MMSCMD of Natural Gas for Power Projects to Gujarat with reference to a letter addressed to him on 15th December, 2004 by Gujarat MPs;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) the production of natural gas in the country during the last five years from 1999-2000 to 2003-04;

(d) the allocation of natural gas made to Gujarat during the last five years from 1999-2000 to 2003-04; and

(e) whether it is a fact that 0.4 MMSCMD of additional gas allocation was promised in 2002, but has not been supplied till date?

#### **Foreign companies in oil exploration**

†104. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign companies are being invited for exploration of oil and gas from our wells;

(b) the names of companies which are showing interest in oil exploration; and

(c) the areas identified for the said exploration?

#### **Indo-Iran gas pipeline project**

†105. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of 2775 km. long Indo-Iran gas pipeline 760 km will pass through Pakistan;

(b) whether the safety of gas pipeline passing through Pakistan is still a matter of concern;

(c) if so, the steps Government are going to take in this regard; and

(d) whether Pakistan is also a partner in this project?

#### **Cost of production of LPG**

106. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have been paying subsidy for LPG supplied to consumers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how the cost of production of LPG in India compare with other countries producing LPG; and

(d) whether any research has been done or other steps taken to bring down the cost of production of LPG?

#### **Demand and supply of gas connections**

107. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps Government propose to take to ensure smooth supply of LPG with correct weight in the country; and

(b) the extent of demand and the supply of gas connections in the country during the last three years, State-wise?

#### **Losses suffered by oil companies**

108. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government will have to formulate a fresh pricing mechanism for the national oil companies in the face of world oil prices rising to US Dollar 55 a barrel in October last year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the price hike effected by Government did not fully compensate the oil companies for the

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

impact of extremely high global prices; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the under recoveries to be borne by the oil companies would shoot-up further, if the prices are not revised?

#### **Natural gas storage**

109. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to develop natural gas storage facilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the purpose of this storage and beneficiaries thereof ?

#### **Oil deposits in Assam**

110. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether new oil deposits have recently been found in Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when exploration is expected to begin?

#### **Revival of Bhatinda Oil Refinery**

111. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) has decided to revive the Bhatinda Oil Refinery Project, the work on which was suspended in 2002;

(b) if so, the details of the revised project, and the steps taken/being taken in that direction; and

(c) under what circumstances the work on the project was suspended earlier?

#### **Completion of Iran-India gas pipeline project**

112. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Iran-India gas pipeline project;

(b) whether certain factors are impeding its timely completion; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard and efforts made to ensure timely completion of the project?

#### **Decisions taken at the conference of Asian Oil Ministers**

113. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a first-ever round table conference of Asian Oil Ministers held in New Delhi on 7th January, 2005, has agreed to endorse India's proposal for an Asian Oil Market;

(b) whether it was also decided to create a benchmark crude for the Asian market;

(c) the name of the countries who participated and the details of the decisions taken thereat; and

(d) whether the oil producing countries gave any assurance to keep the prices and supply stable so that economic growth may go on unhindered?

#### **Exploration of crude oil in Rajasthan and Punjab**

114. DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of crude oil explored in



recent years in the State of Rajasthan and Punjab;

(b) whether Government are considering to set up any oil refinery plant in these States;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) if not, in the State of Rajasthan, the reasons therefor?

#### **International gas pipeline project**

115. SHRI G. K. VASAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to meet India's oil needs through international gas pipeline project; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Revision in prices of LPG and Kerosene**

116. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have increased the prices of LPG and Kerosene; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

#### **Recommendations of Kirit Parikh Committee**

†117. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kirit Parikh Committee constituted by the Planning Commission has recommended to make refinery, distribution and exploration sectors independent;

(b) if so, the details of the loss being suffered as a result of present mechanism;

(c) whether Kirit Parikh Committee has found shortcomings in the present mechanism; and

(d) whether the Committee has recommended to bring drastic changes in the present mechanism?

#### **Asian Oil Market**

118. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been arrived at regarding India's proposal for the development of an Asian Oil Market;

(b) whether the required infrastructure is available in the country for the same; and

(c) the details of the oil market and the countries that are expected to join the Asian Oil Market?

#### **ONGC's investment in Sudan**

119. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of oil which ONGC has extracted from the Sudan oil wells thus far;

(b) the capital invested in the Sudan oil wells by ONGC thus far;

(c) the additional funds which have to be invested in Sudan by ONGC to complete the project; and

(d) the quantum of oil which has been estimated to be in the oil wells in Sudan fields?

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

### **Oil refinery in Punjab**

120. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government have decided to set up a crude oil refinery in Punjab for refining oil recently discovered in Western Rajasthan;

(b) whether the State Government of Rajasthan has threatened to block the pipeline to be laid for the proposed refinery; and

(c) the steps taken to solve the problem?

### **Visits of leaders of oil producing countries to India**

121. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that eminent leaders from oil producing countries will be visiting India in the near future to discuss refining and marketing of fuel oil in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

### **Adulteration of petroleum products**

122. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is massive adulteration of petroleum products all over the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the PSU Oil companies are unable to control this adulteration;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the staff of Oil PSUs at some level are colluding with the petrol pump owners;

(d) in what manner Government propose to curb adulteration of petroleum products; and

(e) the details thereof?

### **Development of tourist spots in Andhra Pradesh**

123. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what concrete and innovative steps are being taken for the past three years to develop the tourist spots in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have planned to undertake any study to find out the ways and means to increase foreign exchange earnings through foreign tourists in India;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

### **Setting up of a Tourism Board**

†124. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are formulating any plan to set up a Tourism Board;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the plans Government are having for the infrastructural development of tourism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

### **Spiritual tourism**

125. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of health tourism and action plan to boost spiritual tourism;

(b) whether Government have drawn

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

up a vision document for transforming India into a health destination; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

#### **Campaign to promote tourism**

126. SHRI R.P. GOENKA:  
SHRI EKANATH K.  
THAKUR:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a nationwide campaign called *Atithi devo bhava* has been launched recently to sensitise and train some 26,000 key stakeholders in the tourist industry towards attracting more foreign tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status of its implementation; and

(c) the details of any similar programme launched/proposed to be launched to give fillip to domestic tourism which remains a vast untapped market with immense economic implications?

#### **Night view of Taj Mahal**

†127. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has given its permission to the tourists to see the Taj Mahal situated at Agra during night time also;

(b) if so, the number of domestic as well as foreign tourists who came to see the Taj Mahal in the night during the last two years;

(c) whether the income has increased during last two months by opening the Taj Mahal for night viewing; and

(d) if so, whether the number of tourists coming to see the Taj Mahal in the night can be increased and if so, by when it can be done?

#### **Development of Buddhist tourism centres**

†128. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of Buddhist tourists visit India; and

(b) if so, the scheme formulated by Government to develop places related to Mahatma Buddha for tourism purposes?

#### **Boost to domestic tourism**

129. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to give a boost to the domestic tourism for the year 2005, by providing low budget accommodation and travelling facilities to new destinations of varied interests;

(b) if so, the details of new facilities proposed and new destinations identified for the purpose; and

(c) the extent to which domestic tourism is expected to increase and the funds earmarked by Government for the purpose during the year?

#### **Tourism in tsunami affected areas of Tamil Nadu**

130. SHRI G.K. VASAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether tourism has been affected in tsunami affected areas of Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to revive tourist interest in these areas?

#### **Tourism projects**

131. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of ongoing tourism projects pertaining to historical and archaeological importance in the different parts of the country, State-wise;

(b) the details of such projects completed so far; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government for these projects to be completed?

#### **Incredible Website**

132. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:  
SHRI R.K. ANAND:  
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the 'Incredible India' website of his Ministry tells foreigners that the Indian Standard Time stands for Indian Stretchable time; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the advice given on this website to foreign visitors gives a bad name to every Indian and consider every Indian as indisciplined; and

(c) what measures are being taken by Government to remove these objectionable contents from the website?

#### **Damage to tourism industry due to tsunami tragedy**

133. DR. KARAN SINGH:  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the total damage caused to tourism industry due to tsunami tragedy;

(b) if so, the details of the total damage that have been caused and loss of lives and properties of the Ministry; and

(c) what is the help and assistance provided by the Ministry to those employees who were killed and also damage caused to various tourist attractive places?

#### **Development of tourism in Andaman Islands**

134. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:  
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to develop tourism in Andaman Islands;

(b) whether it is also a fact that environmental protection issue is coming in its way;

(c) whether Government propose to amend the coastal zone notification to ensure legitimate economic activity with increased employment for the locals; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

#### **Sound and light show at Kittur fort**

135. SHRIMATI. PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have received any proposal of State

Government of Karnataka for providing 'sound and light' show at Kittur Fort;

(b) if so, the status of the proposal; and

(c) the time by which the proposal will be cleared by the Central Government?

#### **Poor percentage of tourist arrivals in India**

136. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the share of India in world tourists arrival is less than 0.4 per cent in the recent years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken by Government to boost world tourists arrival to India; and

(d) whether Government does consult the States on the matter of Tourism Development for better Coordination?

#### **Tourism potential**

137. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is not able to utilise its full tourism potential;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of funds allocated and actually utilised for the development of tourism in the country during 2004-05, State-wise;

(d) the details of ongoing tourist projects launched by Government, State-wise; and

(e) by when the above projects are likely to be completed, particularly in Gujarat?

#### **Pilgrim centres in Uttaranchal**

†138. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to identify some pilgrim centres and develop them from tourist point of view ; and

(b) if so, the names of such centres identified in Uttaranchal?

#### **Measures to boost tourism industry**

139. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an increase in the tourists inflow and foreign exchange earning;

(b) if so, the details in this regard for the last three years with number of overseas tourists visiting India and foreign exchange earned during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether the recent tsunami has adversely affected the tourism industry in the country; and

(d) if so, what measures are proposed to be taken to build the confidence of the visiting tourists and invigorating the tourism industry in the country?

#### **Development of tourism in tsunami hit areas**

140. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recently occurred disaster of tsunami has affected the tourism sector a lot;

(b) whether Government have set any developmental goals to improve the tourism sector in order to attract the tourists; and

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details about developmental steps being taken by Government?

**Increase in demand for accommodation in tourism Sector**

141. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are anticipating any increase in demand for accommodation in the Indian Tourism; and

(b) if so, how Government propose to cope up with the demand and the amount of finance involved in the process and how to make available the required funds?

**World Bank funding for restoration of Water bodies**

142. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sought hefty funding from the World Bank for sustained long term development of water sector, including restoration of water bodies;

(b) whether the proposals to be financed with World Bank aid include building of a sea wall along the coast line lately hit by Tsunami; and

(c) if so, the details of the World Bank aid sought and the bank's response thereto?

**Development of water bodies**

143. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:  
SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Union Cabinet has approved a national project

for repair, renovation and restoration of water bodies directly linked to agriculture;

(b) if so, the details of the project;

(c) what is the estimated cost of the project and the contribution of the Central Government and the State Governments; and

(d) what are the aims and objectives of the project?

**Constitution of a Special Cell on inter linking of rivers**

144. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Centre has decided to constitute a Special Cell on inter-linking of rivers in place of Task Force;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government had disbanded the high profile Task Force set up;

(c) whether it is also a fact that all the 30 links proposed under the inter-linking plans are estimated at Rs. 560,000 crores; and

(d) if so, how Government plans to generate this much required fund for the project?

**Change of course of rivers**

145. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various rivers in the country are showing change of course as reported by remote sensing equipments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the plans of Government for desalination and erosion control of rivers in various parts of the country?

### Sharing of Cauvery water

146. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Tamil Nadu had demanded allocation of 562 thousand million cubic feet of Cauvery water to meet its irrigation, domestic and industrial requirements;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State Government of Tamil Nadu had urged that the water available in Cauvery river basin be given to the riparian States on priority basis; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

### Irrigation projects in Maharashtra

147. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of pending irrigation projects in Maharashtra;

(b) whether Government propose to give Special Loan Assistance to Maharashtra to complete pending irrigation projects;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Central Government have launched the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme for accelerating implementation of on-going irrigation projects which are beyond the resource capacity of State Government;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the amounts so far given to the State Government of Maharashtra under this programme for completing on-going irrigation projects?

### Contaminated ground water

†148. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:  
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER  
SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a survey conducted by the Central Ground Water Board reveals that about 23 crore people of the country are compelled to utilise contaminated ground water;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have formulated any scheme to rid people of this contaminated water; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

### Restructuring of RRB's

149. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been considering certain measures for restructuring Regional Rural Banks, which play a key role in providing rural credit;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is proposed to extensively amend the Regional Rural Banks Act to evolve a hybrid model combining several options; and

(d) if so, by when it is likely to be done?

### Diversion of water from west flowing Mahadayi river to Malprabha project

150. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received any proposal from the Government of

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Karnataka for diversion of water from west flowing Mahadayi river to Malprabha project;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that despite several requests from the Government of Karnataka, clearance to this proposal has been kept in abeyance; and

(c) if so, by when the Master Plan would be approved?

#### **Harnessing of surplus water in west flowing rivers**

151. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of the surplus water in the west flowing rivers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any proposal for harnessing such surplus water for use in the neighbouring States; and

(d) whether Government would formulate a time bound scheme for optimum utilisation of the surface water?

#### **Completion of irrigation projects**

152. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work on many irrigation projects have been held up due to non-release of funds by the Central Government resulting in revision of time schedule and cost over-run in respect of these projects;

(b) if so, the details of such irrigation projects, State-wise;

(c) the time-frame which was set up initially and the new time schedule set for completion of these projects; and

(d) the steps taken by the Central Government to direct the concerned authorities to complete these projects expeditiously?

#### **Water harvesting programmes in Chhattisgarh**

†153. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the amount provided for under ground water recharge and water harvesting programmes in Chhattisgarh under the Central Regional Scheme;

(b) the number of proposals for the schemes received from the State Government of Chhattisgarh under the said programmes along with the costs thereof; and

(c) by when the proposals will be cleared and the amount provided therefor?

#### **Economic help to State Governments under NCPP**

†154. SHRI R. S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government provides economic help to State Governments under National Coastal Protection Project;

(b) if so, the details of economic help extended by the Central Government to the State Governments during the last three years; and

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†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.



(c) the economic help the Central Government propose to extend to the State Governments under National Coastal Protection Project during the year 2005-06?

**Interlinking of rivers**

155. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have agreed before the Supreme Court not

to go back on the inter linking of rivers with an estimated cost of Rs. 5 lakh crores;

(b) whether the issue has been placed before the Cabinet in the month of September, 2004 for a comprehensive review;

(c) if so, what is the decision of the Cabinet in this regard; and

(d) what Action Plan does Government have to complete the project as early as possible?

NEW DELHI;  
*The 23rd February, 2005*  
*Phalguna 4, 1926 (Saka)*

YOGENDRA NARAIN,  
*Secretary-General.*

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