

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the December 2, 2003/Agrahayana 11, 1925 (Saka)*

(Ministries : Civil Aviation; Finance; Petroleum and Natural Gas;
Tourism and Culture; Water Resources)

Total number of questions—108

Open sky policy for ASEAN countries

1. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister's announcement of a unilateral 'open-sky policy' for the 10 member-countries grouped under the ASEAN is to expedite greater economic integration of the Indian economy with one of the fastest growing regions of the world;

(b) if so, whether under this declaration, a number of countries like Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam will be allowed to operate daily flights to Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai after entering into bilateral air-services talks with India; and

(c) if so, to what extent this proposal has been accepted and implemented?

New navigational system by AAI

2. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Airports Authority of India have any plan to

introduce satellite based navigational system in place of old conventional ground-based systems like radars;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) in what manner it will help in increasing the flight operations; and

(d) in what manner it will help in opening up possibilities of new air routes?

Maintenance of aircrafts

† 3. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of airworthy planes is less than required;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the arrangement for manufacturing and repairs of such planes is inadequate; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Gender discrimination in AI

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there are disparities in norms and conditions pertaining to the women crew *vis-a-vis* the men crew onboard Air India flights;

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (b) whether there is difference of standards on retirement age limit, medical check ups, etc.;
- (c) if so, whether it amounts to gender discrimination; and
- (d) what is Government's response thereto?

Air service between Bhopal and Jabalpur

5. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
- (a) whether Government have any proposal to start Indian Airlines service between Bhopal and Jabalpur;
 - (b) if so, by when; and
 - (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Enhancement of air services

6. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
- (a) whether Government propose to increase the frequency of flights to Bhopal;
 - (b) if so, by when additional flights are likely to resume; and
 - (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Air service from Vijayawada airport

7. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
- (a) whether air traffic to and fro Vijayawada airport in Andhra Pradesh has commenced;
 - (b) if so, the details thereof;

- (c) the details of air companies which are operating their flights from the said airport; and
- (d) what steps Government have taken to make this airport airworthy for big aircrafts?

Impact of Open Sky policy on AI and IA

8. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
- (a) whether the 'Open Sky' policy for ASEAN is likely to hit the earnings of Air India and Indian Airlines; and
 - (b) if so, the measures taken to prevent any adverse impact on the revenue of Airlines?

Development of runway at Haridwar

- †9. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
- (a) whether BHEL controlled run way at Haridwar is proposed to be developed as a regular runway;
 - (b) if so, the details thereof; and
 - (c) if not, the details of the steps being taken to provide proper air service to the city in view of its international importance as a religious city?

Privatisation of Mumbai and Delhi airports

10. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
- (a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to privatise Delhi and Mumbai Airports;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof including FDI and foreign partners; and

(c) what precautions have been taken to ensure national interest in traffic control and civil aviation security?

IA's joint venture with Singapore Airlines for ground handling

11. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Airlines has decided to tie up with Singapore Airlines to handle the ground handling business;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines did not consider the offer from foreign airlines and their subsidiaries while taking a decision on joint venture in this regard and if so, the reasons therefor?

Concession to students of NE region

12. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTA-CHARJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the existing practice, students from the North-Eastern region get 50 per cent discount on travel between their home-States and Kolkata;

(b) whether it is a fact that students from this region have requested that discount on air journeys should be given to them between the airport nearest to the student's home and the airport nearest to their place of study; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider this request favourably and if not, the reasons therefor?

Withdrawal of concessions to senior citizens

13. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTA-CHARJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines has decided to withdraw the concessions being given to the senior citizens in domestic flights;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government have received any representation from the senior citizens against the proposed withdrawal and if so, Government's reaction thereto?

Direction issued by Commission of Railway Safety

14. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of directions issued by the Commission of Railway Safety, other than statutory inquiries held into serious railway accidents, to the Railways during the last three years ending 31st March, 2003, year-wise;

(b) the directions out of the above, which have been fully complied with;

(c) the directions not complied with togetherwith the reasons advanced by the Railways therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Commission to ensure full compliance in these cases?

Private airlines' services to Gulf

15. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal from the private airlines for access to lucrative Gulf and other countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**Civic amenities at Allahabad
Airport**

16. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the pathetic condition of civic amenities at the Bambrauli Airport, Allahabad;

(b) whether Government are aware that common utilities like toilets, drinking water, seating facility, air conditioning, etc. have not been provided;

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to provide the same; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Negotiation for Airbus/Boeing

17. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have signed the contract, for the amount of Rs. 10,000 crores to acquire 10 Airbus-340 and 18 Boeing-737;

(b) if so, by when it would be purchased; and

(c) whether Airbuses would be equipped with latest technology?

Retirement age of Air Hostesses

18. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the retirement age of Air Hostesses in Indian Airlines and Air India is different;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the details thereof?

Services on uneconomical routes

19. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have initiated an exercise to review and rework the existing guidelines that force carried to operate a stipulated number of flights on the social and uneconomical routes;

(b) if so, whether it will adversely affect the chances of smaller places like tribal district like Yavatmal in Maharashtra to on the airmap; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to connect Yavatmal by air in the near future?

**Variation in prices of
aviation fuel**

20. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the price of the aviation fuel in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai respectively;

(b) the reason for such a variation of prices in each such case with break up of tax and other duties; and

(c) the steps contemplated to overcome this variation?

Losses due to air crashes

†21. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of air crashes that occurred or were averted due to technical faults or other reasons during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for such mishaps and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

the details of the loss suffered by Indian Airlines as a consequence thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by Government to avert the recurrence of accidents in future?

Private airlines’ service to Colombo

22. PROF.M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to allow Private Airlines to operate to Colombo;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement entered between India and Colombo; and

(c) in what manner it will help in opening the skies to private players to other destinations of the World?

Criteria for appointment of CMDs in Banks

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

(a) the policy of Government and procedure and criteria adopted in making the appointment of Chairmen, Managing Directors and Directors in all the nationalised banks;

(b) the names of the present incumbents on the Board of Directors of all the nationalised banks with their due date of retirements;

(c) whether members on the Board of Directors are also elected; and

(d) if so, the policy and procedure of elections and the likely date of ensuing election in different nationalised banks?

Implementation of Central Projects

24. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have tightened the noose on implementation of all Central projects especially those in infrastructure sector involving an investment of Rs. 50 crore and above;

(b) if so, whether guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance during June, 2003 sought to curb the time and cost over-runs, ensure judicious use of scarce plan funds and remove indifference in quality of project formulation and appraisal which could lead to bottlenecks in implementation;

(c) whether any deadline was set for Central projects, State-owned enterprises;

(d) if so, how many States have so far responded; and

(e) what is the latest position in this regard?

Waiver of custom duty on 91 items

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have agreed to waive custom duty on 91 items during WTO Ministerial Conference at Cancun in September, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have considered the impact of such decision on the domestic industries; and

(d) the steps taken to protect the interest of domestic industries from its adverse impact?

Pension Regulatory Authority

26. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are thinking of setting up a Pension Regulatory Authority;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the reasons for setting up of such an authority?

Grants for hospital upgradation

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

(a) whether a proposal of maternal and child healthcare and hospital upgradation in Cama and JJ Hospital, Mumbai of Rs. 55 crore for obtaining grant-in-aid from Japan was sent to Ministry of Finance by the State Government of Maharashtra;

(b) whether after lifting of sanctions, Japan was keen to complete the project and basic design study team visited these hospitals in January, 2003;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Central Government would take up the matter with Japan for getting the project sanctioned early?

Group discount on Mediclaim policy

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

(a) whether the Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd. allowed excess group discount on Mediclaim policy to LIC during the year 2001-2002;

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

(c) whether this discount was allowed in violation of guidelines and if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the action taken in this regard including the recovery of amount?

Permission to invest abroad

29. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the survey conducted by FICCI, the Private insurance firms are very keen to invest, the Premium funds abroad;

(b) whether any request from the Private Insurance Companies has been received by Government for permission to invest abroad which is otherwise prevented by the existing Act;

(c) whether Government would think of having a separate regulator both for insurance and pension; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Credit out flow to rural sector

30. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the last rural household survey, more than 62 per cent of farmers outstanding debt was owed to private money lenders;

(b) whether the low percentage of credit outflow of the commercial banks to the rural sector is causing this problem;

(c) if so, the details of the credit outflow of the commercial banks to the rural sectors;

(d) whether Government have taken adequate steps to increase the credit outflow of the commercial banks to rural areas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Tax holiday for backward States

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to allow tax holiday in backward States in industrial sector;

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

(c) whether this tax holiday also applies to the most backward state of Orissa, if so, the details thereof?

Insurance Companies operating in India

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

(a) the names of Life and General Insurance Companies operating in India, with the names of countries of registration;

(b) whether some of these companies have established joint ventures in India, with equity participation of Indian Companies;

(c) names of Indian Life and General Insurance Companies operating in such countries; and

(d) names of other countries in which the Indian Companies are operating?

Foreign assistance

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

(a) the details of foreign assistance received by Government during the last three years for various projects in the Country and the amount utilized out of that;

(b) the details of projects on which the above amount has been spent in the Country; and

(c) the specific reasons for not unutilizing the amount by Government?

Duty exemption on equipments

34. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Media Group has sought duty exemption on a range of equipments for technical upgradation; and

(b) if so, the action taken on their demands?

Institutional financial investment in Uttaranchal

†35. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of institutional financial investment in Uttaranchal;

(b) whether the Ministry of Finance is taking some special steps to increase investment through financial institutions and banks in Uttaranchal; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Postal charges for outstation cheques

36. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether banks not only take commission but Rs. 25 as postal charges also for every outstation cheque (OSC);

(b) how much charges private banks are taking for every OSC; and

(c) what are the reasons for not crediting OSCs by using E-mail for exchange of information in the age of telecommunication, information technology?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Rising fiscal deficit

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairman of the Twlfth Finance Commission has warned against rising deficit which would adversely affect economic growth;

(b) if so, the present position of deficit in relation to GDP as compared to the last year; and

(c) the steps being taken to bridge the gap?

High interest bonds for Varishtha Beema Yojana

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

(a) whether it is a fact that LIC has requested Government to create a fund or periodically issue high-interest bonds for meeting interest deficits to make Varishtha Beema Yojana a viable scheme;

(b) if so, whether Government have agreed to accede to the request of LIC; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Economic crisis in financial institutions

†39. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Government and Non-Government Financial Institutions have fallen into severe economic crisis during 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003;

(b) if so, the names of such institutions and the amount given to each institution from various sources alongwith the years in which the same was given; and

(c) the actual capital of each institution at the beginning of April, 2003 and the extent of amount by which this capital is more or less *vis-a-vis* the capital of April, 2000?

Outstanding income tax dues

†40. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the assessment of Income Tax Office, Mumbai, income tax amounting Rs. 28,494.88 crores is outstanding towards big as well as small industrialists;

(b) if not, the total amount outstanding under this head alongwith the amount recovered out of this upto the end of September, 2003; and

(c) the names of the establishment from which the outstanding amount is to be recovered alongwith the amount which is to be recovered from each establishment?

Hike in emoluments of Directors of Banks

†41. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH
'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the fee to be given to Directors of Public Sector Banks has been hiked;

(b) if so, the amount of such fee during April, 2000 and as on 15th November, 2003; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) to what extent banks have to bear the burden of total additional amount as a result of hike made for the last time recently?

Delay in recovery of NPAs

42. SHRI C. RAMA-
CHANDRAIAH:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total NPA in various banks and whether banks have been successful in reducing their NPA after the related legislation passed in the Parliament;

(b) what is the action plan of Government for reducing NPAs by various banks;

(c) whether the Ministry of Finance, has the list of big defaulters in bank loans and loan and claim amount is more than Rs. 100 crores; if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) whether it is a fact that some of the banks are intentionally delaying taking action against the big defaulters?

Task Force on growth rate

43. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Task Force has been set up to make recommendations to achieve the 8 per cent growth target during the Tenth Plan period; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Guidelines issued by CDBT

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

(a) whether there are any instructions/ guidelines issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes, regarding filing of second appeal in income tax and wealth tax cases before the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these instructions/guidelines have been violated and superfluous and unnecessary appeals are being filed which increase workload of appellate authorities;

(d) the number of such cases during the last two years and action taken, if any, against those responsible therefor; and

(e) the action taken/proposed to ensure that such appeals are not filed in future?

Collection of taxes by States

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

(a) whether Government have received suggestions from State Government to pass on 50 per cent of taxes it collects to the States from the present share of 29.5 per cent; and

(b) if so, Government's response thereto?

Mobile phone users under tax net

46. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CBDT had addressed all its Zonal Office to prepare lists of those who pay Rs. 50,000 or more as rentals for using mobile phone services for making them pay income tax;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the lists of such users of mobile phone services have been prepared; and

(d) if so, the action being taken against them for recovery of income tax?

Exemptions of income tax to senior citizens

47. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representations from any organizations working for the welfare of the senior citizens with regard to grant of exemption to the senior citizens from filing Income-Tax Returns whose income does exceed 50,000/- per annum; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what action Government propose to take in the matter in order to provide physical and mental relief to the senior citizens?

Low FDI inflow

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the FDI has dropped to 50 per cent in the first quarter of April-June, 2003;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the FDI inflow for the above period stood at US\$529 million as against US\$1.2 billion in the corresponding period last year;

(c) if so, the reasons for this drop; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to overcome the difficulties and pave way for more FDI inflow?

Corporate governance in private sector

49. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's assessment

of the current state of corporate governance in the private sector; and

(b) the measures undertaken or contemplated to bring about improvements in corporate governance?

Electronic refund scheme for tax refunds

50. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Finance is very soon going to launch electronic refund scheme through the electronic credit system of RBI for claiming tax refunds;

(b) whether any time-frame has been fixed within which the system is going to be launched;

(c) the details of States in which it is going to be launched; and

(d) in what manner the Ministry can launch the system without changing the audit rules and treasury rules?

Mounting fiscal deficit

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

(a) whether RBI in its annual report has expressed grave concern over mounting fiscal deficit;

(b) if so, the details of fiscal deficit at the end of September, 2003;

(c) whether widening fiscal gap has led to steep rise in outstanding liabilities of Government;

(d) if so, the percentage of internal debt and other liabilities to the total outstanding domestic debt of the Central Government

as on 30th September and 31st October, 2003; and

(e) the steps taken to overcome it?

Disposal of seized goods

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

(a) whether the seized and confiscated goods are pending for disposal as on 31st October, 2003;

(b) if so, the value thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the value of goods which is pending disposal for more than 10, 15 and 20 years respectively;

(d) whether delay in disposal of goods is amounting to loss of revenue and blocking of funds; and

(e) the steps being devised to dispose of such goods expeditiously?

Crediting of outstation cheques

53. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that whenever an outstation cheque amounting less than Rs. 5000/- is deposited, banks are not crediting the amount immediately;

(b) if so, whether banks are supposed to credit the amount immediately without waiting for realisation; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

GDP growth rate

54. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of GDP growth rate of the country during 1991 to 2002, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the GDP growth rate has plummeted during the above period in comparison with the growth rate achieved during 1980s;

(c) if so, comparative figures of GDP growth rate for the period 1981 to 1990;

(d) whether the slow down in the GDP growth rate indicates the failure of the economic reforms policy;

(e) if so, whether Government would consider comprehensive measures including review of the present economic policies; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Sale of shares by ICICI bank

55. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ICICI bank has decided to sell off their shares in the South Indian Bank and Federal Bank;

(b) if so, the details of the percentage of shares ICICI bank holds in both the banks; separately alongwith the reasons for the decision to sell the shares;

(c) whether Government have received proposals for the purchase of ICICI shares in the above banks by Indian/Foreign Banks; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Violation of norms for granting loans

56. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Punjab National Bank (PNB) is granting loans to corporate sectors of below "A Rating" category under foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) Loans, in

violation of norms fixed by bank's own guidelines fixed by RBI;

(b) if so, the number of such loans sanctioned during the last two years, year-wise and party-wise; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken for violating the RBI norms and Bank's own circular?

Fake stamp papers

57. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent cases of printing of fake stamp papers;

(b) the number of such cases registered and the details of persons involved therein found guilty/apprehended;

(c) the value of fake stamp papers seized till date; and

(d) the measures adopted by Government to check these incidents, and action taken against the guilty person?

Unsustainable fiscal deficit

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the present consolidated fiscal deficit of 10 per cent of the GDP is unsustainable;

(b) if so, how far Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act has met its envisaged objectives of bringing down Government borrowing and raising tax revenue; and

(c) whether Government have set any time limit for raising the Below Poverty Line people to comparative level?

Opening of private banks

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

(a) the details of policy being adopted by the Central Government for opening private/foreign bank in the country;

(b) the number of private/foreign banks functioning at present in the country, bank-wise indicating the facilities being provided by these banks to the people of the country; and

(c) the details of comparison of private/foreign banks and Indian Nationalised Banks with regard to the services and facilities being provided to the customer?

Performance of Nationalised Banks

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

(a) whether Government have reviewed working and performance of all the Nationalised Banks in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of the steps being taken by Government in this respect?

Easing of borrowing costs for States

61. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have mooted a proposal to ease the borrowing costs for States to finance their annual plans;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are looking at providing funds to States in the form of

negotiated loans out of the balance of National Small Savings Fund;

(d) if so, whether these loans could be at a rate well below the rates for such loans which states contract from institutions like LIC and HUDCO; and

(e) if so, to what extent this decision has been helpful for the States to improve their financial position?

Increase in maximum allowable FDI

62. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to make 76 per cent as the maximum allowable FDI in any sector;

(b) if so, whether the proposal would be considered with retrospective effect or only for future FDI applications; and

(c) whether Government propose to bring in a sunset clause as regards the applicability of Press Note 18 in case of new subsidiaries incorporated for investments pertaining to Research and Development (R&D) activities?

Reduced rate of interest on housing loans

63. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether nationalised banks and financial institutions are giving the benefit of reduced rate of interest on housing loans to its existing as well as new customers;

(b) whether Government are not extending benefit of reduced rate of interest on housing loans to those Government employees who have taken House Building Advance from Government offices at higher rates of interest;

(c) whether Government propose to introduce concept of giving housing loans to its employees on basis of floating rate of interest like nationalised banks and financial institutions; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

World Bank aid to fight poverty

64. DR. ALLADI P. RAJ KUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank has identified India amongst the most needy for poverty aid;

(b) if so, the aid promised by the World Bank; and

(c) the reforms proposed to be taken up to fight poverty with the support of aid?

Fraud prone areas in banks

65. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether RBI and banking sector have identified the common fraud prone areas in banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps each Public Sector bank has taken to prevent frauds in these areas so identified?

Joint ATMs

66. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether various banks have joined hands to run Joint ATMs in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what facilities are being offered to the customers by these groups of banks?

**Prompt Corrective Action by
Punjab and Sind Bank**

67. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that RBI had in January, 2003 suggested several points on which action was required to be taken by Punjab and Sind Bank under Prompt Corrective Action (PCA);

(b) if so, the reasons for not taking action on the point referred to by RBI to PSB; and

(c) what are the points referred to by the RBI to PSB?

Reduction in Prime Lending Rates

68. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether banks are planning to reduce their prime lending rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the deposit rates of banks are reduced to the lower levels recently;

(d) if so, whether this will affect bank deposits;

(e) what is the total deposits in the nationalised banks in Kerala, bank-wise, category-wise as on today; and

(f) the total amount of loan distributed in Kerala by banks, bank-wise, category-wise as on today?

Paradeep Oil Refinery Project

69. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government still have the

proposal to implement Paradeep Oil Refinery in Orissa; if so, what is the total budget, time frame and why the proposal has not been implemented, although the Prime Minister laid the project foundation;

(b) whether the so-called dispute with the State Government has been settled and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that instead of Paradeep Oil Refinery, now Government are intending for only a pipeline and storage for crude oil in Paradeep?

**Privatisation of retailing sector of
IOC**

70. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to privatize the retailing infrastructure of IOC;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether privatizing the retail outlets of IOC would cause the company losing its position as a profit making PSU; and

(d) if not, the details thereof?

**Revision in prices of LPG and
kerosene**

71. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided not to execute any hike in the retail prices of LPG and kerosene and postpone the proposed phasing out of subsidy on the two fuels by two years;

(b) if so, the reasons for taking such decision; and

(c) the quantum of loss Government are likely to incur as a result thereof?

| Gas shortage in Eastern States | Investment made in Sakhlain Project |
|---|--|
| <p>72. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:</p> <p>(a) whether Government are aware that Eastern States have been facing shortage of gas which has resulted in the economic regional imbalances and fertiliser and power plants have been adversely affected due to non-availability of gas;</p> <p>(b) if so, the details thereof and in what manner Government propose to make up the shortage; and</p> <p>(c) whether the proposal for the import of Gas from Bangladesh has materialised and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?</p> | <p>†74. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:</p> <p>Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:</p> <p>(a) whether it is a fact that the O.N.G.C. Videsh Ltd. had made an investment in the Sakhlain Oil and Gas Project of Russia in the recent past;</p> <p>(b) if so, the total amount invested therein alongwith the estimated dividend on the same;</p> <p>(c) whether it is a fact that the increase in the production cost of the project has now been estimated; if so, the details of the fresh estimate made; and</p> <p>(d) what will be the rate of dividend on the invested capital after that?</p> |
| Notification of gas pipeline policy | Assessment of oil reserves |
| <p>73. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:</p> <p>(a) whether it is a fact that Government are in the process of finalising a policy for laying gas pipeline across the country;</p> <p>(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed policy;</p> <p>(c) whether it is also a fact that in the month of September, 2003, Government notified Natural Gas Pipeline Policy;</p> <p>(d) if so, the details thereof; and</p> <p>(e) in what manner it will help common man?</p> | <p>†75. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':</p> <p>Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:</p> <p>(a) whether it is a fact that exploration of oil from many new oil wells has begun in the country during the last three years;</p> <p>(b) if so, the location and the number of such wells and assessment of total oil reserves in the same; and</p> <p>(c) the average annual oil being explored at present from these wells?</p> |

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Adulteration of petrol and kerosene in Delhi

76. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

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

(a) whether Government are aware that a large number of petrol pump owners and kerosene dealers even in the Capital are indulging in the irregularities including adulteration and if so, the number of dealers who have been punished during the last two years for this act; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that a number of dealers of kerosene oil are also indulging in the adulteration and selling it at a higher rate in comparison to the rates prescribed by Government and if so, what is the number of such dealers detected during the last two years and the action taken against them?

Oil PSUs' agreement with Reliance for refueling

77. SHRI N.R. DASARI:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Public Sector Oil Companies are marketing Reliance Industries' Petroleum Products also through their retail outlet network; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement made in this regard and how the public sector oil companies are benefitted by this agreement?

Passing of subsidies to oil PSUs

78. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

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

(a) whether the public sector oil firms have been asked to bear the burden of subsidy on LPG and kerosene; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Splitting of IOC

79. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

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

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to split the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) into three separate entities; and

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

Overseas oil projects

80. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply to the Unstarred Question 76 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th February, 2003 and state whether any progress has been made in offshore exploration blocks in Myanmar?

Exploration of oil and gas

† 81. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that petroleum/ natural gas reserves have been found at several places recently;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and
(c) whether it is also a fact that most of the work related to extraction of the oil from these sources and refining thereof being given to foreign based companies?

Report on usage of bio-fuel

82. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the Planning Commission Report on the development of bio-fuels, use of ethanol as a substitute for gasoline and bio-diesel for petro-diesel could save nearly Rs. 900 crores annually;

(b) whether it is also a fact that by using bio-fuels we can create employment opportunities of more than 155 million days;

(c) if so, what are the other salient features of the report; and

(d) what action Government are contemplating on the report?

Policy on sharing of profits

83. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has forwarded a proposal for giving States a share in the profits made from any oil or gas struck in their territories in future;

(b) if so, whether this move envisages the sharing of petroleum profit in 50:50 ratio between the Government and the State concerned and oil or gas found in future form the on-going exploration efforts under the NELP rounds;

(c) whether Government have approved this proposal; and

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

Guidelines for selection of dealers

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

(a) whether any guidelines and criteria for selection of POL and LPG dealers/ distributors have been approved by Government;

(b) the number of dealers/distributors selected by the companies during the year 2002-2003 and during the period 1st April—30th September, 2003, State-wise; and

(c) the number of SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities among those selected, State-wise?

Storage of LPG

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal has been formulated to create a strategic storage facility for the mass-consumed cooking medium, the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), to provide protection against disruption of supplies arising out of any breakdown in indigenous production or war etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the phased time schedule drawn up for creating the tankages in different regions; and

(c) the expected gap between demand and supply and projections made for the volume and value of imports of LPG annually, during the next five years?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Identification of new tourist spots in Uttaranchal for development

†86. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether some new tourist spots of the State of Uttaranchal have been identified for development;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any development schemes have been formulated therefore; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Recognition of Kanwariya Pilgrims

†87. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Kanwariya pilgrims are recognised by Government to be religious tourists;
- (b) if so, whether the arrangements of toilets, rain baseras and mobile hospitals are being mooted to be made available along the highways and in Haridwar, Rishikesh etc. for providing facilities to the Kanwariya pilgrimage being held twice a year;
- (c) whether any action plan is being worked out with the consultation of the State Governments;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Heritage site in Mehrauli

88. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a Heritage site has been demarcated in Mehrauli;

(b) if so, the particulars of protected monuments included in the Heritage site;

(c) the particulars of other non-protected historical structure's included therein;

(d) whether any private land or building is included in the site; and

(e) if so, whether the ASI has undertaken a survey of the site and initiated steps to remove unlawful occupation, to check illegal construction and acquire private properties?

Illegal encroachments around World Heritage Sites

89. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the World Heritage Sites which are threatened by illegal encroachments; and
- (b) the steps taken by Government so far to stop illegal encroachments around World Heritage Sites?

Action Plan for restoring Sun-Temple

90. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Archaeological Survey of India proposes to give a facelift to Sun God Temple at Konark in Orissa;
- (b) whether the ASI proposes to restore the original splendor and shape to this 13th century edifice a world heritage monument; and
- (c) if so, the details of the action plan of ASI?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Chardham Yatra Circuit

91. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have drawn up a comprehensive plan to improve the infrastructure for tourism around the "Chardham Yatra Circuit" which includes Gangotri, Yamunotri, Badrinath and Kedarnath shrines;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including an outline of the phased programme for development of the Circuit; and

(c) the steps being taken to conserve the cultural heritage and environment along the Chardham area?

Promotion of Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

†92. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount sanctioned to Government of Himachal Pradesh for promoting tourism;

(b) the action taken by Government for upliftment of Durga Hatkoti Temple situated in Shimla district and which is quite important from the point of view of tourism; and

(c) the other religious places which Government propose to promote from the point of view of tourism?

Condition of tourist places in Eastern and Northern India

†93. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tourist places situated in eastern and northern part of India are in poor condition;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Jain and Buddhist historical places in such areas are being neglected much more; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the excavation work of Nalanda University is still incomplete?

Proposal to beautify Ayodhya

94. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to beautify the pilgrimage town of Ayodhya in U.P. (outside the disputed area) to attract domestic and international tourists; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating the nature of beautification proposed, the funds allocated for the purpose and the time required to complete the works?

Proposal for opening protected monuments for prayers

95. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open protected monuments for offering prayers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Tourism potential of Karnataka coastline

96. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that strict provisions of Coastal Regulation Zone are hampering tapping of enormous tourism potential of the vast coastline of Karnataka;

- (b) whether the State Government has approached the Central Government for a special package to relax the strict norms to help the State to develop the beaches for tourist traffic, if so, the status of the proposal; and
- (c) the action plan of the State to develop tourism in the coastal belts of the country?

Setting up of River Basin Organisations

97. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:
- (a) whether any discussions have been held or are proposed to be held with the States for establishment of River Basin Organisations;
 - (b) if so, the details thereof; and
 - (c) by when the Government are expected to set up the River Basin Organisations in the country?

Studies on water-harvesting in Assam

98. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:
- (a) whether Government have made any studies on water harvesting and storage schemes in the State of Assam during the last three years; and
 - (b) if so, the number of such projects approved as a result thereof?

Clearance of irrigation projects

99. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:
- (a) whether it is a fact that some of the important irrigation projects which were lying pending at the Central Government

- level for a long time have been cleared; if so, the details, name of the projects and the districts covered by these projects;
- (b) whether budget provision has been made and funds have already been released; if so, what is the time frame to complete these projects; and
- (c) whether the district of Jaipur is covered by Kanapur, Andapur and Rengali Irrigation Project, if so, the details thereof?

Meeting of Indo-Bangladesh Joint River Commission

100. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: SHRI MURLI DEORA:
- Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:
- (a) whether a meeting of Indo-Bangladesh Joint River Commission was held in New Delhi in September, 2003;
 - (b) if so, the subjects discussed and the decisions arrived at therein;
 - (c) the number of rivers on which disputes over sharing the water persists;
 - (d) the number of treaties entered into so far;
 - (e) the steps taken to resolve the matter in a cordial manner; and
 - (f) whether it is also a fact that the Bangladesh Government raised the issue of India's proposed project of inter-linking of rivers in the meeting although it was not listed on the agenda?

Identification of water rich and water poor basins

101. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:
- (a) whether steps have been initiated

for identifying water rich and water poor basins as a part of the linking of major rivers of the country;

(b) if so, the details of such basins identified as on today;

(c) whether any water rich river basins have been identified in Kerala;

(d) if so, the details thereof including the details of rivers associated with the basin;

(e) whether the suggestions of the State Government of Kerala have been sought regarding the above basins; and

(f) if so, details thereof including the report submitted by Government of Kerala in this regard?

Plan to interlink major rivers in country

102. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of plan to interlink all major rivers in the country;

(b) the river-wise details of plan thereof made by Government during the Tenth Plan;

(c) whether Government are aware that China has drawn up its own road map to divert rivers originating in the Tibet including Brahmaputra river; and

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

Schemes for protection of Majuli Island

103. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to refer to answer to the Unstarred Question 1777 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th August 2003 and state:

(a) the details of the schemes finalized and achievements made so far on erosion protection work of Majuli Island of Assam both short term and long term;

(b) the status of the clearance of DPR concerning of Master Plan on Majuli Island by Planning Commission towards erosion protection work;

(c) whether the amount is budgeted so far;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the schemes will be fully commissioned and operational?

Action Plan for flood control in Orissa

104. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government have drawn up an action plan, as a permanent solution, to control floods in Orissa State; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Water University in Rajasthan

105. MISS MABEL REBELLO: SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to set up a Water University in Rajasthan, the first of its kind in the country;

(b) if so, the kind of training proposed to be imparted to the youth in water conservation, rainwater harvesting and water management etc.; and

(c) the details of other courses to be

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

conducted in the colleges under this university and who would organise the entire system?

Viability of desalination process

106. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have carried out so far a research to find out the viability of desalination process as a proven option to augment the water resources in the water scarcity areas in the country;

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

(c) what other steps are being taken to address the problem of acute water shortage in the country?

Target for irrigation of land

† 107. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of total irrigated land out of the total area of the country at present;

(b) what is Government's target with regard to total per cent of land to be covered under the irrigation;

(c) by when the target is likely to be achieved; and

(d) the State-wise details of land covered under the irrigation facilities during the last three years?

Agreement on river water between Kerala and Tamil Nadu

108. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are agreements on sharing of river water between Kerala and Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details of such agreement existing as on today, including the year in which agreement was signed, duration of the agreement, modifications/additions in the agreement, if any, and rivers and river basins and the dams constructed as a part of the above agreement;

(c) whether any of the above agreements are under review of the competent authorities;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the safety of the dam constructed under the above agreement has been under periodical observation; if so, the details thereof?

NEW DELHI;
The 25th November, 2003
Agrahayana 4, 1925 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN
Secretary-General.

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