

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 4, 2003/Phalguna 13, 1924 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions—155

Leasing of shops at airports

1232. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any policy
regarding leasing out of space for shops at
airports by the Airports Authority of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that such shops
charge high prices for consumables; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that there is
no control of AAI regarding the prices they
charge from passengers?

Enhancing seat capacity on international routes

1233. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while the
availability of seats on the main routes is
slowly decreasing, Government's open sky
policy to permit more international
airlines to operate on these sectors has
failed to take off;

(b) whether it is a fact that while there
is a poor response from the US and Europe
carriers, others are willing to increase their
flights on these routes; and

(c) if so, the details of plan to increase
its capacity on international flights?

Separate company for ground handling operations by AI

1234. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA :
SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to
create a separate subsidiary of Air India
for its ground handling operations;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken
by Government to prepare a financial
restructuring strategy for Air India in order
to bring it out of red?

Enquiring by DGCA

1235. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has
been drawn to the news-item captioned
"Close call in mid-air near Mumbai
Airport" which appeared in The Hindustan
Times of 3rd January 2003;

(b) if so, whether an enquiry was ordered by the DGCA in this regard;

(c) if so, the details of the enquiry report; and

(d) the action taken by Government so that mid-air collisions does not occur in future?

Reduction in air fare

1236. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to bring down the domestic as well as the international air fare;

(b) whether another proposal has been mooted to abolish the 15 per cent Inland Travel Tax for all domestic carrier;

(c) if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) by when these measures are likely to take concrete shape?

Losses by AI and IA

1237. SHRI BHAGATRAM MAHNAR:

SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "IA continues to be in the red" which appeared in The Hindustan Times, New Delhi on the 2nd November, 2002;

(b) if so, what are the details of losses being incurred by Indian Airlines and Air India during the last two years; and

(c) what are the reasons for losses by these airlines during the last two years and the steps being taken to make these airlines profitable?

Revenue sharing between AI and IA

1238. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that both Air India and Indian Airlines ply some flights on common international routes and also offer seats under bilateral agreements to foreign airlines;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Air India earns Rs. 246 crore from commercial and royalty arrangements while Indian Airlines gets Rs. 10 crore only; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to grant Indian Airlines a larger share of earnings from bilateral agreements with foreign carriers?

DGCA's instructions on cockpit doors

1239. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Director-General of Civil Aviation's instruction to airlines to change their cockpit doors by April, 2003, after the 9/11, has been implemented;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what are the other instructions of the DGCA which are to be followed or implemented by the Ministry?

Reduction in acquisition of large aircraft by AI

1240. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India has decided to reduce its large aircraft acquisition order from 17 to 10;

(b) if so, whether the proposed reduction in large aircraft acquisition is due to Air India's plans to operate hub and spoke flights in conjunction with IA; and

(c) if so, when the bids for smaller aircrafts will be called for and finalized?

Lack of passenger facilities at airports

1241. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Airports Authority of India has not been able to provide proper ground facilities like parking, modern telecom etc. to passengers at various airports;

(b) whether AAI surveys requirement of such facilities on a monthly basis;

(c) if so, whether any effort is proposed to be made to improve passenger facilities at airports; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Violation of Indian airspace

1242. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the cases of violation of Indian airspace by foreign aircrafts during the last three years;

(b) the details of each case; and

(c) the action taken by Government in each case?

Air services to State capitals

1243. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to provide better air services to the capital of each State in the country;

(b) if so, the proposal mooted in that regard for 2003-2004; and

(c) the details of the additional flights proposed to be introduced between Delhi-Bhubaneswar and between Bhubaneswar and other State capitals?

Setting up of Civil Aviation Security Academy

1244. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a Civil Aviation Security Academy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the Academy is likely to start imparting training; and

(d) the steps taken to install biometrics based access control system at airports?

Closure of AI's offices in Europe

1245. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India has declared to shut down eight offices in Europe and hand over the marketing work to general sales agents; and

(b) if so, the reasons for this decision?

Outsourcing of ticketing by IA

1246. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines have any plan to outsource its ticketing related activities; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether the tenders have been received for the same?

Cut in non-plan expenditure of Ministries

1247. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have curtailed the non-plan expenditure of various Ministries and whether Ministry of Finance is also included in the same, if so, the percentage of reduction in non-plan expenditure;

(b) whether unnecessary expenditure by bureaucrats has also been reduced besides reduction in non-plan expenditure of various Ministries; if so, the percentage of reduction and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the effect on functioning of various Ministries due to the said reduction in expenditure?

Excise concessions to small scale sector

1248. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government extends certain concessions in Central excise on products of small scale industries;

(b) whether labeling or re-labeling and re-packing as far as levy of Excise Duty

is concerned with regard to chapter 73 and Chapter 85 are legal or illegal; and

(c) the steps proposed to assist genuine small scale units as far as grant of excise concessions are concerned?

Vacancies of Executive Directors in Banks

1249. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether vacancies for the post of Executive Directors have been lying vacant in six Public Sector Banks for a long periods;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that the process of selection for the post undertaken recently 'Is being done in gross violation of the existing guidelines laid down by the Department of Personnel' as brought out in a write up in 'The Indian Express' dated the 26th December, 2002; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for overlooking the established guidelines on the matter?

Indian National Rural Bank

1250. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chairman of NABARD, Reserve Bank of India and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance had recommended for establishment of an Indian National Rural Bank combining all 196 rural banks to streamline and strength the rural economy; and

(b) if so, by when Government propose to bring a Bill in Parliament in this regard?

Special status to ICICI Bank

1251. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ICICI Bank enjoys any special status as the financial institution under the Companies Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Ministry is planning to review this status specially in the context of growing foreign holding in the bank?

Compromise settlement of NPAs

1252. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have now allowed the banks to enter into a compromise settlement of NPAs to the extent of Rs. 10 crores;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount that has been realised through one-time settlement scheme that was introduced by Government since its inception, year-wise;

(d) whether any new guidelines have been issued for the new scheme; and

(e) if so, the details of guidelines?

Effect of Indo-Pak relations on the economy

1253. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the effect of the strained relations between India and Pakistan on the Indian economy;

(b) whether the import-export between India and Pakistan decreased due to the same; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure that the trade does not suffer between the two countries?

Increase in foreign exchange reserves

† 1254. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the foreign exchange reserves of the country is expected to increase from 54 million dollars to 75 billion dollars during 2002-2003;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard; and

(c) the details of the sources through which the amount has so far been deposited in the reserves during the current year along with the details of the amount deposited?

World Bank's concern over fiscal deficit

1255. SHRI B.J.PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank has warned India on fiscal deficit and slow reforms and has issued directives for speeding up reforms, as reported in The Indian Express of 7th December, 2002;

(b) if so, what are the detailed directives of the West Bengal and kind of weakness that have been pointed out by the Bank; and

(c) whether any goal that has been set by the World Bank in reforms and how much progress has been made to achieve the objective?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tax collection on crude oil import

†1256. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government's tax collection on import of crude oil during the first nine months of the current year is more than the collection during the first nine months of the last year; and

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

Levy of ATF sales tax on domestic airlines

1257. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign airlines are exempted from levy of duties and taxes on fuel uplifted from and through India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Air India and Indian Airlines have to pay the aviation turbine fuel (ATF) sales tax;

(c) if so, the reasons for variance; and

(d) what steps are being taken not to levy the ATF sales tax on both the domestic airlines too?

Loans sanctioned to SCs/STs

1258. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of loan sanctioned by Banks and Financial Institutions during the period 1995-96 to 2002-2003 year-wise and State-wise; and

(b) the percentage of total loan sanctioned in favour of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes applicants during the aforesaid period?

Retirement of CMDs of Banks

1259. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CMDs of the Bank of India and Allahabad Bank will be retiring in near future;

(b) if so, whether the process of the selection of their successors has been initiated; and

(c) the steps being taken to ensure that selected candidates are placed in position immediately after the retirement of the present incumbents?

Certification of professional competence for market intermediaries

1260. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether SEBI has plans to make it mandatory for employees/agents of market intermediaries like stock exchanges, brokers/depositories and merchant bankers to secure certification of professional competence from a designated authority;

(b) whether this certification would cover only professionals serving the equity market and what is the deadline for obtaining such certification; and

(c) which body will be accredited by SEBI for certification?

Conversion of IDBI into universal bank

1261. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal from the IDBI for conversion into universal bank; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, what is Government's view on this proposal?

Tax free bonds

1262. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued a new series of 7 per cent tax-free bonds for public subscription;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the existing 8 per cent relief bonds which have a tenure of five years would be wound up or would continue along side the new bonds; and

(d) whether the new bonds would be permitted to be traded in secondary markets and if not, the reasons therefor?

Liberalisation of foreign exchange control rules

1263. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have liberalised the Foreign Exchange Control Rules recently; and

(b) if so, the details and purpose thereof?

Acquisition of brands of defaulter companies

1264. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the banks

are insisting that the brands of defaulting companies should also be acquired alongwith the secured assets;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether any clarification has been issued by the RBI in this respect; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Prosecutions by DCA against errant companies

1265. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of prosecutions initiated by the Department of Company Affairs on the errant companies which have violated the Companies Act, in the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the progress of the cases filed;

(c) whether the Department has approached the Company Law Board for appointment of Directors to some of the Companies against which the cases are pending; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

NABARD loan to Andhra Pradesh

1266. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-
CHANDRAYYA:

DR. T. SUBBARAAMI
REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NABARD has decided to extend financial assistance of Rs. 1,300 crores to Andhra Pradesh Government for implementing rural development programmes;

(b) if so, whether the Bank has decided to give term loans amounting to Rs. 700 crores this year in comparison to Rs. 602 crores terms loans extended last year;

(c) if so, to what extent the Andhra Pradesh Government has utilized this loan;

(d) to what extent the rural development schemes under this loan have so far been implemented; and

(e) the total number of people benefited in the rural areas?

Charging of income tax on compensation money

† 1267. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about charging of income tax on the amount being received as compensation against land acquired for projects (Prakalpa);

(b) if so, the kind of relief that can be given by Government to the people affected by such projects (Prakalpa); and

(c) the measures taken by Government in this regard?

Employees pension schemes in banks and insurance companies

1268. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to give one more chance to the employees of the public sector banks and insurance companies to opt for the employees pension scheme; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Delisting of MNCs from stock exchanges

1269. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of multinational companies (MNCs) have been delisted from the Indian stock exchanges recently; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and its impact on the market capitalisation in the country?

Action against Ketan Parekh

1270. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on Stock Market Scam of 2001 had concluded that the stock broker Ketan Parekh was a key player in the scam; and

(b) if so, what actions were proceeded against him?

NABARD's sops for drought hit farmers

1271. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development has planned to offer sops for drought-hit farmers in different States;

(b) if so, details thereof and progress made in this direction; and

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether this help would also be rendered to victims affected by natural calamities other than drought?

Exemption to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies

1272. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have exempted Primary Agricultural Credit Societies from Income Tax;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have notified these primary credit societies for filing the returns and for furnishing the details of the investors and their family members having a deposit of more than fifty thousand rupees; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons for such move?

Reduction in rate of corporate tax

† 1273. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of corporate-tax is more in the country in comparison to the US, China, UK, Australia, Indonesia, South Africa and Malaysia;

(b) if so, the details of the average annual rate during the last three years in said countries including India;

(c) whether Government propose to consider to slash the rates in comparison to these countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

ATM cards for account holders of banks

† 1274. SHRI B.P. SINGHAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether banks including State Bank of India have issued ATM cards to their account holders;

(b) if so, whether the details given on these cards is only in English and not both in Hindi and English; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to issue such cards with details both in Hindi and English?

Elimination of soiled currency notes

1275. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the RBI has operationalised currency verification and processing systems to eliminate soiled currency from circulation in the country;

(b) if so, the location where these systems are now operational and what is the processing capacity of each unit; and

(c) the reasons for low denomination currencies *i.e.* Rs. 1/- and Rs. 2/- not being in regular circulation these days?

World Banks report on VAT

1276. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the report of the study conducted by the World Bank on the preparedness of States to operationalise the VAT system;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether the report has concluded that many States are not prepared or equipped to introduce VAT system in the immediate future; and

(c) whether VAT system can be introduced in phases selectively depending upon the readiness of the States concerned?

FDI performance Index Value

1277. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Investment Report, 2002 has rated India's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Performance Index Value at 0.2 as against China 1.2 and Sri Lanka 0.4;

(b) if so, what are the reasons of such low ranking;

(c) whether Government propose to introduce financial reforms and provide improved infrastructure facilities with thrust on labour reforms to improve its ranking in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Lok adalats for NPA recovery

1278. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up Lok-Adalat to recover bank loan up to Rs. 10 Lakhs to reduce NPAs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total NPAs recovered by banks during the current financial year, bank-wise;

(d) the number of defaulting borrowers of more than Rs. 10 crores, Bank-wise; and

(e) the concrete steps taken by Government to recover NPAs from those borrowers?

Fiscal Management Bill

1279. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have cleared the fiscal responsibility and Fiscal Management Bill for being introduced in the Budget Session of Parliament;

(b) if so, what are redeeming features of the Bill;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Bill as cleared by the Union Cabinet has been substantially diluted compared to the draft Bill as introduced in Lok Sabha in December, 2000; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reason therefor?

Implementation of schemes

†1280. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Singh lax on Sinha's promises" which appeared in 'Business Standard' dated 10th January, 2003;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that only 21 schemes have been implemented so far out of 61 announced by the Finance Minister in his Budget speech for the year 2002-2003;

(c) if not, the facts thereof alongwith the total number of schemes implemented so far; and

(d) the details of the plan formulated by Government for the remaining schemes?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Low tax revenue to GDP ratio

1281. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's tax revenue to GDP ratio is among the lowest not just among the developed nations but many developing countries as well;

(b) whether negligible contribution to tax kitty from both agriculture and service sectors alongwith numerous tax exemptions are the main causes for the relatively low tax revenue to GDP ratio; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to improve the ratio?

US investment in India

1282. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Ambassador to India has recently commented that US investors have reservations in investing in India due to high tariff and tax regime coupled with Government interference in the corporate sector;

(b) whether many other overseas investors have expressed lack of confidence, whether the sanctity of contracts would be honoured in India; and

(c) whether it is a fact that China receives more investment from US than India and if so the reasons therefor?

Investment by Asian Development Bank

1283. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Asian Development Bank is going to invest \$ 80 billion in India;

(b) what are the projects that are going to be financed from this assistance; and

(c) how much of the assistance will be available for private sector projects?

Prompt Correction Action Scheme for weak banks

1284. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has formulated a new scheme christened "Prompt Correction Action" (PCA) to acquire additional powers for exercising effective control on the 'Weak' banks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the criteria laid down to identify the weak banks, the specific additional powers sought by the Reserve Bank of India and the present status of the proposal?

S.S. Kohli report on defaulters

† 1285. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the RBI have examined the report of the work grant headed by S.S. Kohli in respect of persons defaulting intentionally;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made in the report; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

Implementation of projects in Assam

1286. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the list of projects submitted during

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the details of investment made in that country and the benefits that have been and are being drawn from the ventures there and in what manner this has helped to conserve and preserve oil reserves?

(c) the quantum of capital invested in foreign and domestic companies separately?

Target for production of crude oil

†1322. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a target was fixed for the oil companies for production of crude oil in the country;

(b) if so, the target fixed for each company engaged in production of oil in 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003;

(c) the percentage of production by each oil company in the above period in comparison to the target fixed; and

(d) the reasons for not achieving the production as per the target?

Capital invested in Business Institutions by oil companies

†1323. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that public sector oil companies are making capital investment in foreign and domestic Business Institutions;

(b) if so, the names of the public sector oil companies alongwith the details of the capital investment made by them by December, 2002; and

Crude oil production by ONGC

†1324. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

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

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation produces crude oil in the country;

(b) if so, the names of those areas in the country where crude oil is being produced by the Corporation;

(c) the average quantum of annual production in each area in the last three years; and

(d) the assessment of average production cost in each area?

Profits earned in Post-APM regime by oil companies

†1325. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the net profit earned by the Petroleum Companies of the country has increased after the withdrawal of Administrative Price mechanism system;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the increase in the net profit in first nine months of the year 2002-2003 in comparison to nine months period of previous year?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Economic reconstruction in Jammu and Kashmir

1292. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have drawn any strategy for economic reconstruction in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, broad features of this strategy; and

(c) how Government propose to implement this strategy?

Pension reforms

1293. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) in what manner Government propose to ensure old age social security in the process of pension reforms;

(b) what is the role of insurance companies in the pension reforms; and

(c) by when Government propose to implement the reforms?

Posts of Deputy Governor in RBI

1294. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all incumbents of Deputy Governor level posts in the Reserve Bank of India are in position;

(b) if not, the details of the vacant posts;

(c) whether additional posts of Deputy Governors are also being created; and

(d) if so, the purpose and the allocation of work to them?

Sanctioning of loans to State Government corporations by banks

1295. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that commercial banks have been sanctioning loans to the State Government run corporations against the guarantees given by the State Government;

(b) whether commercial banks have any mechanism to ensure that the loan sanctioned is utilized for the purpose for which it was given;

(c) if so, the details of the defaulting corporations in different States; and

(d) the reasons of accepting the guarantees from the State Governments?

Sanctioning of loans for women weavers of Majuli district

1296. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to sanction the loan/funds for women weavers of Majuli district in Assam State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have schemes and programmes to encourage the women weavers of Majuli district; and

(d) if so, the details of the schemes and programmes?

Foreign exchange loans

† 1297. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to put an end to the practice of going in for foreign exchange loans involving high costs;

(b) if so, whether Government have given any suggestion to corporate sector to try to substitute their high cost loans with that of the low cost loans; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to take advantage of availing high liquidity loans with surplus amount available in foreign countries?

Circulation of counterfeited currency

1298. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of cases involving production and circulation of counterfeit currency and the amount of such currency seized during 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003;

(b) the extent of Rs. 500 denomination currency seized this year; and

(c) what special steps have been/are being taken to prevent production and circulation of such currency?

Exemption of excise duties on re-labeling of goods in SSI sector

1299. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether various small scale industry fora have been representing

Government for a clear and unambiguous clarification on the re-labeling and re-packing of goods made in small scale sector for the purpose of exemption of excise duty;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that large scale units are using the small scale sector as a cloak to avoid excise duties?

VRS in banks

1300. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees in Public Sector Banks before the introduction of the VRS bank-wise and group-wise;

(b) the number of employees retired in each of these banks under VRS during the last 4 years, year-wise group-wise and bank-wise; and

(c) the recruitments made by these banks during the corresponding year, bank-wise and group-wise?

Private investment

1301. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the private investment in India during the last 4 years in actuals, year-wise; and

(b) the break-up of these investments, sector-wise and year-wise?

Promotion of Self Help Groups by banks

1302. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Self Help

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Groups (SHGs) concept under SGSY financed by public sector banks has become a success in southern parts of the country but is yet to take off in other parts of the country;

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

(c) whether Government/Reserve Bank of India and banks have made a study of the status of SHGs in various parts of the country;

(d) if so, the findings thereof; and

(e) what steps have been taken by each public sector bank to popularise SHGs under SGSY throughout the country?

Introduction of interest-based derivatives in market

1303. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce interest-based derivatives in the market;

(b) if so, whether the modalities for trading in interest-based securities have been finalised; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Involvement of underworld in fake currency racket

†1304. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBI got the sufficient proof regarding involvement of underworld in the racket of fake currency notes in India;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that many criminal gangs operating from Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Camaroon and Somalia are actively involved in this racket; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard alongwith complete details thereof?

Rationalisation of tax laws

1305. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHD CCI) has urged to make tax laws simple, fair, rational and equitable to promote overall economic growth; and

(b) if so, the changes sought for by them and Government's reaction thereto, especially in respect of direct and indirect taxes?

World Economic Forum for overseas investors

1306. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the news-item titled, "Jaswant fails to market India at WEF" appeared in Deccan Herald, dated the 27th January, 2003;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Finance Minister attended the World Economic Forum at Davos recently; and

(c) if so, the outcome of his interaction with the overseas investors?

Pending applications under self-employment schemes

1307. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

has been drawn to the news-item appearing in Times of India, dated the 29th January, 2003 under the caption, "Banks sit on loan applications for self-employment schemes";

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

(c) the number of applications under various welfare schemes pending with each of the nationalised banks, scheme-wise;

(d) whether the rejection rate is very high and there is inordinate delay in loan disbursal; and

(e) if so, what is the ratio between the applications submitted and approved, the time lag between loan sanction and disbursement?

Pending applications for Nidhi companies

1308. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many applications are pending for more than three years for approval under Section 620A of the Companies Act;

(b) if so, how many such cases are pending;

(c) what steps are being taken to clear the backlog; and

(d) what are the reasons for this delay and by when the cases are likely to be cleared?

Income tax payers in the country

1309. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of tax payers in

the category of salaried class/ professionals/private ltd. companies/ public ltd. enterprises including banks and financial institutions in the country;

(b) what is the total tax collected from them, category-wise;

(c) what are the tax arrears from these tax payers; and

(d) what steps are being taken to recover the arrears of tax dues from them?

Violation of postal rules by ICICI Bank

1310. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that financial institutions like ICICI Bank are violating postal rules by sending their interest and redemption cheques of high value, even of more than Rupees ten thousand by ordinary post thereby putting the investors to undue risk and also depriving the postal department of revenue; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to be taken by Government to ensure the compliance of postal rules by the financial institutions in such matters?

Rate of interest for small scale industries

† 1311. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from Reserve Bank of India to reduce the rate of interest for small and medium industrial units and to provide loan upto Rs. 15 lakh without any pledge in special conditions to industries having good record;

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

(c) the details of loan and other facilities being provided to small and medium industries?

Slow growth rate

1312. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country's growth rate for 2002-2003 is not expected to go beyond 4.4 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the reasons for the slow growth have been identified and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken in order to boost up the growth rate?

Impact of increase in gas price

1313. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to increase gas tariff from Rs. 2850 to Rs. 5800 per mmscmd for consumers;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government propose a hike of Rs. 38 per thousand standard cubic metre on transportation tariff;

(c) if so, the factors necessitating increase in tariff;

(d) the impact of increase on the cost of production of fertilizers, power, etc.; and

(e) the steps being taken to reduce the cost of production and transportation of gas in the country?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Effect of Iraq-US war on consumption of petroleum products

†1314. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the impending war between the USA and Iraq, the consumption, supply and prices of the petroleum products have been effected in any way in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Production from new wells

†1315. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production has started from several new oil wells during the last three years;

(b) if so, the number of such new oil wells;

(c) the assessment of the quantum of additional annual crude oil produced from these wells; and

(d) the quantum of crude oil produced in the country during the last three years; year-wise?

Pooled pricing for gas sector

1316. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering pooled pricing for gas sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government determine the retail price of gas by weighted average price of LNG and gas;

(d) whether it is a fact that such price determination method will not force the gas producers to retail gas at a cheaper rate and, therefore, the experts have suggested for leaving the pricing aspect to the gas producers and to lower the customs duty on LNG; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

Plan to sell oil well sites by ONGC

1317. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has any plan to sell potential oil well sites to private parties in the Bombay High Oil Fields; and

(b) if so, the details of bids received for the same?

Constitution of Group of Ministers for fixation of gas price

†1318. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI D.P. YADAV:

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

(a) whether the Prime Minister has decided to constitute the Group of Ministers in order to consider the policy for the fixation of natural gas prices;

(b) if so, whether the Group has already considered the policy;

(c) if so, what are their main suggestions;

(d) whether Government has accepted these recommendations; and

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Mixture of Naptha with petrol

†1319. PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:
DR. PRABHA THAKUR :

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

(a) whether Government are aware that Naptha is mixed with petrol;

(b) if so, the percentage of such mixing;

(c) whether it is also a fact that smoke emitted from Naptha mixed with petrol is harmful to environment and health; and

(d) if so, the details of bad effects that can be caused due to such smoke?

Production of crude Oil

†1320. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN' :

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

(a) the details of the plans proposed to increase the production of crude oil in the country; and

(b) the details of the percentage increase in the present production assessed after the implementation of these plans?

ONGC's projects in Syria

1321. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

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

(a) whether ONGC has recently acquired oil stakes in Syria, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of investment made in that country and the benefits that have been and are being drawn from the ventures there and in what manner this has helped to conserve and preserve oil reserves?

Target for production of crude oil

†1322. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a target was fixed for the oil companies for production of crude oil in the country;

(b) if so, the target fixed for each company engaged in production of oil in 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003;

(c) the percentage of production by each oil company in the above period in comparison to the target fixed; and

(d) the reasons for not achieving the production as per the target?

Capital invested in Business Institutions by oil companies

†1323. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that public sector oil companies are making capital investment in foreign and domestic Business Institutions;

(b) if so, the names of the public sector oil companies alongwith the details of the capital investment made by them by December, 2002; and

(c) the quantum of capital invested in foreign and domestic companies separately?

Crude oil production by ONGC

†1324. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

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

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation produces crude oil in the country;

(b) if so, the names of those areas in the country where crude oil is being produced by the Corporation;

(c) the average quantum of annual production in each area in the last three years; and

(d) the assessment of average production cost in each area?

Profits earned in Post-APM regime by oil companies

†1325. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN
SINGH 'LALAN':

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the net profit earned by the Petroleum Companies of the country has increased after the withdrawal of Administrative Price mechanism system;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the increase in the net profit in first nine months of the year 2002-2003 in comparison to nine months period of previous year?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Black marketing of LPG by depots

1326. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that many LPG depots in the country are indulging in black marketing of LPG;

(b) if so, whether any such cases have been unearthed by the Vigilance department under his Ministry;

(c) if so, the number of such cases found in the last three years; and

(d) the details of the action taken against such depots?

Production of petroleum products

† 1327. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that country's established capacity of refineries of crude oil is more than its demand;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the likely quantity of production of petroleum products in the country, product-wise during the current year 2002-2003; and

(d) the estimated demand of each of these products in the country?

Oil refinery at Vishakhapatnam

1328. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that State

Government of Andhra Pradesh has signed a MoU with Trans Corp. USA Inc. to set up a refinery with an investment of Rs. 12,000 crore at Vishakhapatnam;

(b) if so, what are the main features of the MoU signed; and

(c) by when the work on this project is likely to start and complete?

New oil reserves

† 1329. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that exploring new oil reserves in the country has been taken up as a continuous process;

(b) if so, total amount spent on the said work during the last three years;

(c) the oil reserves found during these years; and

(d) the oil reserves found at the end of December, 2002?

Allocation of natural gas to Gujarat

1330. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2041 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th December, 2002 and state:

(a) the details of the allocation of Natural Gas to Gujarat for the years 1998 to 2002; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the production of Natural Gas has increased during the year 1998 to 2002; if so, the year-wise details?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Share in the cess collected in Gujarat

1331. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to answer to the Unstarred Question 709 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 23rd July, 2002 and state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has demanded for 50 per cent share in the cess collected on the crude oil produced in the State; and

(b) if so, by when the request will be considered?

Top headed staff of ONGC

1332. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC is having more officers than workers in its workforce;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Officers Association has demanded again salary revision and profit bonus despite falling output of ONGC;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the reaction of Government thereon; and

(f) the proposals to downsize ONGC staff strength?

Round-the-clock petrol pumps in Uttar Pradesh

† 1333. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number and places of petrol pumps proposed to be opened in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the number of petrol pumps in Uttar Pradesh which remain open 24 hours; and

(c) the number of petrol pumps in Uttar Pradesh which remain open 24 hours and are managed by women?

Revenue to ONGC from overseas projects

1334. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC propose to earn \$1,250 million from overseas operations during Tenth Five Year Plan as reported in the Times of India dated the 18th December, 2002;

(b) if so, the details of the projects proposed to be undertaken abroad; and

(c) the total foreign exchange so far earned in the oil field during the Ninth Five Year Plan period?

Expenditure on off-shore supply vehicles

1335. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total annual expenditure on offshore supply vehicles during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the CAG in its Report has reported that there is a lot of mismanagement of OSVs;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the ONGC in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Black-marketing of Kerosene

1336. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that black marketing of Kerosene meant for PDS generate black-money to the tune of Rs. 5,000 crore annually; and

(b) whether Government have any plan to bring about price parity of Diesel and Kerosene?

Oil and gas blocks awarded for exploration

1337. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of oil and gas blocks which have been awarded for exploration;

(b) whether there is any agency to monitor the progress of the oil and gas blocks; and

(c) the investment likely to be made for the development of these blocks?

Malpractice in supply of LPG cylinders

†1338. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the illegal trade of smaller cylinders is going on in connivance with Government machinery and the domestic cylinders supplied are underweighted; and

(b) whether Government have taken any step so far in this regard; so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor and action proposed to be taken in this direction?

Delay in exploration of oil and gas in North-Eastern Region

1339. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the exploration of oil and natural gas in the North 'Eastern-Region' has recently received a set-back;

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

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to remove the hurdles in the way of fast exploration of oil in the region?

Special dividends by oil companies

1340. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have asked the Public Sector Oil companies to declare special dividends of a b o u n d Rs. 6,000 crore in the current financial year to augment the revenue shortfall;

(b) whether these oil companies have complained about this cash outflow as it will adversely affect their development plans; and

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

Purchase of Talisman Greater Nile BV by ONGC Videsh

1341. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC Videsh Limited has any plan or has purchased 'Talisman Greater Nile BV' a subsidiary of Talisman Energy Inc.; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the financial details thereof? the one year in the country?

Liberalisation of LNG policy

1342. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to liberalise the national LNG policy including pricing and imports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the demand of LNG in various fields such as power and fertilizer have increased during the past few years; and

(d) if so, to what extent liberalisation of national LNG policy is going to help fertilizer and power sectors in the country?

Exploration of petroleum products in Rajasthan

†1343. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:
DR. A.K. PATEL:
SHRI LALIT SURI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a large quantity of petroleum products have been explored in Rajasthan and to what extent our dependance on foreign countries would come down;

(b) the total consumption in the country at present and the proportion of import and domestic production thereof out of it; and

(c) to what extent the production of petroleum products has increased during

Setting up of electronic libraries

†1344. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up electronic library network in villages to provide reading resources without much expenditure on books;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the measures Government are taking or propose to take to boost the library movement in the country; and

(d) by when the above plan is likely to be implemented?

Alleged irregularities in foreign offices

†1345. SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:
SHRI RAMA SHANKER
KAUSHIK:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item published in 'Rashtriya Sahara', New Delhi edition dated the 14th January, 2003 under the caption "Paryatan Mantralaya Ke London Karyalaya Mein Lakhon Ka Ghotala";

(b) if so, the facts of the said case;

(c) whether Government have constituted any Committee to conduct an enquiry in th said case; and

(d) the fresh steps Government are going to take to minimise lavish expenditure of tourist offices of Government of India situated in foreign countries?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Funds allocated for tourism in Assam

1346. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds earmarked for the promotion of tourism in Assam during the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(b) the details of allocation proposed to be spent during the current financial year in the State?

Aid package from Japan

1347. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have secured an aid-package from Japan amounting to Rs. 300 crores for restoration and upkeep of monuments and heritage sites;

(b) if so, which are the locations covered by this aid-package;

(c) whether Government propose to place for consideration the project of restoration of the heritage sites in Karnataka like Hampi and Helebid to international funding agencies;

(d) whether the privatisation of projects for restoration and upkeep of national monuments and heritage sites like Taj Mahal, have proven successful; and

(e) if so, Government's plans to replicate such arrangements elsewhere?

Security of foreign tourists

1348. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the steep fall in the arrival of international tourists into the country;

(b) if so, the estimated loss of foreign exchange; and

(c) whether Government are taking any steps to assure foreign tourists of security and other related aspects?

Tourist places in A.P.

1349. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the tourists visited Andhra Pradesh for treatments through the use of herbs in Krishna district and paralysis treatment as practised in Chirala and other famed allopathic and Indian Medicine treatments;

(b) if so, whether the State Government has agreed to attract more tourist in Andhra Pradesh for traditional system of treatment;

(c) whether Government has agreed to provide help and assistance to develop tourist centres in these places; and

(d) if so, what are the help and assistance that will be provided to the Andhra Pradesh in improving tourist centres in these places?

Increase in the tourist arrival

1350. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite the tourism and civil aviation industries taking a knock after the 11th September, 2001, the tourism sector have had a reversal of trends in the last two months;

(b) if so, whether the foreign tourist arrival have picked up by 16 per cent since November;

(c) if so, to what extent it has increased; and

(d) to what extent the tourism sector

has improved its position from November, 2002 to till now?

India's share in world tourism

1351. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI KARNENDU
BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that CII's National Committee on Tourism and heritage shows that India's share in world tourism is 0.38 per cent, it ranks 50th in the world list of international arrivals, and that its share in world tourism receipts is just 0.67 per cent;

(b) if so, what efforts are being made to substantially increase of our share of world tourism particularly in view of tourism being labour intensive it would give great fillip for creation of new jobs; and

(c) what other measures are under consideration to make India a tourist destination for the foreigners?

Tourism destinations in Andhra Pradesh

1352. SHRI C. RAMA-
CHANDRAIAH:
SHRI K. KALAVENKATA
RAO:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as a part of new initiative some Centres like Bodh Gaya, Jaisalmer and Hampi are being developed as major tourist destinations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any site from Andhra Pradesh has been identified for the purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to develop the site into a major tourist attraction; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Setting up of new tourist Centres

† 1353. SHRI MOOLCHAND
MEENA:
SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up number of Tourist Centres in the country simultaneously; and

(b) if so, the State-wise details thereof?

Village Tourism

1354. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA
RAO:
SHRI C. RAMA-
CHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had decided to develop at least one village from each State as a tourist destination with a view to promote village tourism;

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

(c) the criteria for the identification of the villages;

(d) the village identified from the State of Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) the steps being taken to develop the village as tourist destination?

Wildlife and forest tourism in Gujarat

1355. DR. A.K. PATEL : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope to promote wildlife and forest tourism in Gujarat;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the steps taken to tap the tourist potential;

(c) whether any plan has been prepared by the State Government and submitted to Central Government for financial assistance to develop tourist infrastructure in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Development of tourist spots in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

1356. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andaman and Nicobar having 576 islands, has a lot of tourist potential;

(b) whether Government has any proposal to develop Andaman and Nicobar as a tourist spot to attract domestic and international tourists;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken in this direction by Government?

Implementation of Eco-tourism project in Majuli Island

1357. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the implementation status of the Eco-Tourism Resort project in the Majuli Island of Assam;

(b) the Programmes finalized by the Ministry for conservation of the cultural heritage of the Island, including cataloguing and preservation of manuscript and the artifacts with target set for each;

(c) whether a proposal for cataloguing and monofilament of those items was received from Majuli Island Protection And Development Council (MIPADC);

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

and

(d) if so, status of its implementation?

Preservation of historical statues in West Bengal

1358. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Archaeological Survey of India has suspended excavation at Gosanimari village, under Dinhata sub-division of Coochbehar district, West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) by when the job will start again; and

(d) Government's proposal to preserve the historical statues/sculptured relics of the seventh century?

Funds allocated for extension of tourist facilities in Assam

1359. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to State:

(a) the amount proposed to be allocated for the extension of tourist facilities in the state of Assam;

(b) whether any scheme for the same has been formulated;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Increase in business in hotels by organising 'Plays'

†1360. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have started organising plays in its Five Star Hotels to increase business;

(b) if so, since when and the names of the hotels and quantum of the increase in the business made so far; and

(c) whether I.T.D.C. have recently engaged a troupe; if so, the money spent on it and the authority that approved it and profits accrued to the I.T.D.C.?

Promotion of Pilgrim Tourism in Orissa

1361. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to promote Pilgrim Tourism;

(b) if so, the State-wise number of pilgrim Centres identified for development;

(c) whether any such centre has been identified in Orissa;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to develop tourist infrastructure in these pilgrim centres in Orissa?

Scheme for rejuvenation of culturally and historically significant places

1362. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested Government to include Hampi, Srirangapattinam, Belur and Halebid in the scheme of rejuvenation of culturally and historically significant towns similar to Varanasi and Madurai; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction to the said proposal?

Conservation of Jain Monuments in Karnataka

1363. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Karnataka has approached the Central Government for providing financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 20 crores for conservation of Jain Monuments; and

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal and by when the decision is expected to be communicated to the State Government of Karnataka?

Tourism potential of India and China

1364. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians toured China in the years 2001 and 2002 *vis-a-vis* Chinese visited India during that period;

(b) the steps taken to persuade Indian Tour Operators to exploit tourism prospects of China; and

(c) the other action proposed to explore the tourism potentials of both countries to the maximum?

Promotion of tourist places in Ranthambhor and Sawai Madhopur

† 1365. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government are taking to promote Ranthambhor, Tiger Project and Sawai Madhopur as tourist places;

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the number of foreign tourists visited Rajasthan during the last one year and number of tourists who visited Sawai Madhopur; and

(c) the total number of tourist places in the Rajasthan and steps Government are taking to promote such spots alongwith the number of tourists visited each of the tourist place during the last one year?

Development of Tourism in Rajasthan

†1366. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether tourism schemes for development of Jaisalmer, Chittaurgarh and Kumbhalgarh, proposed by the State Government are pending with the Central Government for clearance;

(b) if so, by when they are likely to be cleared;

(c) whether the State Government had also sought the financial aid for development of Haroti tourism circuit and protections and development of ancient temples of Ausiyan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Budgetary allocation for safe tourist destination

1367. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that arrival of foreign tourists is declining continuously for the last few years;

(b) if so, the foreign tourists visiting India during the last three years; the foreign exchange earned for the same period;

(c) whether the September, 11 incident has further affected the tourism sector; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to promote India as a safe tourist destination with budgetary allocations and the amount spent so far?

Water shortage in Hyderabad

1368. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United Nations consultant for Asian countries has expressed the view that replenishing old tanks with treated sewage water will mitigate water shortage in Hyderabad to a great extent;

(b) if so, whether any concrete programme of action has been initiated by the State Government with the help of World Bank;

(c) whether the projects that were undertaken have been fully completed;

(d) whether Kagna river which is located near Vikrabad and merges into Bhima river in Karnataka could have provided drinking water projects; and

(e) if so, whether any proposal in this regard is also being considered?

Allowing private players to draw water from Periyar

1369. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of any proposal allowing private players to draw water from the river Periyar in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal alongwith the conditions and the period for which sanction has been given;

(c) whether any feasibility study has been conducted in this regard;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether it is also a fact that the river is already in trouble due to reduced flow of water and intrusion of salt water from the sea;

(f) if so, whether such projects will result in further degradation of the river and the environment; and

(g) Government's response thereto?

Erosion of Ganga

1370. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the continuous erosion of the Ganga which has assumed a dangerous proportion at Shankopara Station near Farakka, between railway line Nalodhip and Kala; and

(b) whether Government are also aware that the Bandel Thermal Power Station, Dakhineswar Temple, Balagarh in Hooghly, Katwa, Kalna in Burdwan, Barrackpore in North 24 - Parganas in West Bengal are facing serious erosion problem of the Ganga (Bhagirathi)?

Water resources schemes for Rajasthan

1371. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Centrally sponsored schemes being implemented to assist Rajasthan for enhancing water resources;

(b) the amount earmarked for the purpose during the last two years, year-wise; and

(c) the State's achievement with regard to preservation of water and exploitation of water resources?

Availability of drinking water

1372. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the availability of drinking water per person per year in the country is going down;

(b) if no, the availability of water per person in 1950 and at present; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to tackle the problem of shortage of water in the country?

Utilizing water from Malampuzha Dam in Kerala

1373. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of any scheme for utilizing water from Malampuzha Dam in Kerala for industrial purpose by private entrepreneurs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that water in the dam is insufficient to cater to the irrigation demands of the region and also the drinking water supply to the Palaghat city and its suburbs;

(d) if so, whether such schemes would further strain the irrigation and drinking water system in the area; and

(e) if so, the criteria for permitting such schemes?

Irrigation facilities in H.P.

1374. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any target has been fixed

for providing irrigation facilities in Himachal Pradesh during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of financial assistance proposed to be granted to Himachal Pradesh for the said purpose?

Funds allocated for desilting of reservoirs

1375. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Crop Weather Watch Group which reviews water level in reservoirs has submitted report that overall water position in 70 important reservoirs of the country continues to be critical;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action initiated to rectify it;

(c) whether State Governments and Central Water Commission were directed to undertake desilting of reservoirs in view of the low level of storage; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard together with the period required for desilting and fund allotted for it?

Seeking the US expertise for inter-linking of rivers

1376. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India can emulate Texas, which had an agreement with Mexico for sharing water as a flood control programme, by linking up its major rivers;

(b) whether Government propose to seek the US expertise to help India in the gigantic task of linking its major rivers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Diversions of river water in Kerala

1377. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are six illegal diversions of Bhavani river water above the Attappady Hills flowing to Kerala resulting in acute water shortage in the tribal belt;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the waters of Vargar and Kodunagarapallam were diverted to the Kunha hydel-cum-irrigation project making both the rivers dry, creating acute water shortage in Attappady Valley;

(d) whether the competent authority in Kerala brought the above illegal diversions to the notice of the competent authority; and

(e) if so, the action taken against the above diversions in details?

Survey regarding declining water level

1378. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey on constantly declining water level in the country, particularly in Gujarat;

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

(c) the follow-up action taken by Government on the survey report?

Sutlej-Yamuna link

1379. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a delegation from the major political parties in Haryana

had met the Prime Minister in January, 2003 in connection with the non-implementation of the decision of the Supreme Court on Sutlej-Yamuna link by the Government of Punjab;

(b) if so, what are the details of their demand; and

(c) what action Government have taken thereon?

Setting up of Integrated Water Resource Management

1380. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of setting up of an Integrated Water Resource Management;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a meeting was held in the first week of December, 2002 in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Formation of Indo-Bhutan River Commission

1381. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that every year flood ravages northern districts of West Bengal;

(b) whether Government have agreed to form an Indo-Bhutan Joint River Commission as most of the rivers originate from Bhutan; and

(c) if so, the time-frame thereof?

Scheme to meet scarcity of water in the country

1382. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently launched a scheme to meet the acute scarcity of water in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the allocation of funds for the project;

(d) whether any time schedule has been fixed for implementation of the project; and

(e) if so, to what extent this scheme is different from other such schemes?

Removal of silt from canals

1383. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan for removal of silt from canals network and its repair/renovation across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the fresh steps taken by Government to formulate a National Project for time-bound repair/renovation/desilting of existing canal network across the country in order to avoid large scale seepage/overflow/wastage of precious water meant for irrigation purposes?

Techno-economic feasibility of inter-linking of rivers

1384. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a seminar was recently

held at Anand with experts from Columbia- based International Water Management Institute deliberating on the techno-economic feasibility of the proposed mega project on inter-linking of national rivers;

(b) whether the experts have estimated the total project cost of river inter-linking a whopping Rs. 5,76,000 crores with a gestation period of 40 years; and

(c) whether the seminar recommended adoption of small/localised solutions closer to users rather than mega projects?

Disposal of publicly owned rivers

1385. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in 'The Hindu' dated the 23rd January, 2003 captioned, "Rivers sand and People's survival" is in the attention of the competent authority;

(b) if so, the details of the sale negotiation for disposal of publicly owned rivers/sand for the last two years if any;

(c) the category-wise and State-wise details for the last three years;

(d) if so, the action taken to rectify it; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Underground water level in Delhi

1386. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the underground water level in Delhi is fast depleting following an increasing demand and decreasing supply of water per day;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to augment the volume of supply so as to reduce the drawal of underground water to the minimum?

NEW DELHI ;
The 25th February, 2003
Phalgun 6, 1924 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

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(Ministry-wise)

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