

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 7, 2006/Phalguna 16, 1927 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions — 155

Air service agreement with Thailand

1471. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have agreed with Thailand Government for to and fro international flights;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement and the extent to which India shall be beneficiary;

(c) the number of daily flights to and fro;

(d) the details of airports in Uttar Pradesh from where such flights shall operate; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Purchase of aircraft by Air India

1472. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRI R. P. GOENKA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India has entered into an agreement with the

Boeing Commercial Airplanes for purchase of 68 aircraft at an estimated cost of Rs. 35,000 crores;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the type(s) and distinctive features of the new aircraft, phased programme drawn up for their delivery and arrangements settled, if any, for maintenance, repair and overhauling of the large number of new category of aircraft; and

(c) to what extent the new airplanes are expected to help achieve operational cost savings and expand the route network to combat the increasing competition?

Pilots in Alliance Air

1473. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of pilots and other trained staff like engineers have left the Alliance Air which has adversely affected the services of the company;

(b) if so, the number of persons who resigned from Alliance Air during the last two years;

(c) what is the existing strength of pilots in the Alliance Air and how many of them are in position at present; and

(d) the steps taken to retain the experienced persons in the Alliance Air and with what result?

Infrastructural development at Chennai airport

1474. SHRI R. SHUNMUGA-SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Chennai has recorded a higher growth rate in passenger traffic and aircraft movement according to the report of the Airports Authority of India (AAI);

(b) whether the AAI has demanded for the infrastructural development in the Chennai airport terminals; and

(c) what development projects are proposed for other airports in Tamil Nadu?

Training of CAT-III operation

†1475. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of domestic airlines whose pilots have been imparted training to operate the flights by using CAT-III B landing support system in thick fog;

(b) the airports where CAT-III B system has been installed/propose to be installed; and

(c) the amount likely to be spent thereon?

Committee on infrastructure for airports

†1476. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a scheme of opening new airports and extension of some airports in the country by Government;

(b) if so, the details regarding opening of new airports, State-wise;

(c) the details of the airports which are going to be extended;

(d) by when the said scheme is likely to be implemented; and

(e) the points identified for consideration by 'Committee on Infrastructure' constituted under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister in this regard?

Loss making airports

1477. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Airports Authority of India has been facing huge loss from around 110 airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for making these airports profitable in the near future;

(d) whether Government have made any plan for loss making airports in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Committee on modernisation of airports

1478. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT:
SHRI DIPANKAR
MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Alternate Plan Review Committee was constituted by Chairman, Airports Authority of India (AAI) to examine the modernisation proposal of Mumbai and Delhi airports prepared by AAI Employees Joint Forum;

(b) if so, the brief outline of the recommendations of the report;

(c) the date of submission of the report;

(d) whether any action has been taken on the basis of the report for modernisation of Delhi and Mumbai airports and 35 other non-metro airports by AAI; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

FDI in greenfield airports

1479. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to open up 100 per cent FDI in greenfield airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner this will help in the creation of new airport facilities in non-metro cities, specially with reference to cities in the State of Orissa?

Congestion in air traffic

1480. SHRI DHARAM PAL
SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a huge increase in air traffic in recent months and it is becoming increasingly unmanageable for the staff and management of the airport authority which causes a huge risk of accidents too;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to improve the air traffic situation in the country?

Special Purpose Vehicle for airports

1481. SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle to develop airports in the country; and

(b) if so, the details of the airports on the modernisation list?

Expansion of air services from Guwahati

1482. SHRI URKHAO GWRA
BRAHMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide air connectivity of any kind with Guwahati Airport from every Headquarters of Autonomous District Councils of Assam that has become most essential today;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Commencement of air services from Pathankot

1483. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open Pathankot Airport in Punjab for general public in near future; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Discrimination against Air-hostesses in AI

1484. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the management of Air India issued instructions to permit Air-hostesses to be cabin-in-charge during flight operation;

(b) if so, whether the directive has been implemented thereof;

(c) if the answer to part (b) above is in the negative, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to ensure implementation of the directive and ending discrimination against Air-hostesses?

Disaster management programme of Air India

1485. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India propose to have an effective disaster management and family assistance plan for the aircraft accident victims;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the areas of Air India's operations proposed to be covered thereby;

(c) whether the arrangement is proposed to be entrusted to a private firm; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the conditions attached therewith?

Traffic in metro routes

1486. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of rapidly increasing air traffic between major metro trunk routes like Delhi and Mumbai; and

(b) whether Government are considering any steps to resolve the problem if so, the details thereof?

Indian Airlines' agreement with Airbus Industry

1487. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the Indian Airlines (re-christened "Indian") has signed an agreement with Airbus Industry for purchase of 43 new aircraft as part of its fleet expansion plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the type(s) of aircraft proposed to be purchased, the time-frame fixed for their delivery and tentative allocation for their deployment in different regions; and

(c) to what extent the expanded fleet is expected to boost the "Indian" considering its fall in the market share, especially when private airlines are also expanding their respective fleets?

**International air services from
Hyderabad**

1488. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts being made or already made in the last three years to operate more direct flights to major cities of the world from Hyderabad; and

(b) the status of such efforts and proposal?

**Guidelines on employment of foreign
pilots**

†1489. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to shortage of pilots in the country, many airline companies are appointing foreign pilots;

(b) whether Government have issued any guidelines in this regard keeping in view the security of the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

**New airport building at
Amritsar**

1490. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made in the construction of the new airport building and terminal at Amritsar and by when it is likely to be completed; and

(b) the estimated cost thereof and the cost escalation, if any, likely to be incurred thereby?

**Air service between Delhi and
Guwahati**

1491. SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state whether Government are contemplating to introduce a morning flight from Guwahati to Delhi and an evening flight from Delhi to Guwahati to facilitate the people of North-East to have their work done during the day and return to Guwahati in the evening?

**Outstanding dues of AAI from private
airlines**

1492. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the outstanding dues of Airports Authority of India (AAI) from private airlines for landing and parking license fee, electricity charges etc. as on 15th January, 2006;

(b) whether outstanding dues of M/s Air Deccan From N.S.C.B. International Airport, Kolkata alone is Rs. 1 crore for the period from 1st October to 31st December, 2005; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the delay in payment and action taken by AAI to liquidate the dues and to penalize the defaulting private airlines?

Evaluation of AAI assets

1493. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total assets of Airports Authority of India as on 1st April, 2005;

(b) whether any valuation thereof has been undertaken by Government or by any authorised agency and if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the total assets of Delhi and Mumbai Airports and its total valuation; and

(d) whether such valuation is based on the report of any official agency and if so, the details thereof?

Losses due to strike by AAI employees

1494. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Airports Authority of India employees went on strike recently;

(b) if so, the number of days strike continued;

(c) the loss caused to Airports Authority of India and various airlines;

(d) the number of flights cancelled;

(e) the demands put forth by the employees; and

(f) the demands which have been considered, demands rejected and demands under consideration with the details thereof?

Airport at Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh

†1495. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal regarding construction of airport at Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh is under Government's consideration;

(b) if so, the reasons for which this proposal is lying pending for years; and

(c) by when the action will be taken on the said proposal?

Restriction on concessions to senior citizens

1496. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines, Jet Airways and Air Sahara have put restrictions on domestic travel concession to senior citizens that ticket must be booked two days in advance with a minimum two nights stay at destination in case of round trips and minimum two nights stay at each intermediate point in case of circle trip journey;

(b) whether prior to July 2003 such restrictions did not exit;

(c) whether Government have received representations against these restrictions as they defeat the purpose of concession to senior citizens; and

(d) if so, by when Government would make the Airlines withdraw these conditions?

Air service to Myanmar from Delhi

1497. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to connect Myanmar from Delhi in view of the closure of Myanmar Airways from Delhi to Myanmar;

(b) whether Government consider to grant concession in air fare to senior citizens to Myanmar in view of its short time travel; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**NCW's directives on airhostesses in
Air India**

1498. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA:
SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of
the alleged discrimination of airhostesses
in Air India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received
any suggestion from the NCW in this
regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

**Compassionate appointments in
Banks**

1499. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the
Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether appointments in banks on
compassionate grounds is not practised;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether National Organisation of
Bank Workers has urged to restore
compassionate appointments; and

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

Growth rate of economy

1500. SHRIMATI MOHSINA
KIDWAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that
the Confederation of Indian Industry has
anticipated economy growth of over 7 per
cent in the fiscal 2005-06;

(b) if so, what is the actual growth of
economy in the first three quarters of
2005-06, *i.e.* from 1st April to 31st
December, 2005;

(c) what is the estimated economic
growth predicted by Government during
2005-06; and

(d) what is the projected growth during
2006-07?

**Disinvestment of equity in profit
making PSUs**

1501. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BAL
APTE :

SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are looking at
disinvesting small portion of equity in
profit making Public Sector Enterprises;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to
review the existing FDI policy with a view
to further liberalise it; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Devaluation of rupee against dollar

1502. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased
to state:

(a) whether rupee has become distinctly
softer against the U.S. dollar hitting very
low about five months back; and

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

Credit flow to agriculture

1503. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY : Will the Minister of
FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the credit disbursement
target set during the last three years to

enhance credit flow to agriculture, year-wise; and

(b) how Government propose to achieve the additional loan of about Rs. 1,48,000 crores required during the remaining part of the Tenth Five Year Plan for achieving the total requirement of Rs. 7,36,570 crores?

New reporting system for banks

1504. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Reserve Bank of India is in the process of prescribing new reporting system for banks for suspicious transactions or transactions of more than Rs. 10 lakhs;

(b) if so, whether the RBI is going to make it mandatory for banks to report to Financial Intelligence Unit of India on regular basis;

(c) what are the reasons for the proposed move;

(d) whether the RBI are considering to have a revised Ombudsman for banking sector; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Liquidity crisis in banking sector

1505. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre's surplus fund holding with RBI has touched almost Rs. 50,000 crores;

(b) whether the banking sector now reeling under a liquidity crunch is pressing hard for spending such surplus on projects to ease the liquidity crunch; and

(c) whether Government choose to hold on to the surplus funds to contain fiscal deficit and keep inflation at acceptable levels as per RBI directives?

Duping of investors by plantation companies

†1506. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether many plantation and milk product companies from share market have usurped lakhs of rupees of investors; and

(b) the details of arrangement made by Government to identify them?

Seizure of multi-luxury vehicles

1507. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence has seized some of the multi-luxury vehicles imported into India under false pretext to evade crores of rupees in duty;

(b) if so, the details of the vehicles seized and the names of persons with addresses from whom they have been seized; and

(c) what action the Department of Revenue Intelligence is taking in this regard?

Waiver of loans due to floods/drought

1508. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received requests from farmers of various States who suffered heavy losses due to drought/floods during the current year to waive off the loans and interest;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether Government have decided to postpone the recovery of loan and interest thereon from the farmers in the wake of drought/floods situation in the country during the current year; and

(c) if so, the period for which the recovery of the loan has been postponed?

Revenue deficit of Andhra Pradesh

1509. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gross State Domestic Product of Andhra Pradesh at 5.01 per cent is way below the National average of 5.89 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have committed itself to eliminating the State's revenue deficit by 2006-07 which is estimated to be around Rs. 1400 crores during the current fiscal; and

(d) if so, the present position thereof?

Reduction in fiscal deficit of States

1510. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while talking to the media under the banner of Financial Writers Forum, he has stated that due to reforms in tax administration, the financial position of several States has improved and that their revenue and fiscal deficits have also come down; and

(b) to what extent Government expects that the target fixed for filling revenue and fiscal deficits would be achieved?

Sorting out of systemic issues in primary market

1511. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have advised SEBI to sort out systemic issues in primary market;

(b) if so, the details and the context in which such an advisory was issued;

(c) whether with a view to containing abuse of the process of allotment of IPO shares, SEBI is insisting on the banks to follow a stringent 'Know-Your-Client' (KYC) regime;

(d) whether in the pretext of following the new KYC regime, banks are refusing to open small accounts, thereby depriving banking facility to a large number of ordinary citizens; and

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

ADB loan to Kerala

1512. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ADB extend any grants for undertaking restructuring activities in Tsunami hit areas of Kerala coast;

(b) whether the State Government of Kerala has initiated any steps to make use of the grant and if so, whether the required details called for by the ADB were submitted for availing such grant; and

(c) whether the State Government of Kerala was granted any loans by ADB for Tsunami release work and since when the proposal for grant was pending?

**Rate of interest on loans
by banks**

†1513. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR
PRASAD :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Sector
as well as private sector banks offer loans
for various sectors and charge interest
thereon; and

(b) the minimum and the maximum rate
of interest fixed by banks for the year
2005-2006 for different categories of loans,
category-wise?

**Capital investment in foreign
countries by Mutual funds**

†1514. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER
SINGH MAJITHA :
DR. MURLI MANOHAR
JOSHI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government
have allowed the Mutual funds to go ahead
with capital investment in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the percentage upto which
these Mutual funds would be free to invest
in foreign countries; and

(c) the reasons for allowing these
Mutual funds to go for capital investment
in the foreign countries?

**Payment of bonus on Monthly Income
Schemes of Post Offices**

1515. SHRI KARNENDU
BHATTACHARJEE :
SHRI LALIT SURI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have
discontinued the payment of bonus on
maturity of Post Office Monthly Income
Schemes;

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

(c) whether other rules relating to MIS
and other investment schemes for the small
investors have also been amended; and

(d) the likely impact of the proposed
measure on the growth of small savings by
medium and small investors and steps
proposed to be taken in regard thereto?

**Food subsidies for BPL
families**

1516. SHRI AMAR SINGH :
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) how much amount has been allocated
for food subsidies for the current financial
year for Below Poverty Line families and
how much expenditure has been incurred
upto 31st December, 2005;

(b) whether Government propose to
introduce a system of cash payment for
them instead of giving subsidy through the
public distribution system; and

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Loans to students for higher education

†1517. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI :
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER
SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have fixed certain annual amount for providing loans to students for higher education;

(b) if so, the amount fixed for the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 separately;

(c) the amount actually provided to the students out of the same; and

(d) the loan amount out of above turned as NPA during the above years?

Recovery of taxes

1518. SHRI DIPANKAR
MUKHERJEE :
SHRIMATI BRINDA
KARAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 273 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 13th July, 2004 and state:

(a) the total amount recoverable on account of Corporate Tax, Customs Duty, Income Tax and Central Excise Duty as on 31st March, 2003, 31st March, 2004 and 31st March, 2005;

(b) the disputed amount out of the recoverable arrears; and

(c) the time-bound target of liquidating the same, year-wise?

Revival of stock exchanges

1519. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many stock exchanges are there in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that no trading has taken place in many of them for years;

(c) if so, the details of such stock exchanges;

(d) what are the reasons for their present status; and

(e) what steps are being taken to revive these stock exchanges?

Bogus share applications in Public Issues

1520. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:
SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BAL
APTE:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether SEBI, RBI, NSDL, CDSL, could not find out the benami bogus share applications in Public Issues for more than one year;

(b) whether it is a fact that Investors Associations and others have expressed fear that more than 3 lakh bogus and benami allotments have taken place during 2005;

(c) whether it is also a fact that NSDL has given data of Rupalben Panchal and others in 2005 to SEBI;

(d) whether Government have ordered criminal action against the guilty; and

(e) whether the views of Government regarding more than 3 lakh bogus

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

applications in IPOs and more than 3 crore small investors' share quota siphoning?

Education cess

1521. SHRI JAI PARKASH
AGGARWAL:
SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount collected as education cess since it was levied;

(b) whether the amount so collected has been used for the purpose envisaged;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the remedial measures taken to ensure that the amount collected as education cess is spent within that financial year?

Tax concessions to power sector

1522. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering of removing disparity in tax treatment of generation, transmission and distribution in power sector and also qualifying pipelines and LNG facilities as core sector as has often been demanded by CII/FICCI, etc.;

(b) if so, whether this will entail any substantial reduction in revenue; and

(c) what are the salient features of tax concessions which power sector is likely to get during 2006-07?

World Bank loan to Indian Council of Agriculture Research

1523. SHRI SURENDRA LATH:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN
PANY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that World Bank will provide \$250 million loan to the Indian Council of Agriculture Research;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) for what purpose Government are seeking a loan of such big amount;

(d) what are the details of this agreement; and

(e) how the repayment of this loan will be done?

Recovery of banks' dues

1524. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of
FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the NPAs of Public Sector Banks have decreased in 2005-06 as compared to 2004-05;

(b) if so, the details of NPAs as on 31st March, 2005 and 31st March, 2006;

(c) what effective measures the Public Sector Banks are taking for expeditious recovery of dues from the borrowers in NPA accounts; and

(d) whether his Ministry propose to start a special drive so as to effectively and quickly recover NPAs from the defaulters?

Declaration of annual income of more than Rs. 10 lakhs

1525. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country has only 3.5 crore Income Tax payers of whom just about 85,000 have declared an annual income of more than Rs. 10 lakhs;

(b) whether the Supreme Court has barred Government from operating Amnesty Schemes; and

(c) what are the steps being taken to track black money to generate more resources for the economy in the coming budget?

Exemption of senior citizens from filing Income Tax returns

†1526. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would exempt those pensioners above the age of 70 years from filing Income Tax returns who have no other source of income; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Import of excise duty on LPG cylinder

1527. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal or request made by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to his Ministry for a change in the excise duty structure so that Government need not increase the price of domestic LPG cylinder;

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

(c) what action his Ministry has taken on the proposal sent by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas?

Aid to Andhra Pradesh to fill financial gap

1528. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has offered help to Andhra Pradesh to fill the financial gap encountered by Government in implementing its ambitious programme of constructing a large number of irrigation projects;

(b) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has deputed a team to New Delhi to discuss this issue with the Department of Economic Affairs; and

(c) if so, the details of the discussion and the outcome thereof?

Banks authorised for disbursement of pensions

†1529. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the banks authorised for the disbursement of Provident Fund (P.F.) and pensions of retired employees;

(b) whether the payment of P.F. and pension has been stopped with regard to those employees who are not having account in these banks;

(c) whether there is any proposal to authorise all the Nationalised Banks for the disbursement of P.F. and pensions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Varsha Bima Yojana

1530. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the main features of the 'Varsha Bima Yojana' being run by Government;

(b) whether only the farmers of such areas can be benefited from this scheme which have the facilities to collect the rain related statistics;

(c) if so, the States where the farmers have been deprived of the benefits of this scheme because of the non-availability of rain related statistics, particularly in the State of Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take so that all the farmers of those selected States may benefit from the said scheme?

Short term refinancing by NABARD

1531. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments of Punjab, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh and some other States have demanded that percentage of short term refinance for seasonal agricultural operations of the NABARD should be enhanced from a mere 30 per cent to 75 per cent so that the farmers' dependence on State and Central Co-operative Banks with high rate of interest is proportionately curtailed; and

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

Funding of mega projects

1532. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposals under India Infrastructure

Financing Company Limited (IIFCL) for funding mega projects from various State Governments, particularly the State of Maharashtra; and

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

Kisan Credit Cards

1533. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for issuing Kisan Credit Cards;

(b) the objectives for issuing these Cards;

(c) the number of farmers in Rajasthan eligible for Kisan Credit Cards;

(d) the number of Kisan Credit Cards issued to farmers of Rajasthan, till date since its inception, year-wise;

(e) the amount of money advanced to these farmers under this scheme, year-wise; and

(f) by when Government expect to cover all the farmers of Rajasthan under this scheme?

Shortage of clerical staff in banks

1534. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Public Sector Banks are facing a shortage of 40,000 clerical staff in various banks all over the country; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to be taken to fill up the vacancies?

Dearness allowance due to employees

1535. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which additional dearness allowance and relief has become due to the Central Government employees and pensioners w.e.f. 1st January, 2006; and

(b) by when orders to that effect are likely to be issued?

Action against NBFCs

†1536. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to check the fraud of non-banking financial companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of those non-banking companies who have cheated public during the last two years; and

(d) the action taken by Government so far in this regard?

Increase in prices of gold and silver

1537. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of gold and silver are rising in the country during the last 2-3 years;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this increase; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to bring down the prices of gold and silver?

Expansion of banks

1538. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have been urged to expand Public Sector Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to expand Public Sector Banks; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Introduction of Inheritance Tax

1539. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce Inheritance Tax in the country;

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

(c) whether Government are aware that the Inheritance Tax is unpopular in the countries wherever it has been imposed?

Floating of bonds for unearthing black money

1540. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to issue a fresh series of bonds in order to unearth the black money in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the proposed bonds are likely to be floated in the market?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Rationalisation of duty structure on SSIIs in Gujarat

1541. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that excise duty linked with Maximum Retail Price has affected the Small Scale Industry in Gujarat adversely and the State has asked for rationalization of rates and duty structure;

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

(c) what steps are being taken to protect the Small Scale Industry of Gujarat which is affected adversely by this duty structure?

Time limit for setting up of industries in Kutch district

1542. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has represented to extend the time limit for setting up of Industries in Kutch District till December, 2007;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered the representation positively; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not whether Government would consider the same positively so as to help the backward remote, drought prone area of Kutch?

Bank branches in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh

1543. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of branches set up in rural areas by Nationalised Banks in the country during the last three years particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Nationalised Bank-wise, State-wise;

(b) whether Government and the Reserve Bank of India have issued instruction and guidelines to Nationalised and non-Nationalised banks to open more branches in rural areas particularly in small villages and towns; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof and how far rural people have been benefited?

Lending by banks for self employment

1544. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the lending of money by different banks in order to provide self-employment during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06, State-wise;

(b) the number of beneficiaries in different States;

(c) the number of cases pending for more than three years; and

(d) the steps to minimise pendency?

Recovery of outstanding loans

1545. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are 13000 borrowal accounts with more than 1 crore outstanding loans;

(b) if so, the names of such account holders with the amount due, time of issuing the loan and the issuing branch;

(c) the reasons why no action has been taken to recover these loans; and

(d) the authority responsible for its recovery and whether action should be taken against them?

NPA of banks

1546. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about Rs. 1,40,000/- crore is the total non-performing assets of all the banks operating in the country; and

(b) if so, what is the share of public, private and the foreign banks thereof?

Bankruptcy of Asian Companies

1547. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the observation made by the Director of London School of Economics at a recently held Round Table conference at Kolkata organized by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce to the effect that some Asian Companies were heading towards bankruptcy;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to study the implications of the observation made in the said conference; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

Complaints against recovery agents

†1548. SHRI VASANT CHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are in receipt of complaints with regard to harassment and manhandling the credit holders by recovery agents;

(b) whether Government would enact a stringent law to stop such harassment and manhandling;

(c) the details of the cases registered on the above matter by the police so far; and

(d) whether Government have directed all the banks to stop such practices and if so, when?

Spending of budget allocations in North Eastern Region

†1549. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under specific guidelines, various Ministries of Government are required to spend ten per cent of their budget in the States of North-East Region;

(b) whether some Ministries have been exempted from following these guidelines; and

(c) if so, the names of such Ministries and rationale behind such exemption?

Income Tax concessions to senior citizens

1550. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Policy on older persons declared by Government considers every 60+ person as a senior citizen;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has repeatedly requested his Ministry to consider 60+ persons as senior citizens instead of 65+;

(c) whether it is a fact that his Ministry still gives Income Tax concessions to 65+ only; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) if so, by when the Ministry proposes to give concessions to 60+ persons?

Collection of borrowers details by CIBIL

1551. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Credit Information Bureau (India) Ltd. (CIBIL) is able to collect the details of borrowers and give the latest position of borrowers;

(b) what action has been taken by RBI against the banks who refuse to divulge information with CIBIL; and

(c) the details of NPAs of scheduled commercial banks and its values?

Redesigning of Service Tax net

1552. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to redesign Service Tax net for the year 2006-07; and

(b) if so, the services which are being considered to be brought under Income-Tax net?

Opening of bank branches in Pakistan

†1553. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Bank of India and Punjab National Bank have asked for permission from Government to open their branches in Pakistan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the

names of the countries wherein branches of these banks have been opened?

Soft loans to fishermen

1554. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Fish Workers Forum has urged Government to extend soft loans to fishermen at 6 per cent interest rate;

(b) whether any decision has been taken in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Presiding Officer for DRT in Coimbatore

1555. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Debt Recovery Tribunal in Coimbatore exists in name and without presiding officer for the last two years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when the Presiding Officer will be appointed for the Tribunal?

Action against benami investments

1556. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state what are the details of action has been taken by the Income Tax Department against benami investments made through bogus share applications in the IPO scam of 2005;

Utilization of foreign contribution

1557. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

contribution of about 64,000 crore rupees meant for investment in sectors such as power, roads, hospitals, city beautification, etc. is lying unutilized for years and Government are paying commitment charges worth hundreds of crores of rupees to World Bank and other agencies;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for not utilizing foreign contribution; and

(c) what is the policy of Government to utilize entire foreign contribution?

Wak Orders for Hindustan Cables Ltd.

1558. SHRINANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh have requested the Central Government to persuade the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to release some orders to Hindustan Cables Ltd., Hyderabad for manufacturing cables etc. and to expedite the implementation of new projects as per proposed diversification plans with the help of IIT, Kharagpur, as a long term solution for sustainability of Hindustan Cables Ltd.;

(b) if so, whether Government would assure of expediting a favourable decision in this regard for a short term and long term sustainability; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Surplus revenue with the heavy industries

†1559. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy industries under public sector in the country are having surplus revenue;

(b) if so, the total amount thereof at the end of December, 2005; and

(c) the details of ten such industrial areas under which maximum revenue is accumulated and the amount of surplus revenue in each of them?

Committee as revival of sick units

1560. DR. K. MALAISAMY:
SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Public Sector Units which are sick and to be revived;

(b) whether any time bound programme has been chalked out for the purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any Committee has been set up to speed up the revival of sick units; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Premium brand watches by HMT

1561. SHRIMATI KAMLA
MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that HMT Ltd. is marketing its premium brand of watches through private retail outlets;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether HMT is looking for foreign partners to manufacture premium brand of watches in the country; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Dilution of Government equity in Maruti

1562. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to give up its equity interest in Maruti Udyog Ltd.;

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

(c) how Government propose to ensure that Maruti cars are available at reasonable rates to customers, the purpose for which MUL was established?

Availability of gas reserves in Bihar

†1563. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Bihar has expressed the

possibility of petroleum products and natural gas reserves in the State;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State Government has inked an agreement with a foreign company for exploration of petroleum products and natural gas in the identified places of the State to give the said possibility a concrete shape; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Asian Gas Grid

1564. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal of Asian Gas Grid;

(b) if so, the details including the countries associated with it and the pipeline that would cover India as a part of the proposal; and

(c) the present status of the proposal and the envisaged period of completion of the above project?

Supply of gas to power stations

1565. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that power and fertilizer companies are virtually gas-strapped as his Ministry has told the Ministry of Power that there will be no fresh or additional gas supplies in India till 2008;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this will stall planned power capacities of almost 5000 MWIH in the next two years; and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take to supply enough gas to existing gas based power stations that are running below capacity for want of gas?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Petrochemical project at
Mangalore**

1566. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and the State Government of Karnataka to set up the Rs. 21,000 crore petrochemicals project in Mangalore was signed recently;

(b) if so, when it was signed;

(c) whether Government have cleared the proposed project as per the original plans; and

(d) by when, it will become operational?

Overseas investment of oil companies

†1567. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JEHTMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that public sector oil companies have made capital investment in foreign companies in the foreign countries during the last few years;

(b) if so, the names of those public sector companies which have invested in foreign companies by the end of December, 2005 alongwith the amount of such capital investment; and

(c) the capital investment made by the above companies in indigenous oil companies?

Import of natural gas

†1568. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

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

(a) whether Government have identified the potentialities of increasing the production of natural gas in the country;

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

(c) whether the country could become self-reliant in the coming years; and

(d) if so, the target thereof and the annual average percentage of requirement of the gas in country which is being met through import?

Losses suffered by oil PSUs

1569. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:
DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Oil Corporation has registered a net loss of Rs. 5.83 crores for the third quarter of the current financial year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that last year during the same period there was a huge profit;

(c) the reasons for the sudden loss in the navratna PSUs;

(d) what efforts have been made to arrest the loss; and

(e) whether other oil PSUs have also registered loss?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Joint-venture gas exploration projects

1570. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

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

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) propose to undertake joint gas exploration projects in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat;

(b) if so, the oil and gas bearing blocks identified for the propose;

(c) the estimated storage of gas available there;

(d) the progress made in this regard so far; and

(e) whether the joint venture also propose to undertake such gas exploration projects in Assam, Tripura and other States in North Eastern Regions, if so, the steps taken in this regard so far?

Supply of gas to Ratnagiri Gas and Power Company Pvt. Ltd.

1571. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are in touch with the Government of Oman gas supply for Ratnagiri Gas and Power Company Pvt. Ltd. (RGPPL) the erstwhile Dabhol Power Company, Maharashtra;

(b) whether Government are also making efforts for the long term gas supply for RGPPL with other countries also; and

(c) if so, what are those countries and under what terms and conditions, and their response thereto?

GAIL's investments in Orissa

1572. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

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

(a) whether GAIL proposes to invest Rs. 15,000 crores in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a multi-disciplinary task force has been set up for the purpose to facilitate implementation of each of the projects on a priority basis in Orissa; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Expansion of LPG coverage in AP

1573. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 57 per cent of population in A.P. has been covered by domestic LPG;

(b) if so, what efforts the public sector oil marketing companies are making to increase the percentage of population covered in A.P. from 57 per cent to 75 per cent at the end of this year; and

(c) what is the impact of Government's advice to public sector oil marketing companies to concentrate their expansion plan in semi-urban and rural areas?

Re-negotiation of LNG price with Iran

1574. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Iran wants to re-negotiate the LNG price with India at current market conditions;

- (b) if so, the reasons therefore;
- (c) the expected escalation in crude cost per barrel; and
- (d) what would be its final impact on present LPG cost to the consumer?

Dual pricing for LPG and Kerosene

†1575. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government propose to fix different prices of kerosene and LPG for the people living below poverty line and above poverty line;
- (b) if so, whether Government have verified the number of BPL families having LPG at present;
- (c) if not, whether such double pricing will not increase the black marketing; and
- (d) what is the planning of Government to check black marketing?

Performance of oil companies

1576. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all public sector and private sector petroleum companies have earned profits during the current financial year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof company-wise separately as compared to the profits of previous year;
- (c) whether these companies have increased production, processing and sales of the products; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Prices of petroleum products

1577. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of times the price of Petrol, Diesel and LPG were enhanced after the present Government assumed power and the period and the rate of such enhancement;
- (b) whether any proposal is pending with Government to increase the prices further in view of the recommendations of any authoritative committee and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government have taken decision, if any, in the matter and the reaction of Government thereto?

Clearance to LNG terminal at Kochi

1578. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether necessary clearance has been accorded to the LNG terminal at Vallarpadam, Kochi;
- (b) if so, the details of the present status of the project;
- (c) whether the date of the stone laying ceremony has been postponed;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the required LNG for running the project has since been ensured and if so, the details thereof;
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (g) the time by which stone laying ceremony will be conducted?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Oil refinery at Bhatinda

1579. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA:: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work on Bhatinda oil refinery in Punjab is going on as per schedule; and

(b) if so, the status of the project?

Petroleum Economic Zone

1580. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently a proposal has been mooted to set-up an exclusive Petroleum Economic Zone for service providers in the oil and gas industry, with a view to pooling in knowledge from diverse public, private and foreign institutions about India's geology and using it to attain energy security; and

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

New Gas and oil exploration

1581. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of new gas and oil fields discovered in the country during the last three years State-wise; and

(b) the effective measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government for exploitation of oil and gas reserve areas in the different parts of the country?

Import of crude

1582. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of quantity of crude oil imported by India during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 from various countries;

(b) the details of foreign exchange spent on the import of crude oil during this period; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to produce more oil in the country?

Usage of ethanol-blended petrol

1583. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of running automobiles on ethanol-doped petrol;

(b) what are its consequences;

(c) whether this petrol has been proved economic; and

(d) the complete findings of use of ethanol-doped petrol?

Wait list for LPG in Bihar

1584. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of persons are in the waiting list for LPG Connections;

(b) if so, the number of persons on the waiting list for LPG connections in Bihar as on date, District-wise; and

(c) by when, the list is likely to be cleared?

Shortage of kerosene in Jharkhand

†1585. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given any attention to the critical situation arising out of shortage of kerosene oil in Jharkhand;

(b) whether any request has been received from State Government in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government in this matter?

Availability of oil and coal in Assam

1586. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is plenty of oil trapped in shale oil and coal in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have any plan to extract shale oil from these places; and

(c) if so, the details of Government policy and the strategy in this regard?

Charging of high rate on luxury cars by tourist organisations

1587. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:

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

(a) whether the big tourist organisations in the country operate their luxury cars on diesel while charging very high rate from their customers thus making huge profits;

(b) whether Government are aware that this practice adversely affects the interests of rural farmers for whom particularly cheaper diesel is meant; and

(c) if so, whether Government would consider any proposal to put additional cess or excise duty on diesel purchased by the owners of Luxury cars for purposes of tourism and if so, the details thereof?

World heritage status to Buddha Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh

†1588. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal to declare the Buddha Monastery at Twang city in Arunachal Pradesh as a World heritage site is under Government's consideration;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Cultural and Arts centre in Hilly areas

1589. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the achievements made towards promotion and development of arts and culture in the State of Uttaranchal;

(b) whether Government have set-up or propose to set-up Cultural and Arts centres in the hilly areas of Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, State-wise; and

(c) if so, the details thereof with functions and objectives thereof and achievements made by them?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Promotion of Haridwar as a tourist destination

1590. SHRIMATI KAMLA
MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Haridwar, a religious place has not been promoted as centre of tourist attraction;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that road between Delhi and Haridwar is not to that of international standard; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken to widen the road between Delhi and Haridwar?

Development of ten desolate islands

1591. SHRIMATI JAYA
BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to develop ten desolate islands of Andaman and Nicobar group of islands as tourist spots; and

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

Foreign exchange earned from tourists

1592. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of tourist inflow to India in the year 2005;

(b) the details of such tourist inflow available with Government from different countries; and

(c) the foreign exchange earned for the period?

Promotion of Pilgrim tourism in Rajasthan

1593. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any policy or plan to initiate and encourage Pilgrim Tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have prepared any list of Pilgrim Centres as prime tourist attractions in Rajasthan;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Centre has allotted special grants/funds to Rajasthan to give boost to Pilgrim Tourism; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Hike in entry fee for monuments by ASI

1594. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is going to hike the entry fee for all monuments in the country;

(b) whether ASI has made any distinctions between highly prized monuments in cities and in distant areas, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether ASI propose to increase the number of categories so as to bring about a uniform national system of fees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Promotion of Health Tourism

1595. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS*
BAL APTE:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

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

(a) whether there is a spurt in the arrival of foreign tourists in India during the current year;

(b) if so, the percentage of increase in the arrival of tourist traffic in 2005-06 as compared to 2004-05 and the amount of foreign exchange earned therefrom;

(c) what further steps are proposed to be taken by Government to improve the tourism sector;

(d) whether health tourism had caught up in a big way particularly in Maharashtra, Delhi, Karnataka and Kerala; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Promotions of tourism in Orissa

1596. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

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

(a) whether Government are aware that tourism has good potential in the creation of additional jobs and India has good potential in the tourism sector;

(b) if so, what is the action plan of Government to address the major constraints i.e. modernization of airports, setting up of low-budget hotels, etc.; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to boost tourism in the backward State of Orissa, which has good potential in this sector?

Medical tourism

1597. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

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

(a) whether medical tourism in our country is gaining ground in the international market;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the initiatives that have been taken by Government to give a boost to this sector world-over and project India a favourite health-care destination?

Development of Phoolbagh, Gwalior

†1598. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:
Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether separate proposals regarding development of Phoolbagh, Gwalior, upgradation and development of Hotel Tansen and Sulabh complex, Orchha have been received from the State Government of Madhya Pradesh under Circuit Development Scheme;

(b) if so, the details of these proposals; and

(c) by when, these proposals are likely to be approved?

Development of beaches

1599. SHRI R. SHUNMUGA-SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andaman and Nicobar beach is ranked as one of the top ten beaches in the world;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) what are the proposals and plans to project the Andaman and Nicobar as a major tourist attraction in the country; and

(c) what are the plans to develop and promote other beaches in the country as tourist attraction?

Protection of historical buildings

†1600. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government take care of the protected historical buildings;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number and names of such buildings, State-wise?

Development of Sanchi

†1601. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of efforts being made by Government to attract the foreign tourists;

(b) whether it is a fact that the number of foreign tourists visiting the World Heritage Buddhist place Sanchi is decreasing drastically;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the efforts being made to attract tourists again to the said place;

(d) whether Government are contemplating any scheme for the overall development of Sanchi ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Restructuring of ASI

1602. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to resurrect or restructure the Archeological Survey of India; and

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

Cable car at Shravanabelgola

1603. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India in Delhi has objected to the setting up the cable car at Shravanabelgola in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested the Central Government to accord permission for setting up a cable car at Shravanabelgola in Karnataka to enable visiting pilgrims witness the Mahamasthakabhisheka; and

(d) what is the present status of the above proposal?

Protection of monuments

1604. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officially protected monuments presently in the country;

(b) the number of each of them which have been declared World Heritage Sites;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government are taking special steps to upgrade the areas around all World Heritage Sites;

(d) the fund spent in such upgradation, protection and beautification of all World Heritage Sites in 2004-2005; and

(e) the details of places where the funds were spent in the last fiscal year?

Restoration of stolen sculptures

1605. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that vintage sculptures from Indian temples and historic monuments are being stolen and sold to foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents during the last three years;

(c) how many cases have been solved and stolen sculpture restored to original places; and

(d) the steps being taken to prevent such incidents?

Harassment of foreign tourists

†1606. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of foreign tourists who are visiting the country is decreasing due to teasing and harassment incidents with them;

(b) the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the number of such incidents which occurred in the last two years, State-wise?

Encroachment of land around monuments

†1607. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Archaeological Survey of India as well as other concerned departments are not able to check the encroachment on the monuments and places protected as historical, archaeological and heritage sites in the country as a result of which encroachment on land around such monuments/places is going on unabated;

(b) whether due to lack of coordination between Archaeological and Cultural Departments of concerned States and ASI, it is not being possible to stop such encroachments and to take action against the encroachers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Cultural and heritage sites in Andhra Pradesh

1608. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount allocated and spent by her Ministry in and around the cultural and heritage sites of Andhra Pradesh during the last three years and till date, location-wise and year-wise;

(b) the steps taken/being taken to attract more domestic and foreign tourists to these sites;

(c) whether these steps have increased flow of tourists to these sites; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Funds for Baglihar hydro-electric project

1609. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Baglihar hydro-electric project in Jammu and Kashmir is facing financial crunch since the financial institutions have now refused to fund it any more;

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

(c) whether the work of project has also come to halt;

(d) if so, since when; and

(e) what is the future strategy of Government to save the project?

Fall in ground water table in Delhi

†1610. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any enquiry into the reasons for falling ground water table in the country and particularly in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the efforts Government have made to check the fall in water table and the results achieved so far?

Lift irrigation projects in Andhra Pradesh

1611. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether grants are being given by

Government to the States for lift irrigation schemes run by marginal farmers and farming groups;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the assistance provided to the State Governments during the last three years, State-wise particularly in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) the details of amount sanctioned for lift irrigation projects in Andhra Pradesh during the last two years; and

(d) the details of the status of implementation of these projects?

Availability of water for agricultural production

†1612. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the agricultural production rate has been decreased in many States in the country due to shortage of water availability;

(b) if so, the names of the States where availability of water has decreased during the last three years; and

(c) the extent to which such water shortage has been found?

Completion of irrigation projects

†1613. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of assistance given by NABARD and Central Government to Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar for starting irrigation

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

projects and completing the incomplete projects during the last three years;

(b) the names of these projects;

(c) the estimated and actual potential of irrigation of these projects; and

(d) the names of the projects out of these completed by 31st October, 2005 alongwith the details of the cost incurred thereon?

Inter-linking of rivers

1614. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inter-linking of rivers project has been conceptualized not to meet domestic water needs of the people but to meet the demand for growing commercial agricultural activities;

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

(c) whether it is also a fact that the technological aspect of the river-linking concept was based on the knowledge of the European rivers and not on the realities related to rivers in the country; and

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

Study on river linking project

1615. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the project inter-linking of rivers may affect the fresh water supply to Bay of Bengal and the salinity conditions which would in turn affect the monsoon and the economy of the country;

(b) if so, whether meeting of scientists

held at National Academy of Science, Bangalore during the year 2006 also opined the above suggested for further studies;

(c) if so, the action taken on the above report; and

(d) the status of the project of inter-linking of rivers, as on today?

Clearance of projects under NRAP

1616. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Government of Maharashtra had submitted a detailed project report for environmental clearance under the National River Action Plan (NRAP) with respect to different rivers passing through and alongside different towns/districts in Maharashtra for implementation under the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details of the project proposals with the cost thereof;

(c) at what stage of clearance the different projects stand at present with the Central Government; and

(d) by when, the different projects are likely to be cleared by Government?

Toxic substances in ground water

†1617. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey on the extent of toxic substances found in ground water and adverse effects thereof on human health;

(b) if so, State-wise details thereof, and steps taken to maintain quality of ground water;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government purpose to set up water treatment plant to protect the ground water from contamination;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Expenditure on inter-linking of rivers

†1618. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of progress made in inter-linking of rivers in the contry;

(b) whether Government propose to inter-link the Beas, Satluj and Swan rivers flowing in Himachal Pradesh and some other rivers flowing in the Central and Southern parts of the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the amount likely to be spent on inter-linking of rivers and the time likely to be taken in this regard; and

(e) whether Government propose to bear cent-per cent cost of the project?

Irrigation schemes for Punjab and Maharashtra

1619. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of irrigation schemes approved for Punjab and Maharashtra;

(b) the details of funds sanctioned/ released by Centre to each State Government separately, during the last three years, scheme-wise, till date; and

(c) the number of schemes completed within scheduled time limit and the number of schemes which are still pending, State-wise?

Conservation of ground water

†1620. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Global Compact Society has expressed its serious concern over the indiscriminated underground water tapping in the cities;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the said institution has also given suggestion to control the use of underground water by the farmers;

(c) whether Government are contemplating to take any action for conservation of underground water; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

New authority for Water Shed Programme

1621. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a National Authority for Sustainable Development of Rainfed Areas in order to create a body of professionals to manage the entire Water Shed Programme of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the mandate proposed to be given to the said authority;

(c) the likely benefit to be derived from the operation of the said body; and

(d) by when, the said authority is likely to be set up?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Policy on water management

1622. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formed a policy on water management with a view to preserve water resources in the country, both, for drinking and irrigation purposes; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Completion of irrigation projects in Andhra Pradesh

1623. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of various major, minor and medium irrigation projects under construction as on date in the tribal areas of various States, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, indicating the capacity, and estimated cost, cost escalation and time overrun, if any, project-wise; and

(b) the steps being taken to ensure timely completion of these projects?

Erosion of river Ganga

1624. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 99 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 16th July, 2002 and state:

(a) the names of the short term works identified by Expenditure Finance Committee Memorandum which are to be completed by the Tenth Plan period; and

(b) what is the present status of those works?

Financial assistance to States to desaline water

1625. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of States where salinity of water is more;

(b) the details of State Governments which have requested the Central Government for financial assistance or technical assistance to desaline the water; and

(c) the reaction of Government in this regard?

NEW DELHI;
The 1st March, 2006
Phalgun 10, 1927 (*Saka*)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

I N D E X

(Ministry-wise)

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