

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the December 7, 2004/Agrahayana 16, 1926 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions — 138

New destinations of Air India

433. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India is working out a composite proposal for fleet acquisition at an estimated cost of Rs. 20,000 crores;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Air India will require eighteen aircrafts for Air India Express to be launched in April, 2005;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Air India plans for flying to new destinations; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Airport Economic Regulatory Authority

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

(a) whether Government propose to constitute Airport Economic Regulatory Authority;

(b) if so, what would be its composition and the main functions proposed to be assigned to it; and

(c) by when it is likely to start functioning?

Air service between Kanpur and Delhi

435. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 143 given in the Rajya Sabha on 22nd July, 2003 and state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to operate daily flight services between Kanpur and Delhi and *vice-versa* so far; and

(b) by when it is likely to be started?

Aviation disaster near Mumbai

436. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a major aviation disaster involving three scheduled passenger airlines was averted 100 nautical miles north east of Mumbai on the night of September 23, 2004;

(b) whether it is also a fact that all the three planes were one above the other and

appeared as a single radar position symbol on the radar screen;

(c) if so, whether any enquiry has been ordered in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Revision of air fare

437. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
SHRI MURLI DEORA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether airlines in India have decided to increase air fares and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the air fares in India are three times more than elsewhere in the world and if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Air Turbine Fuel is more expensive here as 80 per cent excise tax coupled with state sales tax ranging from 4 per cent to 9 per cent is imposed on it and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government propose to look into the matter and bring parity in fares with airlines of other countries?

Swagat Seva at international airports

438. SHRI DATTA MEGHE:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the customer-friendly "Swagat Seva" service which would provide hassle-free transit to passengers at international airports;

(b) whether such a service is also available in other countries, and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a payment-based service and if so, the cost thereof?

International airport at Nagpur

439. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 24 and Unstarred Question 239 given in the Rajya Sabha on 6th July and 13th July, 2004 respectively and state:

(a) what is the present status of the proposal to develop a multi-nodal international hub airport for passenger and cargo at Nagpur;

(b) the broad features of the contemplated international airport;

(c) whether the area around is to be developed into a Special Economic Zone to boost up exports as a part of the plan; and

(d) the progress made so far and what is the time-frame for completion?

Facilities for Haj pilgrims

440. SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only Air India and Saudi Airlines are being used for carrying Haj pilgrims at present;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there are complaints against Saudi Airlines for not providing proper services to the Haj pilgrims;

(c) whether Government have any scheme to tie-up with other airlines for carrying Haj pilgrims so that inconvenience could be avoided; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

International carriers to Indian destinations

441. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than forty international carriers have shown

interest to fly to India during the next one year;

(b) if so, the names of the airlines which have shown interest to fly to Indian destinations; and

(c) whether Indian Airlines and Air India are planning to reduce their air fares between Delhi and USA, UK, Europe and South East Asian countries in view of competition and if so, the details thereof?

Introduction of RF tags for baggages

442. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering introduction of Radio Frequency Identification tags on baggages being handled at international airports to prevent them from missing; and

(b) if so, by when it will be implemented at major international airports?

Revenue earned from ground handling work

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

(a) the number of private airlines which have been allowed to undertake ground handling work during the last three years; and

(b) the revenue earned by Government from it?

Poor maintenance of international airports

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

(a) whether maintenance of international airports in the country is very poor in comparison to international standards;

(b) whether foreign tourists express displeasure and are dismayed at the facilities at international airports, especially in Delhi; and

(c) the measures proposed to boost tourism by renovating airport roof and other places of the airports and providing other facilities of international standards?

Air misses

445. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of air misses during the last three months;

(b) the outcome of the enquiry in each case; and

(c) the steps taken to avoid air misses in future?

Provision of modern ILS at Srinagar Airport

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

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to upgrade Srinagar Airport and also to provide for state-of-the-art Instrument Landing System there so as to enable the pilots to negotiate the foggy weather; and

(b) if so, the details thereof including the funds required for the purposes, separately and by when work on the projects is likely to be completed?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Enquiry into ONGC helicopter crash

447. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level committee appointed by Government after the crash of ONGC helicopter in Arabian Sea on the 11th August, 2004 has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations made by this committee; and

(c) the reaction of Government in this regard?

Delay in expansion of Mangalore Airport

448. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether expansion of the existing airport at Mangalore by implementation of second runway project has faced hurdles in acquisition of land due to non-release of funds by State Government of Karnataka; and

(b) whether the State Government will be directed to release funds for acquisition of land in view of the huge potential for increase in international as well as domestic traffic and also several major industries located at coastal areas of Karnataka?

Upgradation of airports in Karnataka

449. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of domestic airports which are identified for upgradation in Karnataka;

(b) whether any new places for establishing airports are being identified in Karnataka for development of tourism;

(c) if so, the details thereof with the budget allocation and *status quo*;

(d) the share of State Government in the above projects; and

(e) whether any time-frame has been fixed for completion of these projects?

New airports

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of cities and towns have been identified for locating airports and where they exist, there is a proposal to upgrade the facilities therein;

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

(c) whether it is also a fact that a new international airport is proposed to be constructed at Bangalore; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard and its present status?

State of airports

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

(a) whether Government are aware that the state of airports outside major cities is far from satisfactory;

(b) if so, whether there are any plans by Government to improve those airports and the facilities thereof; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Policy on air fares

452. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given full freedom to airlines to revise rates;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the foreign airlines no longer need to notify or seek approval of the Director General of Civil Aviation before revising or floating new fares; and

(c) if so, the advantages of the new policy?

(a) whether several listed companies' shares are not traded on the bourses and if so, the reasons therefor and what efforts are being made in that respect so that shareholders may not be losers;

(b) the number of listed companies whose registered/corporate offices are not traceable, State-wise;

(c) what action has been taken or completed against such companies who are defrauding the investors; and

(d) whether some companies had listed their shares on OTCEI and if so, on what bourses their shares are traded now and if not, what action has been taken against the promoters of such companies?

Defaulter companies

453. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of companies who have defaulted in their obligations to various banks and financial institutions, State-wise;

(b) the amount involved during the last three years;

(c) whether SEBI informs the investors about such companies so as to save them from loss;

(d) whether many such companies had inflated their share prices in the past and if so, what action was taken against such companies and their promoters; and

(e) the number of investors who have lost their hard-earned money in such companies and the amount thereof?

Listing of stock companies

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

Role of Cost Audit Branch

455. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the role of Cost Audit Branch and the steps being taken to make it effective tool for checking frauds in the matters of companies; and

(b) by when the blue print of work for Cost Audit would be ready?

Drug companies under Cost Audit

456. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of drug companies which are under Cost Audit and the companies for which Cost Audit has been ordered during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that a number of companies are escaping Cost Audit; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps proposed to be taken to cover all drug companies under Cost Audit?

Cost audit of stock scam companies

457. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the cost audit of stock scam tainted companies has not been ordered;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the block assessment report from the Income Tax Department has been called for re-assessment for Adani Exports, HFCL, Padmini Technologies, Global Telesystems, DSQ Software, Cyber Space Infosys Ltd., Cadila Healthcare, Ranbaxy, Kopran and Zee Telefilms; and

(c) if so, the details of re-assessment?

Investigation of registered companies

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

(a) the number of registered companies which have been directed by the Department to be investigated by the Registrar of the companies for utilization of funds during the last two years; and

(b) the names of companies whose investigation reports have been received so far?

Liberalisation of credit norm by NABARD

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has liberalized the scheme for setting up Agri Clinics and Agri Business Centres (ACABC); and

(b) if so, in what manner this would help in accelerating the process of technology transfer to the agricultural sector?

In-house IMTs for better accountability

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

(a) whether the Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA) has directed all the insurance companies to constitute their inhouse Investment Management Teams (IMTs) by 31st December, 2004 to ensure tighter control over the ways the insurers managed their policyholders;

(b) if so, the complete details of the regulatory works to be done by the proposed IMTs;

(c) by when, the full-time actuarial professionals are proposed to be appointed to replace proposed IMTs in all the insurance companies; and

(d) the details of the other measures, if any, likely to be introduced to ensure better accountability in insurance companies in the country?

Introduction of VAT

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to off-set the losses suffered by State Governments on account of VAT introduction;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the annual financial burden on the Central Government, State-wise?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Sales tax on petroleum products

462. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to high sales tax on petroleum products, the prices of petroleum products in different States are different;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that higher sales tax on petroleum products is one of the reasons for higher inflation;

(c) if so, the rates of sales tax in different States, State-wise;

(d) whether the Central Government have taken the issue of levying lower sales tax by State Governments on petroleum products;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Fake currency notes

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

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) making it mandatory for banks to instal ultra-violet lamps to detect fake notes, counterfeit notes increasingly continue to be circulated in the market;

(b) whether it is also a fact that according to the official statistics, as much as 76 per cent of the total cash value in the country is at risk, because 76 per cent of the 480 crores of notes currently under circulation are of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1,000 denominations; and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take in this regard?

Foreign Exchange Reserves

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

(a) the amount of India's total Foreign Exchange Reserves as on 1st April, 2004;

(b) whether there has been a steady increase in the inflow of foreign exchange remittances during the last three years and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is proposed to deploy the huge Forex reserves to the development of infrastructure like ports, roads, telecommunications, railways etc.; and

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

Guidelines for granting housing loan

†465. SHRIMATIMAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank of India has recently issued some guidelines for prevention of irregularities and frauds in granting housing loan by Co-operative Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the achievement made with regard to the action taken?

Measures to contain inflationary pressures in the economy

466. SHRI R.P. GOENKA:
SHRI LALIT SURI:
SHRI KARNENDU
BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh review has been undertaken to assess the impact of various

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

fiscal and monetary measures taken recently to contain inflationary pressures in the economy;

(b) if so, the results thereof; and

(c) the details of initiatives being taken/proposed to be taken to ease inflationary expectations in the coming weeks?

Clearance of investment project in Bangalore

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have cleared the Rs. 178.90 crores investment proposal of a Canadian firm called Royal Indian Raj International Corporation to set up an integrated township in Bangalore;

(b) whether this is amongst the 25 foreign direct investment proposals worth Rs. 201.58 crores; and

(c) if so, the details of the Royal Indian Project?

Withdrawal of tax interest on NRE deposits

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

(a) whether Government have withdrawn tax interest on Non-Resident External (NRE) Deposits and Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) Deposits; and

(b) if so, the details thereof with revenue implications?

Disinvestment of loss making PSUs

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided divestment of some loss making PSUs and that a Group of Ministers (GoMs) has been formed to identify and decide price etc. for such Undertakings;

(b) if so, the details thereof with terms of reference to GoMs; and

(c) the details of recommendations made by GoMs?

Low productivity of PSU bank staff

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

(a) whether Government are aware that during 2003-04 a PSU Bank staffer did Rs. 2.4 crore of business, while his counterpart in a private bank did 75 per cent better, clocking Rs. 4.2 crore of business;

(b) if so, in spite of this low business profile staff of PSU, they are demanding more salary and perquisites than their counterparts in private banks are getting and often go on strike;

(c) whether Government have ever confronted these PSU bank-employees with their low productivity in the shape of getting business; and

(d) if so, whether any steps are being taken to link the payment of higher salary to matching productivity?

Mismanagement of funds by UCBs

471. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, of late, there have been many Urban Co-operative Banks folding up due to mismanagement of funds;

(b) whether the Reserve Bank of India has suggested to Government to do away with the dual-management of co-operative banks with both the States and the Centre pulling at different directions; and

(c) whether Government would seriously consider reforms in the co-operative bank sector by divesting State control?

Strategy for enhancement of FDI inflows

472. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that India has achieved third position in global economy in respect of FDI;

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any strategy to derive maximum benefits out of the remarkable achievements; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Restrictions on NBFCs from accepting retail deposits

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

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has decided to start a scheme where under all Residuary Non-Banking Financial Companies would be required to refrain from accepting retail deposits and invest all their existing funds only in Government and other approved securities;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the scheme is likely to be implemented; and

(c) what other measures are being contemplated to safeguard the interests of the small depositors, most of whom are

hailing from the rural areas and belong to small income groups?

Infrastructure Equipment Finance Bank

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

(a) whether Government propose to set up Infrastructure Equipment Finance Bank in the country for extending credit and other facilities to small and marginal civil contractors;

(b) whether customs duty has been exempted for import of construction equipment for the purpose of usage in road construction; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Imposition of sales tax on petro-products

†475. SHRIMATIMAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Government has recently directed the State Governments not to impose sales tax on petro-products in order to check the inflation; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the State Governments thereto?

Appointment of Chiefs of public sector banks

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have put on hold the appointment of new chiefs of public sector banks vice retiring incumbents till the merger of banks take place; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of all banks involved in the process and whether concerned banks will remain headless or the present incumbents will be given extensions or whether other arrangements are proposed to be made?

Sharing of customer credit histories

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

(a) whether, at the instance of Reserve Bank of India, Government propose to bring in a legislation to empower banks and finance firms to share customer credit histories without their consent;

(b) whether such customer data is being collected and collated by the Credit Information Bureau of India Ltd. and passed over to a vast network of finance companies;

(c) whether CIBIL's statistical enumeration/database makes any allowance for legitimate disputes arising out of bad service and wrong billings; and

(d) what steps the R.B.I. proposes to take to protect the consumers from harassment by lending agencies/credit card companies etc.?

Tax on import of crude petroleum

†478. SHRI RAMJETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR
JOSHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government impose tax on the import of crude petroleum in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the taxes recovered during 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04, together with the rates at which they were recovered; and

(c) the total amount of money recovered in the form of taxes on account of crude petroleum import during each of the said years?

Protection of investors

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

(a) what steps the RBI proposes to take to protect the interests of the depositors from the private banks;

(b) whether any guidelines/regulations have been issued for this purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how the regulations are going to help the depositors in the event of default by private banks?

Actuarial report for EPS

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

(a) whether the latest actuarial report for the Employee's Pension Scheme (EPS) shows that it is hobbled by the prospect of low returns and mounting payouts and is staring at an unfunded gap of Rs. 17,500 crores;

(b) whether it is a fact that in the long run, the 27.5 million EPS members may be left looking for a bailout;

(c) whether it is also a fact that as per the experts, the ever falling returns on the funds will not be able to pay for the promised pensions; and

(d) if so, the action proposed thereon?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tax on import of petrol and diesel

‡481. DR. MURLI MANOHAR
JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER
SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have imposed tax on import of petrol and diesel in the country;

(b) if so, the names of the taxes which have been recovered in 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 together with the rates at which they were recovered; and

(c) the quantum of petrol and diesel imported in the country during the said period?

National Manufacturing and Competitiveness Council

482. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have set up the National Manufacturing and Competitiveness Council to advise Government on measures to restructure Public Sector Enterprises and on disinvestments;

(b) whether the Investment Commission and Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises proposed earlier in the Budget 2004-05 are being set up;

(c) if so, whether it would not result in overlapping of functions of these institutions; and

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

Attachment of property by assessing officials of IT

483. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA :
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have issued directives to IT officials that they can attach anybody's assets if the assessing officer thinks that a company/individual may not pay up the tax demand;

(b) whether it is also a fact that even the apprehension that there could be difficulty in recovering the tax demand would be sufficient ground for provisional attachment;

(c) if so, whether this does not tantamount to empowering the assessing officer with extensive powers; and

(d) whether this does not tantamount to introducing Inspector Raj, while the PM is very much against this Raj?

Foreign assistance

484. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO :
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of money that the Central Government have received from ADB, World Bank and other foreign institutions for various projects in the country during the last 10 years; year-wise and sector-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the president of the ADB met the Prime Minister in the month of October, 2004, and discussed various issues pertaining to financial assistance to India; and

‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details of assistance that the ADB is going to extend to India in the next 10 years?

Revitalisation of co-operative credit structure

485. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government appreciate that revitalisation of the co-operative credit structure and making finance available to the farmers at reasonable rate of interest is critical for the development of the farm sector;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by the Central Government on the representation received in regard to co-operative credit structure by the Government of Gujarat; and

(c) the likely date by which a decision will be taken?

Cluster based approach for lending to Small Scale Industries

486. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR
PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that RBI has asked the banks to adopt a cluster-based approach for lending to small and middle industries while exploring new instruments to promote rural industry;

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

(c) how far this would help to boost

development of SSI sector especially in areas which are often frequented by floods, drought and hilly terrain etc.?

Introduction of polymer currency

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to introduce polymer currency instead of paper;

(b) if so, whether any proposal to this effect has been received from any foreign country; and

(c) what is the progress towards introduction of polymer currency as it will last much longer than paper currency?

World Bank assistance to U.P.

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

(a) the details of projects initiated with the assistance of World Bank and Asian Development Bank in the State of Uttar Pradesh;

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

(c) the details of works carried out so far in Uttar Pradesh with the assistance provided by above banks, project-wise and region-wise?

Amendment of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act

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

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Securitisation and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, which has already got diluted after a court verdict, to further strengthen laws for early recovery of non-performing assets worth over 60,000 crores;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed amendment; and

(c) the details of the other measures, if any, to stop parking of excess funds of Banks in Government and RIDF bonds etc. and to step up investment of these funds in infrastructure and priority sectors particularly small and medium enterprises?

M/s Home Trade Scam

490. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Oriental Bank of Commerce has taken over the assets and liabilities of Global Trust Bank;

(b) if so, the financial details and reasons for the take over arising thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a substantial amount of money of the Siemens Provident Fund had been eroded due to the scam in Malafide investment by M/s Home Trade; and

(d) if so, whether Government are reimbursing the financial loss to the SPF?

Financial deficit

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

(a) whether financial deficit is likely to increase if the duty is reduced to check the inflation rate by Government;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to control this deficit; and

(c) whether International Monetary Fund has warned India regarding increase in financial deficit ?

Cess on income tax from religious institutions

†492. SHRIMATISAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to impose cess on the income from various religious institutions including temples to mobilize resources for poverty alleviation programmes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

FDI in pension sector

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering 100 per cent FDI in pension sector;

(b) whether Government have laid down any terms and conditions for FDI entry in pension sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Implementation of foreign aided projects in Gujarat

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

(a) the details of projects being implemented with the assistance of World Bank and Asian Development Bank in the State of Gujarat;

(b) the amount of financial assistance provided by these institutions, project-wise; and

(c) whether some projects are moving at slow pace and if so, the steps being taken to accelerate the work of these projects?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tax evasion

495. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the new steps initiated by Government to check tax evasion by individuals and the big companies;

(b) how Government propose to recover tax arrears in such cases;

(c) the reasons for the big tax arrear cases getting on multiplying every year; and

(d) whether any relaxation has been proposed to be given to the honest tax payers like salaried class?

Hawala transactions in Kerala

496. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of banks involved in the hawala transactions in Kerala, and the details thereof;

(b) whether the banks in Kerala played any positive role to help the illegal money transactions;

(c) whether the banks observed the relevant rules of RBI for opening accounts involved in hawala transactions; and

(d) whether the banks made any close watch over the huge withdrawal of money from their branches in Kerala and Tamil Nadu?

Waiver of interest on agricultural loans

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have announced a waiver of interest on

agricultural loans in the drought-affected areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the benefit has not yet been extended to farmers having Kisan Credit Cards?

Review of SFC's operations

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

(a) whether a review of the State Finance Commission's operations for 2000-2005 and the need for restructuring thereof was undertaken by the Gupta Commission;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by that Commission for rejuvenating the SFCs and improving their performance;

(c) what decision has since been taken thereon indicating the steps recommended for improving the performance of SFCs;

(d) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has made request for restricting the Andhra State Finance Commission;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) Government's response thereto?

Review of India Development Initiative

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have reviewed or are reviewing the India Development Initiative;

(b) whether Government are reviewing the above policy to attract more investment to India or to channel Indian assistance to other countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Rise in inflation

500. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the inflation has reached an all time high in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to take specific measures such as reduction in excise, levies and other tax adjustments with regard to consumer goods, keeping in view the interests of poorer sections of the society;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the specific measures to be taken/ taken by Government to contain inflation in the country?

Recovery of tax from BCCI

501. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has even paid income tax on income earned by it;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years separately;

(c) whether the BCCI has not paid the income tax and other taxes which were due from it during the above period and also in 2004-05;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) what remedial action is taken or proposed to be taken by Government to recover the taxes from BCCI?

Loans to farmers

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the loans given to farmers by District Co-operative Banks and various other credit societies in the country, particularly in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra are limited, rather insufficient, to meet their needs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that several needy farmers are falling victim to illegally operating money lenders from whom they borrow money for purchase of farm-seeds etc.;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the measures taken to check the exploitation of farmers by illegal money-lenders and traders?

Cheating by foreign companies

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

(a) whether Government are aware that certain foreign individuals and entities are making offers of huge money to Indian residents in the garb of helping individuals or schools and hospitals in their business development;

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

(c) whether the Reserve Bank of India has taken any action against foreign entities, who are cheating people by promising huge sums of money through lotteries and financial assistance to Indian people;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether any measures have been taken to warn the people against operations of such foreign entities?

Retirement bottlenecks for NRIs in USA

504. SHRI MANOJ BHATTA-CHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Indian professionals working in the USA are constrained to leave back a sizeable quantum of their retirement benefits in that country while coming back to India;

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

(c) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

Private Pension Scheme

505. SHRI MANOJ BHATTA-CHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Private Pension Scheme is being introduced for Central Government employees who have joined service after 1st January, 2004;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would henceforth be absolved of all pension liability;

(d) if so, the status of the existing Government servants who joined service prior to 1st January, 2004; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that the pensionary rights including the quantum of pension of the existing pensioners remain unaffected under the new dispensation?

Merger of IFCI

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a

proposal to merge IFCI Limited with Industrial Development Bank of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether IFCI is already having merger association with any other bank; and

(d) if so, the reasons for calling off the merger with that Bank?

Projections on FDI inflow

507. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any projections on the inflow of FDI (foreign direct investment) into the country in the next few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering any proposal for restricting the flow of FDI; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Fluctuations in sensex

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

(a) whether the market is facing selling pressure by the recent fluctuation in sensex;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it would have influence upon the inflation and interest rate?

Audit of accounts of District Councils

†509. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount allocated to each District Council during the last three years, year-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether an audit of the accounts of the District Councils has been conducted by the Comptroller and Auditor General during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Complaints against CMDs of banks

510. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BAL APTE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received by Government against the Chairmen-cum-Managing Directors of various nationalized banks during the last three years, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(b) the action taken on such complaints received in Maharashtra?

Target for Agri credit

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

(a) the target of Agri credit set for the year 2003-04;

(b) whether the set target has been achieved;

(c) the target set for Agri credit for 2004-05; and

(d) the percentage of target achieved so far in 2004-05?

Public offering by LIC

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

(a) whether the Life Insurance Corporation has sought permission for Rs. 2000 crore public offering;

(b) if so, the reasons for LIC seeking more absolute powers to regulate staff and agents; and

(c) the measures proposed to amend the LIC Act accordingly?

Increase in tax receipts

513. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recently implemented Tax Information Network has enhanced tax receipts in mere four-five months of its existence;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the estimate for increase in tax receipts for the complete fiscal?

Nomination of non-official directors in Banks

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

(a) whether Government have finalized guidelines for nomination of non-official directors on Boards of public sector banks;

(b) whether Government have considered, while making the draft guidelines, the recommendations of expert committees headed by Narasimham and R.H. Patil, making out a strong case for professionally run bank boards; and

(c) whether the proposed guidelines will eliminate the practice of nominating directors representing narrow sectional and economic interests?

Tax exemption to BCCI

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

(a) whether grant of tax exemption to an association engaged in promotion of sports has been withdrawn by Government from 1st April, 2003;

(b) whether the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is a private body registered under the Societies Act but engaged in generation of revenue through telecasting of matches at par with commercial telecasting channels; and

(c) whether BCCI deducts TDS from the remuneration/fee paid to players and if not, the reasons therefor?

Revival of interest rates

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

(a) whether in view of the high rate of inflation recently recorded, which has gone beyond 7.5 per cent and the recent statement of the Chairman of the Twelfth Finance Commission that the real interest rate must be positive, Government propose to revise the interest rates both of the banks and the small savings handled by the post offices; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when a final decision in the matter is likely to be taken?

Frauds in NSCs

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

(a) the number and amount generated through the sale of National Savings Certificates across the country during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) whether Government have received reports of frauds being committed in the handling of National Savings Certificates; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and the action taken to check such menace in future?

Promotion of Deputy Office Superintendent

†518. SHRI VIDYA SAGAR NISHAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some time ago UDCs and Excise Assistants in Customs and Excise Departments have been promoted to the posts of Superintendents and Inspectors on large scale but the Deputy Office Superintendent have not been promoted to the post of Administrative Officer in that ratio;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the pay scales of Superintendents/Inspectors have been revised but the pay scale of the Deputy Office Superintendent remained static;

(c) if so, the reasons for such discrimination; and

(d) whether the promotion of Deputy Office Superintendent and their pay scale are expected to be revised?

Increase in ECB

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) by Indian corporates crossed \$ 5.1 million in six months ending September 2004 despite rejection of many proposals and depreciating rupee;

(b) if so, the names of top twenty corporates who resorted to ECB and details of those whose cases were rejected;

(c) the terms and conditions on which ECBs have been availed of and the major countries/agencies involved; and

(d) the reasons for rejection?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Changes in clause 41 of SEBI

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is considering to reduce the percentage of variation between unaudited and audited results to 10 per cent or rupees ten lacs, whichever is higher, in case of net profit after tax;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the changes proposed to be effected in Clause 41 of the listing agreement concerning the submission of financial results?

Devolution of powers to Panchayats

521. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are committed to full devolution of powers to the Panchayat level;

(b) whether recent policy decisions in this regard do not vest the financial power at Panchayat level with the same remaining under the control of district administrator; and

(c) whether Government are willing to let Panchayats raise their own resources and manage the funds?

BPC/IOC agencies in Nagaland

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

(a) the number of Bharat Petroleum

Corpn./Indian Oil Corpn. agencies allotted in the State of Nagaland;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the names and places of such agencies allotted as on date year-wise; and

(c) the details of BPC/IOC agencies functioning at present in the State?

Price of crude oil

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

(a) the price of crude oil in the international market as on date;

(b) the quantum of crude oil/petrol etc. in stock with the oil companies in the country;

(c) the price at which the earliest of the existing stock was bought; and

(d) whether Government would roll down the price of petrol, gas (LPG) etc. in view of the fact that the existing stock was purchased at a lower price?

India's stake in Yadaveran oilfield

524. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANARAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Iran has offered India 20 per cent stake in Yadaveran oilfield on nomination basis;

(b) if so, whether any discussions have been held between the Government of India and the Government of Iran in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details of the discussion?

Roll back of prices of Diesel and LPG

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

(a) whether Government are considering to roll back the prices of Diesel and LPG to benefit the common man;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that allies of Government are also demanding cut in the prices of diesel and LPG; and

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

Safety in ONGC

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

(a) whether an ONGC helicopter crashed in the Arabian Sea on the 11th August, 2004;

(b) if so, the reasons for this crash and the number of people who lost their lives in this crash;

(c) whether Government have paid any compensation to the kiths and kins of the victims of this crash;

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

(e) the steps taken by Government to enhance safety in ONGC?

ONGC Videsh's investments

527. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC Videsh Ltd. is actively considering massive investment in oilfields in Caspian sea area and if so, the quantum of investment and crude output expected to yield therefrom;

(b) whether ONGC Videsh's earlier investments in Sakhalin oilfields in Russia and pipeline project in Sudan have started yielding dividends; and

(c) if not, how soon the Sakhalin (Russia) and Sudanese projects are expected to be on stream?

**Petroleum and Natural Gas
Regulatory Board**

528. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are going to constitute a Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board;

(b) if so, the aims and objectives of the proposed Board;

(c) the details of the Members and Chairman of the Board; and

(d) by when it is likely to be constituted?

Purchase of overseas oil reserves

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

(a) whether Government contemplate to purchase oil reserves in various countries and to cooperate with Indian companies in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made for exploration of oil reserves in the country?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Artificial scarcity of gas in Delhi

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

(a) whether Government are aware that LPG agencies in Delhi, in connivance with the gas Companies, created artificial scarcity of gas refills before and after 31st October, 2004 when price hike was expected and Indian Customer Service helplines could not be reached;

(b) whether Government propose to investigate the matter to take penal action against those responsible therefor; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Petro-Chemical Complex and SEZ at Mangalore

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Mangalore in Karnataka has been identified for locating the Petro-Chemical Complex and Special Economic Zone after detailed techno-economic feasibility study and is in the process of being implemented;

(b) if so, the details in this regard with particulars of the organisations associated with the project with their respective stake therein;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is a talk of shifting the above project to some other State; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Dividend earned by ONGC

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

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the dividend earned by Government oil company ONGC during the first six months of 2004-05 was more than that of the same period last year;

(b) if so, the amount of the increased dividend together with the quantum of excess crude oil produced by ONGC as compared to the last year; and

(c) the total amount of business done in each of the first six months of the last year and 2004-05 by ONGC?

Demand for petroleum products

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

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the demand of the petroleum products has increased during the last five years;

(b) if so, the annual average increase estimated thereof;

(c) whether the production of crude oil has been increased in view of its increasing demand in the country;

(d) if so, what has been the annual average production thereof; and

(e) the reasons for not increasing the domestic production?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Reduction of State taxes on petroleum products

†534. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAMJETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether Government have urged upon all the State Governments to reduce the State taxes in order to bring down the prices of petrol and gas in the country;

(b) if so, the date when it was urged upon and from which State Government's response has been received; and

(c) the details of taxes on petrol, diesel and LPG levied in each State during October, 2004?

Procurement of oil reserves by oil companies

†535. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAMJETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether Government oil companies in the country are investing capital in foreign countries for the purchase of oil reserves;

(b) if so, the total amount of capital invested upto October, 2004;

(c) the total amount of capital investment for which negotiations are on; and

(d) the reasons for which the oil companies are giving priority for the purchase of oil instead of increasing its indigenous production?

LNG terminal at Kochi

536. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:

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

(a) whether necessary permission has been accorded to the setting up of an LNG terminal at Kochi;

(b) if so, the details of the project including the expected cost of the project;

(c) whether fresh tenders were floated in this regard;

(d) if so, the names of the companies participated in the tender and also the companies selected; and

(e) the present status of the project?

Oil refineries

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

(a) the details of the oil refineries working in public and private sectors in various States of the country;

(b) the amount invested by Government in these refineries during the last three years;

(c) whether Government have formulated any National scheme in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Review of taxes on petroleum products

538. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the retail prices of petroleum products are based on

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

three components—the imported crude price, the refining cost and various taxes of the Union and the State Governments;

(b) if so, the details thereof for each of these components for different retail prices ruling at different point of time, date-wise, and product-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the tax components is disproportionately high, if so, the plans of Government to rein in the retail price of the products; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Linking of petrol price to import parity

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to link petrol price to import parity;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are considering to review the system of carrying out a fortnightly review of prices by the oil companies; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

Revision in LPG price

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

(a) whether Government are considering to reduce the cost of LPG in the light of reduction of price on petroleum products as has been done in the case of petrol; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Demand and supply of LPG

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

(a) whether there is a gap in the demand and supply of LPG in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the quantum of LPG imported during the year 2003-04 and the steps taken by Government to bridge the gap between supply and demand thereof?

Merger of oil companies

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to create two mega players in the oil sector by merging State-owned oil companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names and the equity shares of the two companies?

Merger of IBP with IOC

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

(a) whether Government have approved the merger of petro-retailer IBP Co. with Indian Oil Corporation (IOC); and

(b) if so, the details regarding the above and whether it would result in the falling of Government shareholding?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Availability of petrol and gas in
Himalayas**

‡544. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards distinct possibilities of availability of petrol and gas in the Himalayas as per the conclusion of scientists after analyzing data collected from the Himalayas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the expenditure likely to be incurred on the same and the time period of the said programme and by when success is likely to be achieved?

Domestic production of oil

‡545. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for domestic production of oil through coastal and off shore drilling in the Ninth Five Year Plan and target achieved for the same;

(b) the target fixed for Tenth Five Year Plan;

(c) the latest position of availability of gas and oil in the country as per the present requirement of the same; and

(d) the total amount required for exploitation of resources by the end of Tenth Five Year Plan?

ONGC's achievements

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

(a) the amount invested by the ONGC

for acquiring MRPL refining company from the Aditya Birla Group;

(b) the growth recorded in the investment in 15 months' time by the ONGC; and

(c) the details of other such performance achievements made by ONGC during the last one and a half year?

**Clearance of pending tourism projects
from Nagaland**

547. SHRI T. R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Nagaland has requested the Central Government to clear its pending tourism projects;

(b) if so, the details of projects of the State cleared by Government during the last three years;

(c) the details of projects still to be cleared; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government to clear the pending projects?

**Development of Tourism in Madhya
Pradesh**

‡548. SHRIMATIMAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that although a number of diversities exist in Jabalpur, Gwalior etc., in Madhya Pradesh from the tourism point of view, the Central and State Governments have not shown any interest for development of tourism at these places;

(b) if not, the details of the developmental work carried out, so far;

(c) whether Government are considering to construct ITDC hotels at

‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

these places for the convenience of the tourists and also to boost tourism; and

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

Growth of tourism industry

549. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed afresh the existing practices/mechanism established for co-ordination amongst various concerned Ministries, like Civil Aviation, Railways etc., the State Governments as also the private sector, to identify catalysts and synergise strategies for the unimpeded growth of tourism industry in the country;

(b) if so, the results thereof, especially the bottlenecks/shortcomings noticed in the mechanism; and

(c) the details of fresh initiatives being taken to streamline the existing machinery to speed up the process of consultations to help accelerate the pace of growth of tourism in the country?

Tourist traffic

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the tourist traffic in India is dwindling over the years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in comparison to other foreign tourism destinations, overseas tourists find India a costly tourist centre, resulting in their travelling to other tourism centres; and

(d) if so, what measures are proposed to be taken by Government to make tourism in India more interesting and competitive?

Development of religious tourist spots

†551. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tourist spots in the country which have been developed, if any, as religious tourist spots, State-wise; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

Special Tourism Zone in Kerala

552. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a proposal for a Special Tourism Zone in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government on the proposal?

Pending tourism projects

553. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects for the development of tourism pending for clearance;

(b) the details of the proposals, State-wise and project-wise; and

(c) the number of projects cleared by Government during the last three years, State-wise and project-wise?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Introduction of night-shopping concept

554. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent introduction of night-shopping concept in Delhi has caught up thereby attracting more tourists than in the past;

(b) whether the night-shopping concept has brought in law and order problems for the State Government; and

(c) if so, whether the Centre will lend support to the State Government to augment its police forces for deployment during night hours?

Incredible India Campaign

555. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made by Government to study the impact of roadshows organized recently, as part of the "Incredible India" campaign, targeted at focusing markets world-wide; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and fresh initiatives taken to market India as a tourist destination, especially to attract the high end tourists?

Fast Track Clearance for foreign tourists

†556. SHRIMATISAVITASHARDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to start the facility of Fast Track Clearance on International Airports for foreign tourists arriving in India so that the tourists not willing to wait in the long queue may get immediate clearance at the Airports by paying extra charges;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

Leasing of islands to private operators

557. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal of leasing 23 islands in Lakshadweep and Andamans to private operators; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Incredible India Campaign

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

(a) whether Government are aware that while there is a great potential in tourism in our country, there is little exploitation;

(b) whether the basic problems with tourism is lack of infrastructure and without short/long term plans, we cannot translate the success of our campaign Incredible India into ground reality; and

(c) if so, what is our short/long term plans to address the basic issues like easy access to our country and availability of viable hotel accommodation for foreign tourists?

Foreign tourist flow into Orissa

559. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the lack of air connectivity and bad time schedule of flights are the prime cause of fall of foreign tourist flow into Orissa; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Integration of Buddhist places

560. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to integrate the Buddhist places of interest in Orissa like Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri and Udaygiri, known as Diamond Triangle, with Gaya-Sanchi Circuit and to project them as a package in Buddhist market; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

Development of tourist spots in Kerala

561. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what specific projects are under Government's consideration to develop more tourist spots in Kerala in the near future to attract more tourists; and

(b) if so, the locations identified and the amount likely to be spent on them?

Control of Headquarters of Ropar, Ferozepur etc.

†562. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966 the control of Ropar, Harike and Ferozepur Headquarters would have been vested with Bhakra-Beas Management Mandal;

(b) whether a letter dated 24th January, 2004 has been written to him in this regard by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan;

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Reconstitution of Cauvery Tribunal

563. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRI DHARAM PAL
SABHARWAL:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received by the Union Government from the State Government of Karnataka seeking reconstitution of the Cauvery Tribunal;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereon;

(c) the time likely to be taken in reconstituting the new Cauvery Tribunal; and

(d) the proposed composition thereof?

Management of flood water

564. SHRIM.A.M. RAMASWAMY:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have taken any steps in consultation with State Governments who suffer heavy losses due to floods every year in chalking out an effective strategy in controlling flood and better management of flood water;

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

(c) the long term plans the Central Government propose to take to control flood;

(d) the likely estimated cost of these projects;

(e) whether any project study reports have been prepared on these projects; and

(f) if so, by when the people welfare oriented projects are likely to be completed?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Dams on rivers

†565. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of multipurpose dams proposed to be built on rivers like Ganga, Yamuna and its tributaries;

(b) the names of those dams which are pending construction due to inter-State disputes; and

(c) the details thereof and steps taken by Government for solving inter-State disputes?

PAP agreement for sharing water

566. SHRI N. K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) when did the Parambikulam Aliyar Project agreement come into existence for sharing water between Kerala and Tamil Nadu;

(b) what is the annual water share due to Kerala and whether violation of PAP pact by Tamil Nadu has been brought to the notice of Government;

(c) whether it is a fact that Tamil Nadu Government is not allocating actual water share to Kerala and is diverting the allocated share in between Manakkadavu Weir and Moolathara;

(d) whether Government of Kerala arrived at an agreement to share 2.5 tmc. water from Anamalayar by compromising the interest of Kerala; and

(e) whether Government propose to review the PAP agreement?

Contamination of water sources

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

(a) whether West Bengal is worst hit by arsenic and fluoride contamination of drinking water sources;

(b) the measures taken by Government to assist the State Government to solve this problem; and

(c) the fund allocated or proposed to be allocated for the said purpose?

Division of water resources between India and Bangladesh

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

(a) whether recently an Indian delegation had visited Bangladesh and held talks with Bangladesh authorities about division of water resources between the two countries;

(b) if so, the outcome of the talks, particularly about division of the water of Ganga, Tista, Monu, Khowai, Awadhkumari, Dharala, Muhari and Gomati rivers; and

(c) the details of the projects/dams/canals proposed to be built on those eight rivers?

Interlinking of rivers

569. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any initiative has been taken on the programmes of interlinking of rivers in the greater interest of the country; and

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Pending irrigation schemes

‡570. SHRIMATIMAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that hydro-electric and irrigation schemes proposed by the States are under consideration since long

in the absence of a consensus between his Ministry and the Ministry of Environment and Forests;

(b) if so, the details of these schemes, State-wise; and

(c) by when these schemes are likely to be sanctioned?

NEW DELHI;
The 1st December, 2004
Agrahayana 10, 1926 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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