

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 13, 2005/Agrahayana 22, 1927 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions —155

Norms for overseas air services

2112. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently
finalised the norms for airlines flying
abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have sought
some inputs from each airlines in this regard;
and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Development of Surat airport

2113. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Surat air-
port was already handed over to Airports
Authority of India for further development
and operations and an MoU for it was
signed and accordingly it was to be started
within two years;

(b) whether it will start within this

scheduled period and if not, the reasons
therefor and by when it will be started;

(c) whether Air Deccan started its flights
from 6th November, 2004 but it had to
stop abruptly; and

(d) whether Government would
accelerate its development works so that
the airport may start functioning soon
keeping in view the vast development of
Surat?

Night landing facility at Jabalpur airport

†2114. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN
SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL
AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of
Madhya Pradesh have provided the land
for Jabalpur airport free of cost;

(b) whether the development works like
construction of Terminal building, night
landing facility etc., have been completed
after the acquisition of the land; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Improvement in air services to US

2115. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether spurred by the far-reaching Civil Aviation pact signed recently between India and US, Continental airlines is set to start daily non-stop service between New Jersey and New Delhi from November;

(b) whether Continental's Delhi-Newark service is being launched in November 2005 and first scheduled flight will depart Newark's Liberty International Airport;

(c) if so, what are the other main points of the pact signed between India and US; and

(d) to what extent Indo-US air service is fully improved and helpful to India?

Additional air services to Orissa

2116. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enhance air traffic in Delhi and Mumbai airports;

(b) if so, the details of the steps proposed to be taken to beef up flight operations across the country; and

(c) the details of additional (to and fro) flights that are proposed to be started from Delhi and Mumbai airports to Orissa?

Air India's scheme for promotion of tourism

†2117. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any plan has been started in collaboration with Air India for attracting Indian tourists by many countries;

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

(c) the extent of profit likely to be earned by Government from this Scheme?

Improvement of security at airports

2118. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA
NATCHIAPPAN:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ordered certain stern security measures to improve safety and security at Indian airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether these additional measures will cause inconvenience to the passengers and delays in passenger handling at the airports?

Development of Aviation Sector in MP

†2119. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to develop the Aviation Sector in Madhya Pradesh from the tourism point of view, if so, in what manner;

(b) whether some proposals of the State Government in this regard are pending with the Centre;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when these schemes will be completed?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Renovation of IGI airport

2120. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to renovate IGI Airport, Delhi;

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

(c) the estimated expenditure to be incurred thereon and by when it is expected to be completed;

(d) how far this renovation shall be superior to the Mumbai Airport, and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the extraordinary facilities that are to be provided to the passengers?

Facilities at Delhi Airport

2121. SHRI SU. THIRUNAVU-KKARASAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the steps taken to increase/improve the runways, infrastructural facilities like, restaurants, restrooms/lounges, toilets in the Delhi Airport to cope up with the increase in the number of flights operations which is more than 100 in the last year?

Development of airports in North-Eastern States

2122. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes launched or proposed to be launched for development of Dimapur, Imphal, Aizwal, Silcher, Gangtok, Guwahati, Lilabari, Jorhat etc., during the Tenth Plan;

(b) the total amount sanctioned and released for these schemes;

(c) whether any progress has been made in these schemes; and

(d) the details of the amount sanctioned and expenditure incurred till date thereon?

Completion of Pathankot Airport

2123. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) by when the Pathankot Airport is likely to be completed; and

(b) the details and estimated cost thereof?

Expansion of air services from Bhopal

†2124. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been formulated to increase air services from Bhopal to Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, etc., in view of abundant possibilities to boost tourism industry in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details of its outline?

Replacement of outdated technology used for ATC automation system

2125. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ATC automation system in Delhi and Mumbai is using a 15-year old technology;

(b) if so, whether they are outdated and difficult to maintain;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether there is any proposal to replace them with the latest system?

Distribution of Deepawali sweets

†2126. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tradition of distribution of sweet packets to those travelling by Indian Airlines and also to its employees on the day of Diwali existed every year;

(b) if so, the reasons for discontinuance of the above tradition this year;

(c) whether Indian Airlines would continue this tradition from the coming year;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

IPO by Indian Airlines and Air India

2127. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National carriers Indian Airlines and Air India are preparing for an IPO in this fiscal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that SEBI norms of mandatory 50 per cent independent directors on the board have to be followed?

Disruption in schedule of Alliance Air

2128. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that number of pilots left the Alliance Airlines opting for new private carriers;

(b) if so, whether this has led to drastic curtailments in the schedule of the airlines;

(c) the steps Government taken/proposed to take to tackle the situation;

(d) whether Government have taken steps to provide alternate employment opportunities to the workers of Alliance Air in case of termination of service of the airlines;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reason therefor?

Modernisation of Trivandrum Airport

2129. PROF. P.J. KURIAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Kerala have submitted some proposals for the expansion and modernisation of Trivandrum Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

Modernisation of airports during Tenth Plan

2130. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of airports where the upgradation and modernisation programmes have been undertaken during the Tenth Plan alongwith the funds spent thereon; and

(b) the details of the modernisation works carried out during this period?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Land for new airport at Chennai

2131. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Tamil Nadu had offered 1457.5 acres of land free of cost to set up a new international airport in Chennai;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Airports Authority of India to acquire the land offered by the State Government of Tamil Nadu free of cost; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State Government of Tamil Nadu had suggested that the new international airport in Chennai be located on the northern side of the existing main runway?

Changes in Bangalore international airport project

2132. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has suggested changes in the proposed greenfield airport's terminal building of the proposed Bangalore international airport at Devanahalli;

(b) if so, whether Government have suggested to take action to increase the capacity of new greenfield airport's terminal from 4.5 million passengers to 10 million;

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

(d) the present status of the proposed Bangalore international airport project?

Advanced baggage clearance system at Bangalore Airport

2133. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passengers, on an average, check in at Bangalore Airport daily;

(b) whether advanced baggage clearance was installed in Bangalore Airport; and

(c) if not, by when it will be installed?

Revival of Cuddapah Airport

2134. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Cuddapah Airport in Andhra Pradesh is under the control of Airports Authority of India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that between 1985 and 1989 Vayudoot flights were in operation in Cuddapah Airport;

(c) if so, the reasons for abandoning the above airport;

(d) whether there is any proposal to revive the airport and start its operations afresh;

(e) whether any request in this regard has been received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken by Government on the request?

Pending proposals for new airlines

2135. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are

encouraging existing private airlines to expand their wings in Aviation sector;

(b) if not, the reasons for granting international slots to these airlines without waiting for Aviation Policy;

(c) whether Government would encourage other private domestic airlines and allow new players to enter the Aviation sector by giving the permission promptly;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the details of proposal for grant of permission to new airlines pending for more than six months; and

(f) the steps being taken to clear these proposals promptly by Government?

Joint Venture between SIAEC and Indian Airlines

2136. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of bilateral agreements on Aviation sector between India and Singapore;

(b) whether Singapore International Airlines Engineering Company (SIAEC) have recently withdrawn from the Joint Venture (JV) with Indian Airlines on setting up of the Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility; and

(c) if so, the main reasons for withdrawal from the planned JV of MRO facility and whether it will hit the Indian Airlines in their growth programmes and if so, the steps being taken to revive the JV by Government at the highest level?

Air service agreements with Belgium and Holland

2137. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have updated its existing air services agreements with Belgium and Holland;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of frequencies that are going to be operated under the new agreements with Belgium and Holland?

Operation of main runways at Mumbai and Delhi Airports

2138. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the main runways at Mumbai and Delhi International Airports have not been fully operational since August, 2005 leading to delays and disruption of flights; and

(b) if so, the factors responsible for the same and the period of unavailability of main runways at these airports during the year 2005?

Losses due to floods

2139. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of the damage/loss suffered to the airlines industry due to recent floods and natural calamities in the country;

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

(c) the loss suffered by various airlines as a result thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to deal with such a situation in future?

Damage to Vishakhapatnam airport

2140. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the recent incessant rains in Andhra Pradesh, Vishakhapatnam airport was inundated in water for several days;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether his Ministry has taken up upgradation of Vishakhapatnam airport with the help of Navy and State Government of Andhra Pradesh with an estimated cost of Rs.200 crores;

(d) whether a new terminal building and runway is also being constructed; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Open sky agreements with South Asian countries

2141. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed open skies over South Asia recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the response of each country from South Asia in this regard; and

(d) the decisions arrived at so far?

Development of airports in Rajasthan

2142. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan for

development of domestic or International airports at Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaisalmer in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when such development plan is likely to be executed and completed;

(d) the details of projects if any sanctioned for the development of Civil Aviation in Rajasthan, during the Tenth Plan Period;

(e) the amount earmarked for this purpose; and

(f) the progress of work in each case?

Pending cases for violation of Companies Act

2143. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) total number of cases pending in various courts (Supreme Court/High Courts/District Courts), for violation of Companies Act;

(b) the steps being taken by Government to expedite the trial;

(c) the number of such cases against various companies ended in conviction/punishment, during the last three years and percentage conviction thereof; and

(d) what steps Government contemplate to take to improve the conviction percentage?

Shifting business process of Registrar of Companies to e-governance mode

2144. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in order to reduce the paperwork, Government

propose to shift entire business process of Registrar of Companies to e-governance mode; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposals alongwith status of its implementation?

Levy of high user charges in rural areas by banks

2145. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Nationalised Bank levy higher user-charges in rural areas than in urban areas;

(b) whether the RBI has allowed such a discriminating policy against rural bank users;

(c) whether it is a fact that banks charge higher fees for bank drafts, cheque encashment in rural areas;

(d) what is the policy RBI has enunciated in this matter; and

(e) steps proposed to review a policy whereby rural consumers pay more and get less services from banks?

Expert Committee on Income Tax Act

2146. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to appoint an Expert Committee to look into the changes to be made in the present Income Tax Act;

(b) if so, whether the personnel for the Committee have been identified and the time-frame decided for it to complete and submit its recommendations; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and by when the amending Bill is likely to be introduced?

Extension of banks in smaller cities of Russia

2147. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Russian Banking Association is asking Indian banks to extend their banking services in smaller cities in Russia;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Indian Banks Association is in favour of this proposal;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Money laundering

2148. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has recently reckoned the extent of money laundering in India at about \$ 600.00 million to \$ 1.5 billion;

(b) whether these projections work out to 2 to 5 per cent of our GDP; and

(c) whether introduction of Financial Action Task Force is likely to curb money laundering and if so, to what extent?

Modifications in data collected through TIN

2149. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been able to make any significant use of the wealth

of information being collected through Tax Information Network (TIN);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any modifications or alterations are proposed in the types or amount of data collected through TIN; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Problems in getting educational loans

2150. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many students from poor and middle class families are facing problems in getting educational loans for their further studies;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto and the details of steps taken for making available the education loans to every student belonging to poor and middle class family who desires to seek higher studies;

(c) whether Government are seriously considering to raise a Corpus Fund which will offer students loans at zero or minimum rate of interest; and

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

Provision of easy loans to farmers in Uttaranchal

2151. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the farmers in Uttaranchal have to face many difficulties in getting loans from the banks;

(b) whether Government propose to issue guidelines to provide loan to the farmers in the State, especially in the hilly and far flung areas; and

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

Requirement of examinations for aspirants of Customs House Agents

2152. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the aspirants of Customs House Agents licenses are required to appear for further examinations by other customs stations despite having already qualified the required examinations stipulated under Regulation-8 of CHA-Licensing Regulations 2004 at a different Customs House earlier; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor since a CHA-license issued at any Customs House in the country is valid for functioning at all the customs stations across the country on a simple intimation in Form-C at the respective customs stations?

Elimination of revenue deficit

2153. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to eliminate revenue deficit by March, 2009 as mandated by Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the achievements made, so far;

(c) whether this goal would be achieved as stipulated in the Act;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Separate funds for investor protection and awareness

2154. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are two separate funds available for investor protection and awareness, one with the Department of Company Affairs (DCA) and another with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI);

(b) to what extent DCA has utilised the available funds for this purpose; and

(c) whether the Ministry is considering transferring the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEFP) available with DCA to the SEBI?

Legal action against banks defaulters

†2155. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Banks have to take legal action against those people who do not return loans taken from the Nationalised Banks;

(b) if so, the details of cases in which the legal action has been taken to realise loans during the last three years together with the details of amount involved in each case, bank-wise;

(c) whether loans have been returned as a result of this legal action; and

(d) if so, amount received by Banks as payment during last three years, year-wise?

Recovery of due amount of taxes

†2156. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due amount of total taxes was Rs.99,698 crore by the end of year 2004-05;

(b) if not, what is the actual amount;

(c) whether it is also a fact that out of this due amount Rs.7,083 crore had been recovered by a Task Force constituted in August, 2004;

(d) if not, the quantum of this amount and the total amount written-off during the above year; and

(e) whether in view of this, the present system of tax recovery needs an improvement?

Measurement of development outcomes of programmes

2157. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a mechanism which would be put in place to measure development outcomes of all major programmes;

(b) whether any concrete programme of action plan has been prepared by Government;

(c) if so, whether during the first year focus would be on the outcome of plan schemes;

(d) whether Government have felt the need to improve quality of implementation

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

and enhance efficiency as well as accountability of delivery mechanism; and

(e) if so, to what extent these proposals will be helpful in improving implementation of major programmes that have been undertaken by Government in the country?

Merger of weak banks with stronger banks

2158. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR.T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the first phase of the consolidation in the Indian Banking sector, he is considering the merger of weak banks with stronger banks to strengthen financial position of banks;

(b) if so, the details of weak banks which have been considered;

(c) what are major plans proposed by Government in this regard; and

(d) to what extent it will be helpful in improving banks functioning and profitability?

Pending excise duty cases

2159. SHRI SANTOSH
BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 55,000 cases involving excise duty of Rs.23,276 crore were pending as on 31st March, 2004 with different authorities;

(b) whether it is also a fact that about 8369 cases are pending for more than five years;

(c) if so, measures taken to expedite adjudication of these cases; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to fix time-limit for adjudication of cases?

Financial package to revamp Co-operative sector

2160. SHRI R. P. GOENKA:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Rs.15,000 crore financial package has been worked out to re-vamp the Co-operative sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the contribution proposed to be made by the State Governments and the Co-operative banks, in accordance with the recommendations of the Vaidyanathan panel; and

(c) the details of steps taken to fine-tune the regulatory control exercised by the Registrar of Co-operatives so as to ensure the continued financial health of the Co-operatives?

Exemption of salaried employees from filing Income Tax returns

†2161. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS
BAL APTE:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a scheme to exempt salaried employees from filing Income Tax returns;

(b) if so, by when the formal declaration would be made in this regard; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether any financial loss is likely to be incurred to Government from this?

SSI finance centres

†2162. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to set up Small Scale Industries finance centres in industrial areas for extending financing facilities to micro industries by banks and Financial institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that per cent of credit flow towards Small Scale Industries by Nationalised Banks and Financial institutions is approximately nil whereas these units have a major contribution in National production; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction in this regard?

Deferment of disinvestment of equity of BHEL

†2163. SHRI SURENDRA LATH:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have abandoned the policy of disinvestment;

(b) if not, whether Government have also deferred the disinvestment of 10 per cent shares of BHEL;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the Prime Minister has again and again reiterated that there is need of a lot of investment for making the country the economic super power and that the speed of investment

cannot be increased without resorting to disinvestment; and

(e) if so, in what manner the object of heavy investment shall be achieved in the absence of disinvestment?

Benefits of foreign exchange remittance

2164. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how far the country has been benefited by foreign exchange remittance during the year 2005;

(b) whether such benefits are expected during the year 2006; and

(c) how far this benefit shall have a favourable impact on the country's economy and finance, in all respects and by when?

Restructuring of arrears/refixation of dues

†2165. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question No. 145 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 26th July, 2005 and state:

(a) whether guidelines issued to mitigate the problems of the farmers affected by natural calamities also contain waiver of interest while restructuring of arrears/refixing of dues of farmers;

(b) if not, how the farmers would repay the huge amount of interest; and

(c) the details of guidelines issued for providing finance to the farmers reeling under immense pressure of loans taken from non-institutionalised agencies like money lenders and onetime settlement scheme for

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

small and marginal farmers alongwith the amount allocated under this item?

Powers of appellate tribunals to award costs

2166. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Customs, Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunals do not have power to award costs;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to empower them with suitable powers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Pending cases of under invoicing

2167. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of cases of under invoicing are pending with Government against the companies;

(b) what are the details including the names of such companies;

(c) the amount of duties and the loss of foreign exchange during the last three years; and

(d) what action has been taken against these companies and the details of recoveries made?

Special package for Bihar

2168. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced any special package of financial

grant to Bihar for funding development works in the State;

(b) if so, the volume of funds announced;

(c) the details of the nature of works to be covered;

(d) the details of the size of fund already allocated, if any, to the State and dates thereof; and

(e) the details of measures stipulated, if any, for monitoring utilization of the fund under the special package ?

Credit to poor farmers

2169. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have evolved any concrete policy to extend easy credit to poor farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Seasonal loans to farmers

†2170. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures being taken by Government for providing loans at low interest rate through NABARD and other banks with a view to free the farmers from the clutches of money lenders;

(b) whether Government contemplate any plan for providing seasonal loans to the farmers to fulfil their requirements of seeds and fertilizers particularly in sowing season; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Debt trap of Maharashtra

2171. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the recent report of the Comptroller and Auditor General in June, 2005, the State Government of Maharashtra had submitted any proposal for taking the State out of the debt trap;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal made by the State Government for the purpose; and

(c) the Central Government's response thereto, indicating the stage at which different proposals are standing?

World Bank loans to hilly States

2172. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has expressed its willingness to extend loans/ assistance to hilly States in India for development of roads, irrigation and slum area development schemes;

(b) if so, to what extent the World Bank has agreed to provide this amount to Uttarakhand; and

(c) to what extent Government have agreed to the suggestions for providing such loans to Uttarakhand and by when it is likely to materialise?

Reduction in bonus payable on endowment policies

2173. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the LIC has neutralised the benefits to its endowment policy holders through a golden jubilee bonus announced last year, by cuts on bonus on endowment

policies from Rs. 51/- per Rs. 1000/- sum assured to Rs. 45/- in 2005;

(b) whether falling income has forced the LIC to effect a 10 per cent reduction in bonus payable on endowment policies; and

(c) whether the LIC is also under time-bound pressure to shore up its solvency margin to IRDA's norms?

Higher rate of interest of import duty on ship breaking

2174. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether higher rates of import duty have been prescribed for ship breaking in the country compared to rates applicable to the imported metal scrap;

(b) whether Government are aware that it has created adverse impact on small scale and rural industry in Gujarat; and

(c) whether Government would consider favourably the representation of Gujarat in the interest of industrial development of the State?

System for monitoring of foreign exchange inflows

2175. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the RBI has adequate machinery and systems to carefully monitor and tabulate all foreign exchange inflows into the country;

(b) if so, whether RBI also carefully collects and tabulates the data of such foreign exchange inflow on a country-wide basis;

(c) if not, how will the RBI have information as to which set of NRIs are sending what quantum of foreign exchange;

(d) to what extent is the RBI geared to do this basic work efficiently; and

(e) steps proposed to assist such NRIs who actually send foreign exchange remittances through legal banking channels in the country?

Issuance of oil bonds

2176. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to issue oil bonds to make up for the under recoveries of oil companies;

(b) if so, the total amount for which the bonds are proposed to be issued, the duration of the bonds and interest payable thereon; and

(c) by when a final decision in the matter is likely to be taken and by when the bonds are likely to be marketed?

Evasion of taxes by MNCs

†2177. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the survey conducted by Department of Income Tax, some multinational companies have evaded the tax amounting to more than twenty crore rupees in connivance with Government officials;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for recovery of this amount?

Service tax on inhouse catering

2178. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether companies who are

providing inhouse catering and food to their staff within the company premises/offices through a catering contractor are being charged both the service tax and VAT;

(b) whether Government are aware that this tax component works out to be around 22 per cent in States like Haryana making it extremely difficult for companies to provide food to their staff; and

(c) whether Government propose to exempt such inhouse catering facilities from these plethora of taxes?

Transition to single tax rate regime

2179. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently some fresh initiatives have been taken to move towards aligning the Goods and Services Tax (GST) with a single rate, in view of the growing globalisation of the economy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the road map drawn for transition to the single rate regime?

Assessment of performance of State revenues

2180. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh evaluation has been made to assess the performance of State revenues during the first six months of the recently implemented State VAT regime;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that some of the States have still not joined the VAT regime; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and efforts being made to persuade the remaining States also to join the VAT system so that the unscrupulous elements do not exploit the difference in tax regime between States?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Levy of service tax on sale of
advertising newspapers**

2181. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether at a time when the domestic newspaper industry is exposed to global competition, the levy of service tax on the sale of advertising newspapers, tantamount to curbing the growth of newspaper industry in the country;

(b) whether while bringing advertising agencies business under service tax net in 1996, Government held that the tax would not be applicable to amounts paid for advertising space in newspapers; and

(c) whether newspapers are considered an essential social and community service rendered on subsidised rates and neutralised by revenue generation from advertising?

Guidelines for credit card operations

2182. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the RBI has issued guidelines for credit card operations by banks and financial companies;

(b) whether under the new guidelines the credit card issuing banks/companies will be held accountable for acts of omission and commission of direct selling agents/marketing agents; and

(c) whether there is any provision in the guidelines to bar unsolicited telephone calls by marketing agents/call centres to prospective customers?

**Waiver of interest rate on agriculture
loans**

2183. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal for waiving off the interest on agriculture loan taken by farmers from the Nationalised Banks and Scheduled Commercial Banks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Waiver of interest rates of States

2184. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of States whose requests for reduction/waiving off interest rates are pending with the Central Government at present; and

(b) the status of requests in each case?

**Collection of loans with compound
interest from small entrepreneurs**

2185. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked banks to collect loans with compound interest from small entrepreneurs;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government have urged banks to collect their loans without any concessions in matter of interest;

(c) to what extent does Government apply these standards to itself;

(d) whether Government would honour debts to small entrepreneurs when it holds their funds; and

(e) if not, steps proposed to implement proper policies by Government?

Withdrawal of powers of CAG

2186. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:
SHRI R.K. ANAND:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to do away with the role of CAG on Government companies and PSUs through a bill to be introduced soon, on the basis of the recommendations of JJ Irani Committee;

(b) whether Government feels that such tasks of audit of Government companies and PSUs would be better handled by CA firms; and

(c) whether it is a fact that professional Chartered Accountant cannot discharge the social responsibilities hitherto assigned to watchdog institutions like CAG?

Misuse of Export promotion schemes

2187. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain import and export companies, which exist only on documents, have cheated Government to the tune of several crores of rupees by misusing Export Promotion Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof and action taken so far against such Export and Import companies;

(c) whether it is a fact that some officials of Customs Department are also involved in this racket;

(d) if so, the details thereof including the number of Customs officers facing charges and the details of action taken against them, State-wise; and

(e) the remedial measures implemented so far to prevent such fraudulent practices in future?

Resurfacing of vanished companies

2188. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have removed the names of 107 companies from the original list of 229 companies identified as vanished which later on re-surfaced;

(b) if so, the details thereof including total amount involved through shares and whether they re-surfaced as new companies by changing their original names; and

(c) the details of remedial measures already taken and proposed to be taken to curb such menace to economy by such companies which create a breach of trust of domestic investors who invested huge amounts on shares of such companies?

Discrepancies in provision of loans to DDA applicants by Banks

2189. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the last draw of DDA flats, Government have permitted the Banks to finance the minimum deposit on behalf of applicants with a nominal amount of interest;

(b) whether such a manipulation exaggerated the demand specially when the flats were too less;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by his Ministry to disband such a practice for future?

Inter-linking of branches of insurance companies

2190. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an insured person is at liberty to pay his insurance premium at any branch of the concerned insurance company anywhere in India on account of inter-linking of the branches through internet;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that certain insurance companies insist on the customers paying their insurance premium only at the branch where the insurance was taken on the pretext of network problems; and

(d) if so, what measures are taken to ensure that insurance companies do not deprive the customers of such facilities and cause inconvenience to them?

Low growth in sales of consumer goods

2191. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that growth in sales of consumer goods this year was less than 2 per cent whereas sensex scaled highest ever; and

(b) what are Government's comments on this upward trend in Indian economy *vis-a-vis* consumer downtrend?

Loans on higher interest rates to SSI

†2192. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether big companies are being

provided loans on lesser interest rates while farmers and the Small Scale Industries are given loans on higher interest rates in the country;

(b) whether the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India has cautioned the Government in this regard, if so, the steps Government are going to take in this regard; and

(c) whether Government are aware that while speaking on global banking in the Joint Convention of the FICCI and Indian Bankers Association on 6th October in Mumbai the Governor of RBI expressed his concern over it?

Disinvestment of Shipping Corporation of India

2193. SHRI AMAR SINGH: SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently decided to hive off 15 per cent stake in the profit-making Shipping Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether similar disinvestment has also been made in respect of some other profit-earning public sector undertakings; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Rural credit by banks

2194. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present banking infrastructure provides only Rs. 2000 crore credit to rural areas, while the actual requirement is Rs. 45000 crore;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) what banking reforms are needed to meet the credit requirement of rural areas?

Permission to open foreign branches by PNB

‡2195. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Punjab National Bank has sought the permission of Government to open more branches in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of the countries where these branches are proposed to be set-up?

Families benefited under Health Insurance Scheme

‡2196. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) total number of families benefited so far, under Health Insurance Scheme;

(b) whether the present scheme is proving to be more popular as compared to the Universal Health Insurance Scheme announced by previous Government; and

(c) if so, in what manner?

Tax assessment of private schools and colleges

2197. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether tax assessment of private schools and colleges is completed in a summary manner;

(b) if so, the details of private schools and colleges taken up for scrutiny assessments during the current year and the previous year and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure that the provisions of tax exemption are applied only to genuine and eligible institutions?

Grants-in-aid to Maharashtra

2198. SHRI VASANT CHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the amount of the share as tax devolution and grants-in-aid to Maharashtra, as recommended by the Tenth and Eleventh Finance Commission and what was the actual disbursement made for the period 1995-2000 and 2000-2005;

(b) whether it is a fact that the actual amount so disbursed is less than the recommendations of the respective Finance Commission; and

(c) if so, the details of proposal received from Maharashtra for specific needs for the consideration by Twelfth Finance Commission?

FDI inflows

2199. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) FDI received by Government during the last one year from each country;

(b) the amount spent so far for various projects and purposes especially in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether Government have identified the new proposals in Andhra Pradesh;

‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the modalities worked out for this purpose?

Income Tax deduction on donation to Archery Association

2200. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have issued notification for giving 100 per cent Income Tax deduction on donation to the Archery Association of India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether this will help the development of Archery in India; and
- (d) whether other sports are also being considered for this benefit?

Easing of NPA provisioning rules for Urban Co-operative Banks

2201. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that RBI has eased NPA provisioning rules for Urban Co-operative Banks;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) its impact on other Banks?

PSUs in Punjab

2202. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Public Sector undertakings functioning at present in Punjab;

- (b) the total investment made in each of them; and

- (c) the details of the profit and loss involved by each undertaking during each of the last two years, PSU-wise?

Fund for heavy industry sector

†2203. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that Rs. 406 crore had been allocated during the current year by Government for heavy industry sector;
- (b) if not, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that concerned department have taken the decision to spend this amount; and
- (d) if so, the amount to be spent separately in non-plan sector and plan sector out of this allocated amount?

Review of Navratna and Mini-ratna schemes

2204. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal to review Navratna and Mini-ratna schemes of public enterprises;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the performance of Navratna and Mini-ratna companies during the last two years including profit/loss made by them, company-wise and year-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (d) whether any new PSU achieved this status during this period; and
 (e) if so, the details thereof?

Restructuring of CPSUs

2205. SHRI DIPANKAR
 MUKHERJEE:
 SHRI CHITTABRATA
 MAJUMDAR:

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

(a) the number of sick CPSUs, referred to Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) so far;

(b) the names of the CPSUs which have been cleared for revival/restructuring by the BRPSE;

(c) the details of approval given by the Cabinet for revival/restructuring as recommended by the BRPSE; and

(d) the unit-wise time bound action plan for expeditious approval of the revival schemes initiated by the BRPSE?

Appointment of independent directors

2206. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI:
 SHRI K.B. KRISHNA
 MURTHY:
 SHRI SANTOSH
 BAGRODIA:
 SHRI AMAR SINGH:

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

(a) whether Government are facing a dearth of suitable candidates for the appointment as Independent Directors on the Boards of Directors of CPSEs;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to

introduce fresh talent in the Boards of Directors from a large spectrum of professionals and experts;

(c) whether Government are also considering to create a pool of independent professionals in fields relevant to CPSEs who could be appointed as independent directors;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Transfer of ownerships of HMT units

2207. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ex-employees of HMT Ltd. and those who are running the ancillary units of the company have made a request to the management for transfer of ownership to them in view of the financial difficulties experienced by HMT in supporting these units; and

(b) if so, whether any decision has been taken in the matter and what are the details thereof?

Export by heavy industries

2208. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the value of exports made by the heavy industries during the year 2004-2005; and

(b) the break-up of the value of exports of different products during the said period?

Employees under VRS

2209. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees who have taken VRS/VSS from Central Public Sector Undertakings so far;

(b) whether any rehabilitation schemes have been launched to provide source of sustenance to them;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of beneficiaries under such schemes?

Revival of Hindustan Photo Films

2210. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a meeting was convened at New Delhi on 30th August, 2005 and 18th October, 2005 to discuss about the future of the ailing Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company Limited, Ooty;

(b) if so, the details of persons who were invited for the said meeting to participate;

(c) the reasons for not inviting MPs of Tamil Nadu who are very much concerned about this industry for such a meeting; and

(d) what were the details of the deliberations of the meeting?

Development of rural business hubs in Orissa

2211. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to develop rural hubs, the Chinese way to integrate rural areas into modern economic hubs;

(b) whether Government have selected some States for the purpose and a task force has been set up by his Ministry for conceptualizing rural business hubs in specific areas for economic development; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, with special reference to Orissa?

Strengthen of PRIs

2212. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are taking any steps to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions in order to bring economic reforms in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the various steps Government propose to give more role to Panchayati Raj Institutions?

Establishment of two out of three tier Panchayat system

2213. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a demand from

certain smaller States for a Constitutional amendment to permit them the option of establishing any two out of three tier Panchayat-system instead of the present mandatory Constitutional provision which gives option to the States only as regards the middle tier;

(b) if so, the names of the States who have formally or informally demanded for the amendment; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

Joint ventures with China

2214. DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:

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

(a) whether Indian Joint Task Force visited China during month of August, 2005 and found strong support from Chinese state-run firms and Government to forge a Joint participation for assets in third countries;

(b) whether China has taken edge when it comes to bidding as it snaps deal at any cost;

(c) if so, whether by co-operation of both China and Indian companies, both Governments could get contacts from foreign countries; and

(d) if so, to what extent joint participation so far have been agreed upon and what are countries where these joint participation will take place?

GAIL and HPCL joint venture

2215. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that GAIL and HPCL have formed a joint venture for oil exploration abroad;

(b) the details thereof and the reasons for this major diversification; and

(c) whether these two companies have made bids in foreign countries also and if so, the details thereof?

Murder of IOC official

2216. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

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

(a) whether a manager of the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) posted at Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh was murdered for doing this duty honestly in the later half of November, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there are instances of selling adulterated fuel and the officer concerned had ordered closure of some IOC dealer petrol pumps in Lakhimpur;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the measures taken by Government to check the mischief of adulteration and give adequate protection to officers?

Demand for LPG

2217. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of Liquified Petroleum

Gas (LPG) used in the country during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the break-up of figures of gas provided through pipeline and cylinder during this period;

(c) the estimated demand of LPG in the next three years; and

(d) the measures taken to meet the demand?

Tax on petroleum products

2218. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one of the reasons for increase in the prices of petroleum products is too much tax imposed by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are planning to decrease the tax on petroleum products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Recovery of excess tariff by GAIL

†2219. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether the Tariff Commission constituted by Government has clarified that 28 per cent excess gas transmission tariff is being recovered by the Gas Authority of India Limited;

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

(c) whether Government have decided to terminate the above excess recovery; and

(d) if not, the reasons for delay in this regard?

National Consumers Forum's direction on weight of cylinder

†2220. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that National Consumers Forum has directed the Indian Oil Corporation to deliver the L.P.G. cylinders after weighing it in front of the consumers;

(b) if so, whether Government have directed all L.P.G. seller companies to follow the said instructions; and

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

Regulatory authority for petroleum sector

†2221. 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 there is necessity of the constitution of an independent regulatory authority for the petroleum and natural gas sector;

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

(c) whether Government have also taken any decision in this regard;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
 (e) by when it would be implemented?

Stability in petrol and diesel prices

†2222. SHRI DARA SINGH:
 SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
 SHRI RAVI SHANKAR
 PRASAD:

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

- (a) whether Government have taken any steps so far to minimize the impact of continued rising international crude prices on domestic oil prices;
 (b) if so, the details of steps taken till date to ensure stability of petrol and diesel prices in the country;
 (c) whether Government have so far taken any action to modify present duty structure on oil; if so, the details thereof;
 (d) whether Government are also contemplating any long-term supply contract with oil producing countries; and
 (e) if so, the steps taken in this regard till date?

Agreement with Myanmar on gas pipeline project

2223. SHRI MOOLCHAND
 MEENA:
 DR. T. SUBBARAMI
 REDDY:

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

- (a) whether over \$ 2.5 billion Myanmar-India gas pipeline project *via* Bangladesh is back on track with Bangladesh

Government open to holding fresh negotiations on three conditions set by it for signing the tri-nation agreement for implementing projects;

- (b) if so, what are the main points of agreement reached between the three countries;

(c) whether gas pipeline from Myanmar *via* Bangladesh to India is viable as far as cost-effective option of bringing gas from off-shore gas fields in Myanmar is concerned;

(d) whether all conditions put by the three countries have been finally settled; and

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

Changes in Exploration Policy

2224. SHRI RAASHID ALVI:
 DR. T. SUBBARAMI
 REDDY:

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

(a) whether Government are planning changes in policy for award of exploration acreage for oil companies with a view to expediting exploitation of reserves and attracting foreign firms with latest technology;

(b) if so, whether separate categorization of blocks based on risk involved is needed;

(c) whether Government would launch sixth round of bidding for oil and gas blocks by year end;

(d) if so, to what extent changes that have been considered will be undertaken soon; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(e) to what extent these new changes will help in exploration?

Co-operation with Japan in hydrocarbon sector

2225. DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR
SANGHI:

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

(a) whether India and Japan have agreed to look at promoting ventures in exploration and production sector in third countries and also examine possibility of 'swap' arrangements based on convenience of geographical proximity;

(b) what are the main features of agreement reached;

(c) whether meeting of two Ministers was with a view to accelerating deepening and widening cooperation between India and Japan in hydrocarbon sector; and

(d) if so, to what extent Japanese companies would be allowed to private assistance as possible from JOGMEC to develop exploration and production opportunities in India in addition to service and technology areas?

Discount on ATF price

2226. SHRI CHITTABRATA
MAJUMDAR:
SHRI DIPANKAR
MUKHERJEE:

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

(a) the import parity price of ATF at present (Rs./kl);

(b) the amount of ATF sold during the last three years to domestic airlines and foreign airlines;

(c) whether any discount is being offered to foreign airlines at present, if so, the average discount in Rs./kl offered to the foreign airlines; and

(d) the total under recoveries of Oil Marketing Companies during last three years, year-wise and in the current year on account of discounts offered?

Supply of underweight cylinders

2227. DR. M.A.M.
RAMASWAMY:
SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY:

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

(a) whether cases of supply of underweight cylinders by Government owned oil companies have come to the notice of Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for supplying underweight cylinders; and

(d) the action taken by Government on the complaints of supply of underweight cylinders and against the responsible officers?

CNG distribution centres in Rajasthan

†2228. SHRI LALIT KISHORE
CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of CNG distribution centres for vehicles in different States alongwith State-wise details;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the number of distribution centres in Rajasthan alongwith their locations;

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

(d) by when and where these distribution centres are proposed to be opened?

Use of LPG in cars

†2229. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether LPG is being used in cars in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government intend to encourage the use of LPG in cars?

Dual pricing policy for LPG

2230. SHRI ANAND SHARMA:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

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

(a) whether Government are considering dual pricing policy for LPG in the country; and

(b) if so, the details of the policy and the proposed date of its commencement?

New oil refineries

†2231. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN
PANY:
SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA:
SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA
NATCHIAPPAN:
SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning to set up more refineries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount likely to be spent by Government for setting up refineries under this scheme; and

(d) the progress made so far in this regard?

Shortage of Kerosene

2232. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action has been taken to increase the kerosene supplies and to control the massive price increase due to shortage of kerosene as on today;

(b) if so, the details including the quantity of kerosene supplied to States for curbing the shortage and the present price of per litre kerosene as on today, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure adequate supply of kerosene through public distribution system to overcome the shortage and the quantity of kerosene provided to various States to overcome the shortage as on today, State-wise?

Exploration of natural gas in Tripura

2233. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR:
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of natural gas that is explorable for consumption all over the country, State-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the quantity of natural gas now being used every day on the average in the State of Tripura;

(c) the quantity that will be consumed by the proposed Palatana and Manarchak Thermal projects everyday on the average;

(d) whether there is any assessment of further exploration of natural gas in newer areas of the State of Tripura;

(e) whether it is a fact that some of the reservoirs of the State of Tripura are extended to the Bangladesh also; and

(f) if so, how to arrest the flow?

ONGC under Government control

2234. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) enjoys the status of a Navratna company;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the privileges enjoyed by it being a Navratna company;

(c) whether in a letter dated November 7, 2005, his Ministry has asked the Department of Public Enterprises to review the ONGC's Navratna status and revert the company under full Government control; and

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

Waiver of tax dues of oil refineries

2235. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a

decision to waive-off tax dues from the oil refining majors like IOC, BPCL and others and also Reliance Industries; and

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

Use of Kerosene for commercial purpose

2236. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Kerosene oil is used in automobiles that cause shortage of kerosene oil for domestic uses;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any proposal is under the consideration of Government to reduce the use of Kerosene oil for the commercial purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Black marketing of Kerosene in Uttar Pradesh

†2237. DR. CHHATRAPAL SINGH LODHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of black marketing of kerosene in public distribution system and mixing of kerosene in diesel and petrol pumps;

(b) the quantity of kerosene being supplied by Government under public distribution system, district-wise, State/UT-wise;

(c) the steps being taken by Government to prevent the adulteration in diesel and petrol; and

(d) the details of the action taken by

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Government against black marketing of kerosene and selling of adulterated petrol and diesel in the district of Bulandshahar in Uttar Pradesh?

Discussion on supply of petroleum products

†2238. SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that talks by Government are going on with other countries for supply of petroleum and natural gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of countries with whom talks held so far; and

(d) the decisions taken by Government in consequence of the above talks?

Private companies in gas transmission projects

2239. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed private companies to lay gas transmission lines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have set up an expert group to study international experience in building gas pipeline; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Representation on Kerosene and LPG

2240. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received

a proposal from All India Democratic Women's Association to reduce the price on Kerosene and LPG;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the said Association demanded to enhance the supply of kerosene and LPG; and

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

Allotment of petrol pumps in Himachal Pradesh

2241. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether petrol pumps were allotted by Public Sector Undertakings of oil sector during the period from March, 2004 to 31st December, 2005;

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

(c) whether oil PSU's allotted petrol pumps to individuals in State of Himachal Pradesh, and if so, the details thereof?

LNG terminals

2242. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LNG terminals which are operating in the country;

(b) how many are in offing; and

(c) what is the status of Ratnagiri (Maharashtra) terminal?

Decline in exploration of oil by ONGC

†2243. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the places where exploration of oil is being done by ONGC in the country;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the details of the progress made during the last three years;

(c) the names of private companies and dates from which they were entrusted with the work of exploring oil and the extent of success achieved by them;

(d) whether it is a fact that there has been decline in the exploration of oil by ONGC; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

Provision of PNG

2244. SHRI VEER SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have provided PNG connections for domestic use in Sector 12, R.K. Puram, New Delhi;

(b) whether the meters for the connection have been installed inside the house in multi-storeyed houses and outside the single-storeyed houses;

(c) if so, whether it was according to the plan and if not, the reasons for following different parameter in installing meters;

(d) whether Government would install the same inside the house keeping security and safety in mind, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) by when all the houses in single storeyed houses which are damaged due to this connection will be repaired?

Price of natural gas

2245. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

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

(a) the details of mechanism in fixing the sale price of natural gas;

(b) the prices of natural gas during the last two years, month-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is no market regulator in place to determine gas prices;

(d) whether any request from the States received to set up market regulator so as to fix price for natural gas instead of depending on the market forces; and

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken by Government in this regard?

Amount sanctioned to Chhattisgarh

†2246. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2947 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 23rd August, 2005 and state:

(a) the reasons for not releasing the full amount by the Central Government sanctioned for Chhattisgarh;

(b) the actual amount demanded by the State Government during the above period;

(c) the total amount lapsed during the above period, year-wise; and

(d) the details of the achievements made by spending the above amount?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Development of infrastructure for adventure tourism

2247. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that adventure tourism is fast picking up in our country and would be one of the biggest foreign exchange earner in times to come;

(b) the present status of this industry and what is the action plan of Government to develop the required infrastructure, as India is a perfect playing ground for a host of adventure sports like white water river rafting, paragliding, hot air ballooning, skiing, mountain biking etc; and

(c) the position of Orissa in this sector?

Development of historical and mythological places in Buxar

†2248. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently sanctioned some funds for the development of infrastructural facilities in Buxar town of Bihar in view of its historical and mythological importance;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the scheme of Government to attract tourists at Buxar in view of its immense tourism possibility?

Survey on potential places for tourism

2249. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether an overall survey of our country was made to identify the potential places and thier locations for tourism;

(b) if so, what is the programme of their development;

(c) whether it is a fact that even in prominent places of tourism, basic amenities like toilet, water supply, resting places, food facilities, wheel chairs, cloak room, suggestion note books, gift shops, parking area, etc. are lacking; and

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

Allocation of funds for shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer

†2250. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that world fame shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti is situated in Ajmer where millions of people from all over the country and world visit for prayer;

(b) whether the surrounding area as well as the approach roads to this shrine require proper maintenance, cleanliness and beautification in order to maintain the significance and holiness of this world fame shrine of Khwaja garib- nawaj;

(c) if so, the total amount allocated by the Central Government to the State Government during the last three years or the amount proposed to be allocated for this purpose; and

(d) if no, amount allocated, the reasons therefor?

Tourism centre in China

2251. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India proposes to open a tourism centre in China to tap its huge potential;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the number of tourists from China who visited India during the first half of this year and the estimates for the next year which is being marked as 2,500 years of Lord Buddha as well as India-China Friendship Year?

Development of tourism projects in Kerala

2252. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposals for projects pertaining to development of tourism have been received from the State Government of Kerala;

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

(c) the details of projects cleared by the Centre alongwith funds released for each of these projects; and

(d) the present status of these projects, project-wise?

Connectivity for tourist spots

2253. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there are various tourist spots in different parts of the country which do not attract many tourists due to lack of proper connectivity;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to get these places connected to main stream areas?

Development of tourist spots in Himachal Pradesh

†2254. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Himachal Pradesh has submitted any schemes for the development of tourist spots during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 to the Central Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of schemes sanctioned during the said period and the amount released to the State Government; and

(d) the progress made in these schemes so far?

Development of tourist centres in Karnataka

2255. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested for financial assistance for the development of tourism centres in all districts of the State, including providing of resting points on the National Highways;

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

(c) the Centre's reaction thereto?

Night Bazar at Hyderabad

2256. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of tourists visited various States during the last two years, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up Night Bazar at Hyderabad;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
 (d) what is the concept of Night Bazar?

Usage of scarce water resources

2257. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank has suggested prioritized, sequenced and pragmatic path be followed to deal with issues concerning availability and usage of scarce water resources;

(b) whether the World Bank water expert and country director of Brazil has pointed out that water was becoming a big issue;

(c) if so, whether they have suggested that India and Pakistan should think of jointly developing a major hydro- electric project in Jammu and Kashmir and should take up major dam projects in a big way; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take to implement suggestions made by World Bank?

Water disputes with neighbouring countries

†2258. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER
 SINGH MAJITHA:
 DR. MURLI MANOHAR
 JOSHI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the river water disputes between India and its neighbouring countries are continuing for the last several years;

(b) if so, the names of the countries which are the parties of the said disputes with India;

(c) the names of the rivers in dispute with each of the countries; and

(d) the number of discussions held with each of the said countries on the said disputes so far?

Completion of Sutlej canal

†2259. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in construction work of Sutlej canal in accordance with the directions given in Supreme Court in this regard;

(b) the time likely to be taken for its completion; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take regarding the losses and the problems being faced by farmers of Haryana due to non-distribution of water from Sutlej canal?

Interlinking of major rivers

†2260. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
 SHRI RAJ MOHINDER
 SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the target of implementing the august plan of inter-linking the basin water of major rivers of the country by linking the basins with one another and lastly connecting them with Cauvery basin by the year 2016 has been fixed;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and
 (c) the length of waterways required to be constructed to facilitate the flow of water to reach Cauvery basin?

Surplus water in the basin of major rivers

†2261. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
 SHRI RAVI SHANKAR
 PRASAD:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during rainy seasons there is 30,000 to 60,000 cubic meter per second surplus water in the basins of major rivers like the Ganga, Brahmaputra Mahanadi and Godawari in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the quantum of surplus water in each of the above basin; and

(c) the details regarding quantum of this surplus available water being utilized in each of the basins?

Exploitation of ground water by soft drink companies

2262. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any policy has been formulated by the Central Government for soft drink companies who are exploiting ground water extensively for their products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any memoranda have been received by the Central Government from State Governments in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Central Government in this regard?

Non-payment of salaries to employees of NPCC

†2263. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that thousands of field unit employees of National Projects Construction Corporation (NPCC) who have not been paid their salaries and other payments for the last eighteen to twenty months;

(b) whether it is a fact that the children of these employees have left thier study in between due to non-payment of salaries to them;

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to pay arrears of salaries to these employees of NPCC at the earliest; and

(d) the steps Government would take to ensure regular payment of salary to these employees in future?

Irrigation facilities under Bharat Nirman Yojana

†2264. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to provide irrigation facilities for the additional one crore hectare of land under Bharat Nirman Yojana;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have since received the action plans in this regard which was sought from various States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof including the details of amount expected to be spent on it?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Pending water projects from Punjab

†2265. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some water projects of the Punjab are pending for approval with Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and by when, pending water projects of the State are likely to be cleared in the current year; and

(c) by when these projects are likely to be implemented?

Development of ground water

2266. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Ground Water Authority is responsible for regulation and control of ground water development and its management; and

(b) whether the Authority has assessed the lowering of ground water level in various places in the country its causes and the measures needed for improving the level of ground water particularly in water scarce areas?

NEW DELHI;
The 7th December, 2005
Agrahayana 16, 1927 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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