

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 14, 2004/Agrahayana 23, 1926 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions — 155

Concessions to senior citizens

1150. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether concessions in fare hitherto
given to senior citizens have become
meaningless with the imposition of new
rules by abolishing single fare tickets and
requiring advance bookings;

(b) if so, the reasons for imposing new
curbs on the travel by senior citizens; and

(c) whether a senior citizen unable to
travel at short notice is forced to pay full
fare under the existing rules?

Upgradation of airports

1151. SHRI C. PERUMAL:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the civil
aviation sector is poised for overall growth
over the next three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government
have taken a decision to upgrade 30 airports
in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether it is a fact that about
Rs. 5,000 crores would be required to
upgrade these airports to global standards?

Rescheduling of flights during winter

1152. SHRI ANAND SHARMA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps taken by the AAI
and the DGCA to prevent disruption and
diversion of flights from Delhi and North
Indian Airports due to fog in winter;

(b) whether there is any proposal for
diversion or rescheduling of the scheduled
Air India and Indian Airlines flights during
December-January; and

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

Mandatory inspection of aircraft

1153. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Indian Airlines plane bound for Mumbai recently hit a tractor and took off without the mandatory inspection;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken against the responsible officers who did not adhere to the mandatory inspection after this incident thus endangering the lives of the passengers?

Dilution of Government equity in IA and AI

1154. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to dilute their equity holding in both IA and AI;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also propose to strengthen the existing fleet of these carriers before going in for dilution;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time likely to be taken in this regard?

Recovery of dues from Travel Agents

1155. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS
BALAPTE:
SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUK-
KARASAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that failure of Indian Airlines to ensure proper and timely remittance of dues has resulted in a blockage of huge amount, which runs into several crores of rupees, with the Travel Agents authorised by it;

(b) if so, the details thereof as on today;

(c) how much amount is outstanding against them for the last two years; and

(d) the details of steps taken to recover the outstanding dues?

Equity support for AI and IA

1156. SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:
SHRI ANAND SHARMA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1330 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 17th August, 2004 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to increase the equity base of Air India and Indian Airlines; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the anticipated time for its implementation?

Purchase of equity by AI and IA

1157. SHRI S.M.LALJAN BASHA:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any policy to allow Indian Airlines and Air India to buy shares in private airlines;

(b) if so, the details of this policy;

(c) whether it is a fact that shareholding in other airlines would give Indian Airlines and Air India greater commercial spread in the airline sector; and

(d) what steps Government are taking

to ensure that the PSU airlines do not lose their market dominance in the country?

Accident at Palam airport

† 1158. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a security officer of Sahara Airlines was overrun by a bus of Jet Airways near the runway of Palam airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard;

(d) whether Government propose to take any action to prevent this type of accident; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Infrastructure facilities at airports

1159. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to improve the infrastructure facilities at Ahmedabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Bangalore airports;

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

(c) whether Government are also considering seriously for upgradation of hangers and maintenance of aircrafts to that of international standards by signing JV agreements with other international firms; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Payment to cabin crew staff of IA

† 1160. SHRI R.S.GAVAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the cabin crew staff of Indian Airlines are not paid at the rate of 75 dollars per day while on duty abroad;

(b) if so, whether Indian Airlines would make payment at the rate of 75 dollars per day to its cabin crew staff;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Study on airspace

1161. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Airports Authority of India is gearing up its machinery to make the four major metro international airports capable of handling the 500 seater plus super Jumbo Jets;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Airports Authority of India had initiated a study with the assistance of an international aviation consultant to restructure the present airspace to bring in more technological advancement for providing upgraded air services; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Courier service by IA

1162. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines plans courier service in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, it is proposed to be started?

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Policy on confirmed reservations

1163. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some airlines, particularly private airlines, do not honour their confirmed reservations and put helpless passengers into great inconvenience;

(b) whether it is a fact that neither any compensation nor fresh confirmed booking is given; and

(c) whether Government have any policy to deal with such situations?

Delay in commencement of work on International Airport at Devanahalli

1164. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) by when the work on the proposed Bangalore International Airport will commence;

(b) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has not cleared the "integrated air traffic management plan" proposal;

(c) whether the State Government of Karnataka has released a sum of Rs. 350 crore for the project as its share required under the State support agreement;

(d) whether the financial closure has been signed with the lenders to cover the projects' debt amount; and

(e) whether there is any proposal with Government to name Devanahalli International Airport after Tipu Sultan as Devanahalli is his birth place?

National level airport in HP

†1165. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to construct a national level airport in Himachal Pradesh to further develop Himachal Pradesh from tour point of view;

(b) if so, by when along with the details of the outline;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government have also received a proposal in this regard?

New terminal at Thiruvananthapuram airport

1166. SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal seeking sanction for a project to construct a new terminal at Chakkai in Thiruvananthapuram International Airport is pending;

(b) whether the State Government of Kerala expressed its willingness to hand over land required for the project;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether Government would consider to accord sanction for the above project?

Restructuring of airports

1167. SHRI S.P. M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the proposed projects for restructuring of the airports in the country through private sector participation; and

(b) the status of the implementation of those Government approved projects?

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Appointment of insurance company by
IA**

1168. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the IA has appointed any insurance company since the contract of the existing insurance company ended in September, 2004;

(b) if so, the details of the appointment made;

(c) the details of insurance companies to whom contracts have been awarded during the last five years, year-wise;

(d) whether it is a fact that some deviation took place in the appointment of insurance company this year; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Private airlines to overseas destinations

1169. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are committed to permit the private airlines to fly to more overseas destinations;

(b) whether AI and IA have been unable to utilise the rights bilaterally negotiated with Governments of flight destinations; and

(c) whether Government would consider permitting the private airlines fly the same routes instead of giving the unused bilateral rights to foreign airlines?

Recovery of dues from airlines

1170. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of airlines owe huge amount of money to

Government on account of various levies and taxes;

(b) if so, the details in this regard, with outstanding amount in respect of each airline;

(c) what measures are contemplated to recover the arrears from the defaulting airlines and reduce the loss to the exchequer;

(d) whether Government are contemplating a re-look into the Civil Aviation Policy in order to ensure only the right players get the licence to operate air passenger service; and

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

**Financial support for Bangalore
International Airport**

1171. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Karnataka has requested for extending financial support from the National Fund for Airport Development for development of Bangalore International Airport; and

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

**Direct air service between Ahmedabad
and Moscow**

1172. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to start direct flights from Ahmedabad to Moscow;

(b) if so, by when it is going to be implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Improvement of airports in Himachal Pradesh

†1173. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:
SHRI ANAND SHARMA:
SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that millions of foreign tourists come to Himachal Pradesh every year to see tourist places like Shimla, Kullu, Manali, Chamba, Kangra and Kinnaur etc.;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that due to the landing of small aeroplanes on that airports the fares are comparatively high as a result of the tourism being affected;

(c) whether there is any scheme regarding the extension of runway and improvement of airports; and

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

Scrap disposal policy of AI

1174. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the scrap disposal policy of Air India as regards aircraft items;

(b) whether it is a fact that the lack of timely raising of scrap notes by the concerned departments for timely disposal of aircraft items results in further deterioration of the obtainable value of scrapped items;

(c) the details of aircraft items pending for disposal due to non-issuance of scrap notes; and

(d) what is Air India's policy and the plan of action to bring greater accountability in stemming the losses of Air India on this count?

Prosecutions against vanishing companies

1175. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether under sections 63, 68 and 128 of the Companies Act, 1956, prosecutions were launched against 82 vanishing companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether vanishing of more companies from capital market was detected after such prosecutions?

Lowering of penalties of companies by Securities Appellate Tribunal

1176. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in recent past Securities Appellate Tribunal has drastically towered down the penalties of some companies that were imposed by SEBI; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Nationalisation of private sector banks

1177. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it is proposed to nationalise certain private sector banks in the country; and

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

Decline in GDP

1178. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the GDP of the country is declining;

(b) whether it has an adverse impact on industrial and manufacturing sector; and

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

Utilisation of foreign exchange reserves

1179. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports in the media on differences of opinion between the Reserve Bank of India and his Ministry in the matter of utilization of part of foreign exchange reserves for development of infrastructure;

(b) whether in view of the larger requirement of funds for the purpose, how do Government propose to raise funds, particularly since RBI is not in favour of utilizing the forex reserves for the purpose;

(c) whether regulatory agencies are being contemplated to be set up in the Planning Commission to make infrastructure funding by the private sector more attractive; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Grain export assistance

1180. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has given an 'in-principle' nod for Rs. 300 crores grain export assistance for the current fiscal;

(b) whether it is also a fact that his Ministry's clearance has been obtained for giving assistance to traders at the rate of Rs. 900 a tonne for wheat and rice exports; and

(c) if so, whether these exports are likely to affect the country's food security?

Tax refund

† 1181. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to deposit the tax refund in many cities of the country directly into the bank accounts of the tax-payers instead of refunding the same through cheque; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Freeze on operations of Co-operative Banks

1182. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank of India has frozen the operations of Co-operative Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number and names of such banks?

Revenue collections from oil refining companies

1183. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of revenue collected from oil refining companies, both in the private and public sector, during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the amount of dividend earned from public sector oil companies during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the amount of duty drawback allowed to exporters of petroleum products and the other details arising thereof for the last three years, company-wise and year-wise?

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Bold reforms

1184. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are aware of the report in print media on Bold Reforms;
- (b) if so, what are the bold reforms that Government are considering;
- (c) whether such reforms will boost the rate of growth of the economy;
- (d) what are the bold reforms which will be implemented in the remaining part of this fiscal; and
- (e) the full details of such a strategy being planned?

Increase in World Bank and IDA funding

1185. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank President has agreed that the level of World Bank and International Development Association (IDA) funding for India must be raised to \$4 billion (Rs. 18,400 crores) a year; and
- (b) if so, the details of Government's proposal to use the funding?

Introduction of 10 rupee coins

1186. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to introduce 10 rupee coins in the country;
- (b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the designs that visually-challenged people can feel, techno-aesthetic brilliance in

terms of form and metallurgy and safety are going to be the hallmark of the 10 rupee coins; and

- (c) if so, how soon this is expected to happen?

Increase in operations by foreign banks

1187. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOOT:
SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that foreign banks are exploring possibilities to start/increase operations in India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the steps being taken by Government to protect the interests of Indian banking industry;
- (d) whether any proposal has been received from any foreign bank to take over any private sector bank in India; and
- (e) if so, the details in this regard?

Fake currency notes

1188. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI:
SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether fake currency notes, particularly of higher denominations, are in circulation in the country;
- (b) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted to identify the source of such fake currency notes and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that there are instances of fake currency notes being found in the notes issued by some nationalised banks;

(d) if so, whether any inquiry in this regard has been conducted;

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

(f) what measures are contemplated to prevent such incidents?

Black money

1189. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2004 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th December, 2002 and state:

(a) the measures suggested by Central Vigilance Commission for controlling black money generated in the country by evasion of taxes; and

(b) the steps taken by Government on the suggestions?

Utilisation of foreign exchange reserve

†1190. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:

PROF. M.M. AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total foreign exchange reserve in the country as on 30th November, 2004;

(b) the rate of interest being received by Government on the above reserve each year;

(c) whether Government have taken any decision to sanction amount out of this foreign exchange reserves for infrastructure development in rural areas of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Representation against imposition of income tax

1191. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Agriculture Product Market Committee and State Governments have represented against the imposition of income tax on the said Committee for the assessment year 2003-04; and

(b) if so, the final decision of Government in this regard?

Offloading of shares of PSUs

1192. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to offload shares of as many as 35 Public Sector Undertakings including some profitable Navratna companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof and in what manner this proceeds would be utilized; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set-up Boards for Reconstruction of Public Enterprises and if so, the details thereof?

Regulation of lottery industry

1193. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lottery industry worth Rs. 50,000 crores whose

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

tentacles have spread across 13 States had not attracted Government's attention so far despite the stricture passed by C.A.G. in its various reports about its least regulated business involving loss of thousands of crores to the exchequer;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what action Government propose to take to regulate this industry?

Compensation to petroleum companies

1194. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the loss incurred or profit/revenue foregone by the public sector petroleum companies on account of the rise in petroleum crude prices and non-revision of consumer prices since 23rd May, 2004 till date;

(b) the revenue foregone by Government on this account;

(c) whether Government propose to compensate the public sector petroleum companies for this loss; and

(d) in what manner this would affect the fiscal deficit of Government in the current fiscal?

Raising of loans by States directly from World Bank

1195. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to allow States to raise loans directly from World Bank, International Monetary Fund and other international agencies has been under consideration of Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

Swapping of high interest loans of States

1196. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to swap high interest bearing loans of State Governments with low interest in order to ease the financial burden of State Governments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

GDP growth rate

1197. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated GDP growth rate during the current financial year 2004-05;

(b) whether the initial surveys of RBI and Planning Commission are indicative of achieving the projected targets of economic growth; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to remove the constraints in achieving targeted growth?

Criminal cases pending against employees of Allahabad Bank

1198. SHRI VEER SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the criminal/civil cases pending with the police/courts against the employees of Allahabad Bank during the last three years;

(b) whether these cases involve fraud, cheating and acts of misappropriation;

(c) if so, the details of such employees; and

(d) what action is proposed/likely to be taken against such guilty employees under service and conduct rules?

Electrification of rural households

1199. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a scheme for coverage of hundred thousands villages by 2007 and providing access to electricity to all rural households is being examined by his Ministry; and

(b) if so, the present status thereof?

Higher interest rate on savings

1200. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Public Provident Fund is maintained only in the post offices and branches of State Bank of India;

(b) whether higher rates of interest on savings of senior citizens has recently been allowed to those who held accounts in Post Offices and not in the SBI; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for this discriminatory decision and whether this higher rate of interest will also be allowed to senior citizens holding Provident Fund Accounts in branches of SBI and if not, the reasons therefor?

Kelkar panel for changes in economic structure

†1201. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government constituted Kelkar panel to bring about basic changes in the economic structure;

(b) if so, whether the above panel has suggested some basic changes in his Ministry; and

(c) if so, the main points of suggestion for structural changes in his Ministry and the steps being taken by Government to change the structure in the Ministry in the light of abovesaid suggestion?

Conversion of stock-exchanges into companies

†1202. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to convert the stock-exchanges into companies, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government propose to bring about a change in the Security Agreement Rule; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Increase in customs duty on import of cotton

1203. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations regarding demand to increase the customs duty on import of cotton which is presently quite low at 10 per cent to save the cotton farmers in the country;

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

(c) whether Government propose to increase the customs duty on import of cotton to the maximum level of 40 per cent as has been done in case of silk etc.; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question received in Hindi.