

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the March 15, 2005/Phalgun 24, 1926 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions — 155

Fleet expansion programme of IA

1386. SHRI DHARAM PAL
SABHARWAL:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government
have allowed domestic airlines to fly on
international routes;

(b) whether it is also a fact that
Government have directed the Indian
Airlines to complete its fleet expansion
programme before it starts flying on
international routes; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for not
granting international routes to Indian
Airlines and whether this would slow down
the global expansion plans of the state-
owned carrier to the benefit of private
operators?

New international airport at Mumbai

1387. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the
Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased
to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CIDCO has
proposed a new international airport near
Panvel at Navi Mumbai with public-private
participation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, Government propose to
give approval in principle to this project?

APEX airlines fares to Srinagar

1388. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the
Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased
to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government
have approved to accord Srinagar airport
the status of an International Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also
considering introduction of APEX fares to
Srinagar to boost ailing tourism industry in
Jammu and Kashmir; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

IA's bid for London sector

1389. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will
the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether IA was not allowed to bid
for the operation of Delhi-London and
Mumbai-London route; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

Leasing of aircrafts for AI

†1390. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are
reconsidering the purchase of 43 aeroplanes
for Air India on lease basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total estimated cost of the
purchase?

Strike called by crew of Alliance Air

1391. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) whether the crew of Alliance Air in
the northeast resorted to a cat-call strike
through mass absenteeism recently causing
cancellations of many flights serving the
region;

(b) whether the striking crew had put
forth demands of party in pay and perks
enjoyed by their counterparts flying Airbus
aircrafts; and

(c) whether Government would
consider offering aircrafts now operated by
Alliance Air on dry lease to private air
carriers to ensure better service to air
travellers on non-trunk/remote sectors?

New airports in Andhra Pradesh

1392. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR
SANGHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL
AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified
any cities in Andhra Pradesh for new
airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether there is any plan to
modernise or expand or upgrade the existing
airports in Andhra Pradesh?

Encroachment on Nowgong airport land

1393. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS
BALAPTE:

SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN
PANY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of
the encroachment on the land of Nowgong
airport in Madhya Pradesh and also the
non-existence of its boundary;

(b) if so, the action being taken by
Government for the protection of the
airport; and

(c) the category of the Nowgong
airport?

Creation of Airport Security Force

1394. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN
PANY:

SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS
BALAPTE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to
create the Airport Security Force for
airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any decision has been taken
by Government in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons for the delay?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Facilities at Goa Airport

1395. SHRI R.K. ANAND:

SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

SHRI SANTOSH
BAGRODIA:

SHRI K.B. KRISHNA
MURTHY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) by when, Goa Airport will be operative 24 hours;

(b) whether Government have any plan to introduce more facilities at Goa Airport in view of the fact that Goa has become a hot tourist destination from all over the world; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

New ventures in Aviation Industry

1396. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR
PRASAD:

SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he has made a statement that 2005 will be the year of airports for our Aviation Industry;

(b) if so, the details of new ventures; and

(c) the action plan of Government to transform this sector into world class?

Restructuring of Chennai airport

1397. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR
PRASAD:

SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government

have cleared the proposal to restructure the Chennai airport to a world class airport alongwith Delhi and Mumbai;

(b) whether it is a joint venture project;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of other airports which are also proposed to be considered for restructuring?

Flights operated by public sector/ private sector airlines

1398. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of domestic air flights conducted by the public sector airlines in a week;

(b) the number of domestic flights conducted by the private airlines in a week;

(c) whether the number of international flights conducted by the private sector airlines of the country has increased recently;

(d) the loss incurred to public sector airlines by allowing private companies in the international sectors of air services; and

(e) the number of extra flights which were operated by the public sector airlines and also by the private airlines for performing rescue works of the Tsunami victims?

Facilities at Metro airports

1399. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

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

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

(c) whether Government are also considering 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?

Development of Yermarus airstrip

1400. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India had conducted a preliminary survey of the Yermarus airstrip near Raichur in Karnataka to make it a permanent base to link air routes among Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hubli and Goa;

(b) if so, when the survey was conducted and whether the survey has indicated the feasibility of the proposed project;

(c) the estimated cost for upgrading the above airstrip;

(d) whether Karnataka Government has agreed to bear the cost; and

(e) the present status of the above project?

Adherence to CVC guidelines on purchase of aircrafts

1401. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the public sector airline companies in India are likely to place orders for over 200 aircrafts with the world's two major aircraft manufacturers-Airbus and Boeing Co.worth \$ 10 billion in 2005; and

(b) whether all these proposed purchases meet the CVC guidelines in full?

Concession agreement for a green field airport near Hyderabad

1402. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Government of Malaysia have signed a concession agreement for a greenfield airport near Hyderabad;

(b) what is the minimum standard of performance specified for the proposed international airport near Hyderabad;

(c) whether any time-frame has been fixed within which this airport is going to be completed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Virgin Atlantic's direct air services in India

1403. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed Virgin Atlantic (VA) to operate in India directly and cancelled its earlier arrangement; and

(b) if so, the details about the loss to Air India therefrom?

Policy on international operations by private airlines

1404. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a policy decision permitting private airlines to operate also on international routes;

(b) if so, the details of the policy and the stipulated conditions for the

qualification of private airlines for international operations; and

(c) the names of countries and destinations covered under the new policy?

Financial performance of national carriers

1405. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the national carriers are making continuous losses;

(b) if so, the profits earned or losses incurred by Air India and Indian Airlines during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the reasons for losses, if any; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to make the Indian Airlines and Air India more competitive in view of intense competition they face in future?

Air services to Gulf from Southern States

1406. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a long pending demand from Southern States to operate more flights to the Gulf region in view of large number of South Indian people working in Gulf countries and remitting huge foreign exchange to the exchequer of the country;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to operate more flights to the Gulf region; and

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

Purchase of aircrafts by AI

1407. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Boeing

company has offered 50 aircrafts to Air India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Air India has sought such an offer of 50 long-range and medium range passenger aircrafts;

(c) what would be the phased acquisition programme of Air India for such aircraft;

(d) whether there is traffic for Air India for such large scale purchase of aircrafts; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Direct air service between Kathmandu and Bagdogra

1408. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the public demand for direct flights between Kathmandu and Bagdogra; and

(b) if so, the details of action taken so far to fulfil the demand?

International air connectivity at regional airports

1409. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are taking steps to improve international air connectivity at regional airports outside the metros; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Pilots in Alliance Air

1410. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Pilots who have left Alliance Air in the last three years;

(b) the number of Pilots needed in Alliance Air; and

(c) the steps taken to fill in the gap, if any?

**Theft of trolleys from IGIA,
New Delhi**

1411. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large number of trolleys were stolen from IGIA recently;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the airport management was blind to the entire theft ever a long period of time;

(c) whether it was the duty of the airport manager and others to stop such theft of trolleys and other property;

(d) the reasons for the lack of action and initiative by the airport management; and

(e) in what manner Government propose to ensure that the Airports Authority of India maintains vigil all over the country to prevent such theft and misuse of passenger facilities?

Airports in Madhya Pradesh

†1412. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of airports under the Airports Authority of India in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) the number of airports out of the above proposed to be made of international level alongwith the action taken in this regard?

Development of Jabalpur airport

†1413. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Madhya Pradesh Government had provided free

land for the development of Jabalpur airport;

(b) whether the task of land acquisition has been completed by Government;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether development of works like terminal building and night landing facility etc. have been completed?

**Performance of Category-III landing
instruments at the Delhi Airport**

1414. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that installation of Category III-B and III-C systems at the Delhi Airport has not yielded desired results in landing and take-offs of planes during fog; and

(b) the details of steps Government propose to take in the matter?

Amendment of Competition Act, 2002

1415. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court of India has allowed the Centre to amend the Competition Act, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to set up an Appellate Tribunal headed by a retired Supreme Court Judge or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court to hear the appeals against the orders of Commission;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when the Bill is likely to be passed?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Opening of an office of Registrar of Companies at Ranchi

†1416. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has agreed to open an office of the Registrar of Companies in Ranchi (Jharkhand);

(b) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) by when the above said office is likely to start functioning in Ranchi?

Role of Independent Directors in Corporate governance

1417. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have received the Naresh Chandra and the Narayana Murthy Committees reports on the role of Independent Directors in companies, etc;

(b) whether Government have examined these reports;

(c) if so, whether it is also a fact that the major recommendations have been abandoned by Government with regard to Independent Directors;

(d) what steps Government would take to ensure that Independent Directors have a clear and strong role in Corporate Governance; and

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

Registration of foreign companies

1418. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of foreign companies operating in India since 1991, State-wise;

(b) the foreign companies registered since 2001;

(c) the profits earned by those existing foreign companies during the last five years; and

(d) the pending requests from foreign companies for registration in India?

Investment by public sector banks in private sector institutions

†1419. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more capital investment has been made by the public sector banks in private sector institutions in comparison to public sector institutions in the first ten months of the current year;

(b) if so, the extent of amount invested in public and private sectors; and

(c) on what basis decision has been taken to give priority to the private sector?

Statutory obligation to quote PAN in property transactions

1420. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a statutory obligation to quote Permanent Account Number for a person entering into transaction of immovable property of a value of more than Rs. 5 lakhs;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of such transactions in Delhi and Mumbai during the last two years;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government have reviewed those transactions with a view to ascertain the approximate value thereof; and

(d) if so, how many transactions were found under value and what action Government have taken against in respect thereto?

NABARD's projects in Gujarat

1421. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the projects, proposals received by the NABARD in Gujarat during the last three years, project-wise and year-wise;

(b) the funds allocated to the projects during the said period, project-wise;

(c) whether the cases of misuse of funds by the State Government have come to the notice of Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken in these cases so far?

Service tax target for Karnataka

1422. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the service tax target fixed for 2004-05 for Karnataka;

(b) what were the actual collections by the end of January 2005 in Karnataka;

(c) what steps have been taken to ensure that all service providers are covered under the service tax net in Karnataka;

(d) whether it has come to the notice of Government that service tax will remain a major source of income for Government;

(e) whether Government of Karnataka has sought releasing of service tax collected in Karnataka; and

(f) if so, the amount of service tax proposed to be given to Karnataka during 2004-05?

Problems faced by pensioners in Uttaranchal

1423. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the pensioners of Uttaranchal have been getting their pensionary benefit from the Nationalised Banks located in different regions of the State;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there have been many complaints that pensioners are not paid the amount they need in emergencies despite the fact that these pensioners have lakhs of rupees deposited in the banks; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to redress the grievances being faced by the pensioners?

Grading of Co-operative Banks

1424. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the RBI has asked the Registrars of Co-operative Societies (RCS) of different States to grade Co-operative Banks in line with the system followed by the banking regulator; and

(b) if so, the details of RBI grading system?

Lifting of excise duty on molasses

1425. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the domestic liquor industry has sought lifting of excise duty on molasses and abolition of custom duty on imported molasses due to steep fall in production of sugarcane and hike in prices of molasses in International market;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government have taken any decision on the demand of liquor industry; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Opening of bank branches in M.P. and Chhattisgarh

†1426. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the district head quarters in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh having only one Nationalised Bank located over there;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the names of districts of these States whose demands for setting up branches of other banks than the present ones are pending; and
- (d) since when the demand for the fulfilment of this requirement in Jashpur district head quarter (Chhattisgarh) is being made alongwith details of action taken in this regard?

Separate framework for Co-operative Banks

1427. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to go in for merger of public sector banks;
- (b) if so, details of the merger plan;
- (c) whether Government propose to work out a separate framework for Co-operative Banks with a view to free them from supervision of multiple agencies; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

IRS officials involved in corruption cases

†1428. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of IRS officials found involved in corruption cases during the last three years; and
- (b) the details thereof and the action taken against the guilty officials?

Theft of cheques from ATM drop boxes

†1429. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have received complaints regarding theft of cheques from ATM drop boxes and encashing them;
- (b) if so the details thereof;
- (c) whether any investigation has been made into it and if so, the results thereof;
- (d) the action taken against those who have been found guilty;
- (e) whether Government have formulated any plan to prevent recurrence of such incidents; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Merger of banks

1430. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:
SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether during 2005 consolidation of banking sector is being seriously taken up;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) whether the first in the series will be the merger of Bank of India and Union Bank of India;

(c) whether almost all the public sector banks are talking to each other to find partners so that their respective strength could be exploited to the hilt;

(d) the details of banks which have agreed for merger and how many banks have so far merged; and

(e) to what extent it has helped the economy?

NHB scheme for tsunami victims

1431. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Housing Bank (NHB) has announced a concessional scheme for the tsunami victims;

(b) if so, what are the details of the financial assistance that will be provided to them;

(c) what are the conditions imposed under this scheme and whether all eligible victims will be able to get these funds; and

(d) whether all the victims can fully utilize this scheme?

Loans to farmers under institutional network

1432. DR. KARAN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether private lenders provide loans to farmers at high interest rates with the result that they become over burdened;

(b) if so, whether Government have decided to bring farmers under institutional network so that they take loans from banks, not from private lenders;

(c) whether any target has been issued to the banks to provide loans to farmers without any formalities;

(d) if so, the guidelines issued to banks; and

(e) to what extent such guidelines have been followed strictly by them?

National policy on subsidies

1433. SHRI UDAY PRATAP
SINGH:
SHRI SUDARSHAN
AKARAPU:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate a National policy on subsidies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) which are the key areas/sectors identified for reducing subsidies?

Constitution of Sixth Central Pay Commission

1434. SHRIMATI KAMLA
MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
DR. ALLADI P.
RAJKUMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission were implemented in January, 1996;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the recommendations of Sixth Pay Commission if constituted will be implemented in January, 2006; and

(c) if so, whether Government should constitute the Sixth Pay Commission as early as possible so that the recommendations are implemented in 2006, and if not, the reasons therefor?

Introduction of VAT system

1435. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI LALIT SURI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) by when the Value Added Tax (VAT) system will be introduced and how many State Governments have agreed to implement the scheme;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Government of Karnataka will have to face revenue shortfall of Rs. 1500 crore annually due to implementation of VAT;

(c) whether there are any proposals from the Government of Karnataka to compensate the loss of revenue; and

(d) for how many years the reimbursement of revenue shortfall will be continued?

Pre-payment of loans of States

1436. DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM
KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Governments have been asked to prepay some of their loans taken from public sector financial institutions by partial funding support from the Centre;

(b) if so, whether the Centre has floated scheme of pre-payment last year and no State Government has taken the advantage of facility so far, to pay off some of their high-cost loans;

(c) whether States claim that they have no funds to undertake debt swap, which was expected to run parallel with other popular scheme to liquidate loans taken from Central Government; and

(d) if so, how many States have so far repaid loans and accepted Centre's offer?

Universal Health Insurance Scheme

†1437. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incumbent Government have launched a Universal Health Insurance Scheme replacing the Health Insurance Scheme launched by the previous Government;

(b) if so, the amount allocated for this scheme; and

(c) the number of persons/families benefited from this scheme?

Replacement of Sales tax with VAT

†1438. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposed to introduce the Value Added Tax (VAT) system throughout the country from the 15th April, 2005 and if so, the number of States which have declined to implement this system;

(b) whether Government would abolish the Central Sales Tax law with the introduction of Value Added Tax System and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would consider to keep both the Sales Tax and VAT in force simultaneously on the pattern of Himachal Pradesh, keeping in view the opposition of some States to the implementation of VAT, and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Special package to Maharashtra

1439. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Twelfth Finance Commission is considering a proposal to provide a special package to Maharashtra to enable the State wipe out its whopping 1 lakh crore debt;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the rate of interest to be charged on this special package amount; and

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

TAX GDP ratio

1440. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the Tax-GDP ratio of the country as on 31st December, 2004;

(b) what are the efforts being made by Government to increase the tax base as well as the tax compliance to increase Tax-GDP ratio; and

(c) how does India compare with other countries in relation to Tax-GDP ratio?

Introduction of innovative savings scheme

1441. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce an innovative savings scheme particularly for senior citizens or for people who don't want to risk their money on shares, which will be protected against inflation;

(b) if so, whether this scheme will be managed by Public Sector banks or through Post Offices; and

(c) what are the details of this scheme?

Consultations with States on budget proposals

1442. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government sought the opinion of State Governments relating to the budget proposal; and

(b) if so, how many State Governments responded and whether any State Government is yet to respond and if so, the details thereof?

Compensation to US-64 unit holders

1443. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to compensate the erstwhile US-64 unit-holders who suffered heavily during equity market slump in 2001 and were later allowed redemption in May/June 2003 at the rate of Rs. 12/- per unit upto 5000 units held per individual and at the rate of Rs. 10/- in excess of 5000 units;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total gain that has accrued to Government as on 28th February, 2005 due to a spurt in the prices of PSU Units that Government acquired while liquidating US-64 Scheme in 2003?

Totalisation agreement with USA

1444. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 504 given in the Rajya Sabha on 7th December 2004 and state whether any