

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the April 19, 2005/Chaitra 29, 1927 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions — 155

Reduction of airfares in Delhi- Srinagar sector

2781. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have declared Srinagar airport as an international airport in order to enhance the connectivity of Srinagar with the rest of world;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Indian Airlines and the private domestic airlines have done nothing to promote Srinagar and are charging exorbitant air fares;

(c) if so, the reasons for such high airfare on Delhi-Srinagar sector; and

(d) whether Government would consider reducing the airfares in this sector to promote tourism and introduce APEX fares and if not, the reasons therefor?

Signing of air service agreement with US

2782. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI
BARUPAL:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether air service agreement between India and the United States is expected to be signed in the month of April, 2005;

(b) if so, whether under this agreement restrictions have been lifted on the number of airlines that can be carried between the two countries;

(c) whether the earlier agreement has been reframed after 50 years of its existence;

(d) if so, to what extent it will be different from the earlier one and to what extent it will be helpful for both; and

(e) whether by this agreement India has become the 67th country to have open sky policy with the US?

Setting up of a private flight academy in Hosur (Bangalore)

2783. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI R.S. GAVAI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indus Aviation Inc. in collaboration with Taneja Aerospace and Aviation Limited (TAAL) are setting up a private flight academy in Hosur (Bangalore);

(b) whether the Civil Aviation Ministry has accorded permission to the project; and

(c) if so, what are the courses offered to the trainees, methods of admission of pilots and the fees structure?

Independent Regulatory Authority for the aviation sector

2784. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI R.S. GAVAI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a Bill for providing an independent Regulatory Authority for the aviation sector, on the lines of Telecom and Insurance sector;

(b) whether the recommendations of Naresh Chandra Committee will be incorporated in the proposed Bill; and

(c) by when the comprehensive bill on aviation policy will be introduced?

Purchase of aircrafts for IA and AI

2785. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines and Air India are in shortage of

aircrafts and not in a position to compete with the private operators;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to acquire some more aircrafts for IA and AI; and

(c) the total number of aircrafts proposed to be purchased by the Government and the financial allocation for this purpose?

New European Regulations for Airlines

2786. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 9 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 1st March, 2005 and state:

(a) whether the law or similar law will be applicable to the domestic airlines; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

Flights handled at HAL Airport, Bangalore

2787. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flights being handled by HAL Airport, Bangalore, everyday;

(b) the number of passengers travelling every day to various places by different flights from HAL Airport;

(c) whether there is any proposal to instal Automated Air Traffic Control System at HAL Airport;

(d) if so, the estimated cost of the same and the steps taken to procure the same;

(e) what is the percentage of aircrafts that can be accommodated in the same airspace with the installation of the above ATC at HAL Airport; and

(f) by when, it will be installed?

Flying academies

2788. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Flying colleges/ Academies run by Central Government/ Government Corporations/Public Sector Units in the country;

(b) whether these Flying Academies are able to produce the required number of pilots; and

(c) whether Government would open more flying academies to train more youth to become pilots?

Abandoned Airports in Tripura

2789. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal from the State Government of Tripura to hand over abandoned airports in the State to the State Government for the use of Government institutes;

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

(c) the decision of the Central Government in this regard?

Operation of Air India Express

2790. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India Express (AIE), a subsidiary of Air India, has set to operate/ to be operated as a low cost, no frills airline;

(b) if so, the details including destinations to be operated during the year 2005-06;

(c) whether baggage that is allowed to be carried by passengers is same as allowed

in other airlines operating in the same destination;

(d) if not, whether action will be taken for the same; and

(e) whether steps will be taken to prepare a blueprint for future so as to make AIE as a flagship rather than a subsidiary?

Air service between New Delhi and Guwahati

2791. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government will consider to increase the frequency of Indian Airlines flights between New Delhi and Guwahati;

(b) whether Government will also consider to create new airports in Assam; and

(c) if so, whether it would include the revival of Rupshi Airport which is now under Bodoland Territorial Areas District of Assam?

Exodus of pilots from State carriers

2792. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several pilots from State run carriers have left these carriers;

(b) if so, the details of pilots who have left these carriers and joined other private airlines during the last three years;

(c) whether this has badly affected the operations of these carriers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

Bids for Delhi and Mumbai airports

2793. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have granted 12 weeks to the nine short listed private and international consortia to submit the final technical and financial bids for Delhi and Mumbai airports;

(b) if so, the details of these companies including their financial health;

(c) the criteria for shortlisting adopted by Government;

(d) the details of companies and consortia whose applications have been rejected; and

(e) the reasons therefor?

Fee on air passengers

2794. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to levy fee on the passengers passing through Indian airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which the money collected will be utilised?

Non-traffic revenue of AAI

2795. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the non-traffic revenue of Airports Authority of India at Indira Gandhi Airport comprising of income from duty free zone accounts for only 22 per cent of its earlier revenue;

(b) if so, the reasons for this low percentage;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in other foreign cities like Singapore etc., it is as high as 70 per cent; and

(d) what are the steps proposed by Government to enhance this percentage of non-traffic revenue?

Regulations for helicopter pilots

2796. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of civilian helicopter crashes reported during the last one year;

(b) the reasons for the increase in number of copter crashes;

(c) whether it is a fact that one of the reasons cited for copter crashes was the inexperience of pilots;

(d) if so, whether Government are considering to implement stringent regulations for the copter pilots; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Delayed delivery of consignments booked for Kozhikode

2797. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the consignments booked for Kozhikode at New Delhi Airport or other airports are being sent to Kolkata due to usage of code similar to Kozhikode and Kolkata;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the consignments booked for Kozhikode are delivered after 10 days of bookings; and

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

Employment of foreign pilots by Airlines

2798. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the guidelines for airlines to employ foreign pilots; and

(b) the number of foreign pilots employed by different airlines with airlineswise?

Cancellation of pilots' licence test

2799. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the DGCA has cancelled its pilots' licence test as the papers were leaked; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

Airworthiness of private planes and helicopters

2800. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the rising number of Helicopter crashes in the country claiming many victims;

(b) whether the DGCA has investigated the causes of the crashes and if so, what are the findings of such enquiries; and

(c) what steps have been taken by the DGCA to check on the airworthiness of privately owned planes and Helicopters in the country?

Special package for development of airports

†2801. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering any policy/scheme envisaging a separate special package for the development of airports in the country;

(b) whether it includes the development of airports of Chhattisgarh, specially of Raipur, from the tourism point of view; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Planes with IA

2802. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of planes operating in Indian Airlines;

(b) the new planes ordered by Indian Airlines which are yet to be delivered; and

(c) the details of the plans of Indian Airlines for strengthening the fleet by 2010?

Services from Thiruvananthapuram airport

2803. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of foreign countries to which the budget airlines propose to conduct services from Thiruvananthapuram International Airport;

(b) the reasons for exempting services in Thiruvananthapuram-Dubai Sector and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

whether Government would consider to start services in this sector; and

(c) the percentage of concession in airfares in the Gulf route following the introduction of budget airlines and whether Government would consider any further relaxations or concessions thereof?

Bilateral Air Agreement with France

2804. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has amended its Air Bilateral Agreement with France to facilitate the private air carriers of India to fly to France;

(b) whether similar agreements are in the pipeline to allow the Indian private airlines to fly to other destinations of the world;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how many bilateral agreements India has now with France following this amendment to Air Bilateral Agreement?

Poor maintenance of private helicopters/aircrafts

2805. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of frequent crashes of private helicopters/aircrafts in the recent times;

(b) whether it is a fact that poor maintenance is the major cause of these crashes; and

(c) whether Government will take suitable measures to prevent crashes due to poor maintenance?

Permission to China for use of Indian space

2806. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether China has approached Government of India for allowing Indian Air space for flying its Air crafts over India;

(b) whether it is a fact that about 600 flights of China were to fly over Indian Air space;

(c) the reasons for not giving permission in time; and

(d) if such permission had been granted how much India would have earned per month?

Complaints against Income tax officials

2807. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaint against certain officers of Income Tax Department, Chandigarh who have been forcing the businessmen in Ludhiana and other adjoining cities to deposit huge money in a private trust called "Mother India Fund" whose account has been opened in ICICI Bank;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the names of the officials involved in this case; and

(c) what action Government have taken against them?

Decline in interest rates on small savings

†2808. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that senior citizens are suffering heavy losses due to decline in the rates of interest on long term deposits in the banks and the post offices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to bring down the rates of interest on the small savings further;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government have taken or propose to take steps to increase the rates of interest on the small savings in the banks and post offices to encourage the common men and senior citizens to save invest?

Increase in non-agricultural debts

†2809. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a major increase has been estimated in the year 2004-05 in comparison to the last five years in respect of non-agricultural debts in the Public Sector Banks;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the estimate of the growth rate; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the said growth?

Loans advanced to the agricultural sector

†2810. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the clear instructions to the banks to provide 18 per cent of loans to agricultural sector only 10.84 per cent to 13.5 per cent loan has been provided in the country during the recent years;

(b) if not, the amount of loan provided to agricultural sector separately during 2002-03, 2003-04 and the first nine months in the 2004-05; and

(c) the amount of loan provided by the Private Sector Banks?

Scrutiny of foreign banks

2811. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 25 foreign banks operating in India are under the scrutiny of the newly set up Transfer pricing Directorate of India for their cross border transactions with their related branches approach;

(b) if so, what are the names of the foreign banks who are under scrutiny; and

(c) what action Government have taken against them after thorough checking?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Penalty imposed on National
Insurance Company of Kolkata by
IRDA**

2812. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tariff Advisory Committee of IRDA has imposed a hefty penalty of more than Rs.5 crores on national Insurance Company of Kolkata for tariff violations while providing insurance cover to Vadodara refinery of IOC;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the National Insurance Co. has been asked to pay penalty equivalent to the difference between the normal premium and the one undercharged by NIC to clinch the deal with IOC; and

(d) whether the NIC has asked the IOC to pay up the difference constituting the penalty and if so, the response of IOC thereto?

Inflation rate

†2813. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR
JOSHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the average rate of inflation has been 6.5 per cent in the 52 weeks before 29th January, 2005;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the said rate of inflation is not only higher than the last year's rate but also is more than the target set during the above period;

(d) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(e) what would be the effect of this increase in the rate of inflation on the economy of the country in future?

Unclaimed bank deposits

2814. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, according to his Ministry an amount of Rs.291.87 crores is lying with the 19 Nationalised Banks in the country as unclaimed deposits as on December 31, 2003;

(b) if so, whether these deposits have not been touched for the last 10 years;

(c) whether these unclaimed deposits are not being used by the Banks;

(d) if so, whether Government proposes any legislation for this investment; and

(e) what other steps Government propose to take to utilise these funds which are unclaimed for the last 10 years?

Housing loans to poor

2815. DR. T. SUBBARAMI
REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKASONI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to Reserve Bank of India, there are a number of home loans which have increased manifold in the last 15 years but the housing needs of the poor and lower income group have remain unaddressed;

(b) whether, according to the report of RBI on 'Trends and Progress' on banking, points out that clause of margin is one of the reasons for low financing to weaker sections;

(c) if so, what are the steps Government propose to take to address housing needs of poor; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) whether any concrete programme of action has been planned during 2005-06 for providing housing to the poor?

DFID's assistance to Control poverty

2816. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN
PANY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UK Government's Department of International Development (DFID) has provided an assistance of Rs.3,661 crore for various projects in India to control poverty; and

(b) if so, out of the above, how much amount has been given to Orissa to control poverty?

Adverse impact of Budgetary proposals on Senior Citizens and Pensioners

2817. SHRI MANOJ
BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI N.K. PREMA-
CHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his pragmatic tax proposals for 2005-06 have very adversely affected the senior citizens and pensioners much against his hopes that they would offer relief and respite;

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

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

FDI in Insurance sector

2818. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Standing Committee of Parliament on Finance had unanimously recommended Foreign Direct Investment of not more than 26 per cent in the Insurance sector; and

(b) if so, whether Government has decided to raise the FDI cap in insurance sector to 49 per cent and if so, the reasons for hiking the FDI cap?

Institutional mechanism to identify priority sectors for subsidies

2819. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH
BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any criterion and institutional mechanism to identify the priority sections eligible for subsidies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the benefits of subsidies have gone to non-priority sections;

(d) if so, the extra expenditure incurred on that account;

(e) whether Government propose to rationalise the subsidy regime to reduce the subsidy bill; and

(f) if so, the main elements thereof?

Study on subsidy regime

2820. SHRI SANTOSH
BAGRODIA
SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have commissioned any study on rationalising the subsidy regime;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether Government are in agreement with the recommendations of the study;

(c) whether Government also acknowledge that the subsidies on food, petroleum and fertilizer have not reached the targeted segments;

(d) if so, whether Government have set up any criterion and the institutional mechanism to identify the targeted segments of the population, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether Government also agree with the report and consider small-scale industries, rural development and agricultural research as non-priority sectors and if so, the reasons therefor?

Introduction of VAT

2821. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA
SEKAR REDDY:
SHRI S.ANBALAGAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Value Added Tax has been introduced from 1st April as scheduled;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the States and Union Territories where the VAT has been implemented;

(c) the benefits to be accrued to the

people and Government as a result of implementation of VAT;

(d) whether some States have refused to implement the VAT;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, State-wise; and

(f) the steps proposed to be taken by the Central Government to solve the problems faced by the States in the implementation of VAT?

Measures to lessen loan burden of Government of Maharashtra

2822. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Maharashtra has borrowed loan of around one lakh ten thousand crore rupees from various segments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of corrective steps suggested or proposed so far to the State Government of Maharashtra for lessening the loan amount in the next five years?

Restriction on import of scrap iron

2823. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to restrict the import of scrap iron because of security concern; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to notify it immediately to save human life?

New guidelines of NABARD

2824. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development

proposes to introduce the new guidelines which will ensure increased and quick outcome from the banks to the farming community to minimise assistance;

(b) if so, what are the details of the guidelines issued;

(c) whether all National and private banks have been urged to consider these guidelines prepared by the NABARD;

(d) if so, to what extent these banks have followed the same guidelines; and

(e) to what extent it has been beneficial to farmers?

Income Tax Collection

2825. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the performance and achievements of Income Tax Department vary from region to region though the law of the land and the procedure are one and the same and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is envisaged to have a change in the objective, organisational set-up, operational approach and manpower for better performance;

(c) how targets for collection of Income Tax are fixed; and

(d) whether the potentiality of the area, environment and the quality of Income Tax personnel concerned, etc. are taken into account or the targets are just fixed on a conventional basis usually followed and periodically reviewed?

Case against CMD, Indian Bank

†2826. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a case has

been filed against Chief Managing Director, Director General and some other officials of Indian Bank under Delhi Zone under sections 409, 467, 471 and 477-A of I.P.C. and summons have also been issued to them by the Court;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that the above officials had committed some irregularities in the term deposit amount of an N.R.I. and what action is being taken thereon?

Assistance to backward districts

†2827. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State-wise districts have been identified wherein the rate of economic development is below the National and concerned State average;

(b) if so, the details of such districts and areas in Uttaranchal;

(c) whether he would extend assistance for the implementation of schemes in such districts on priority basis from out of the backward area funds;

(d) whether any such schemes have been submitted by the State Government of Uttaranchal; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Loans to unemployed graduates

†2828. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Banks are providing loans to the unemployed graduates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for self-employment; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the number of youths belonging to SC/ST category who were provided Bank loans during the last three years, State-wise and Bank-wise?

Representations against service tax

2829. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations from various sections of industry/society regarding imposition of service tax, if so, the details in this regard;

(b) whether it is also a fact that service tax is largely considered as tax on the inefficiency etc., of services rendered;

(c) whether Government propose to review the levy of service tax; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Fake PAN cards

2830. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Police Crime Branch has recently arrested a paan seller for allegedly making and selling fake Permanent Account Number (PAN) cards by tampering with the data;

(b) whether a gang of cyber manipulations producing and dealing in fake PAN cards has been busted; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and its *modus operandi*?

Non-implementation of VAT

2831. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some States have decided not to implement VAT with effect from 1st April, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it would not give rise to confusion for transactions between VAT and non-VAT States; and

(d) how the interest of Government and consumers will be protected in such a situation?

Shortfall in revenue collection

2832. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only Rs. 80,000 crore worth of revenue has been collected in the last three quarters of 2004-2005, which is almost 40 percent short of the target of Rs. 1,39,000 crore for the full year;

(b) if so, how the targeted amount of Rs. 1,39,000 crore is to be collected;

(c) whether the uniform percentage of about 25 per cent of the targeted amount was collected in the first and second quarter or there was sudden fall in the third quarter; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take so that the targeted amount of Rs. 1,39,000 crores is collected fully?

Utilisation of deposits of RRB's

†2833. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total deposit amount in the Regional Rural Banks as on 31st March, 2004 and details of deposit amounts of all the 196 Regional Rural Banks;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) the details of loans given by the Regional Rural Banks out of the deposit amounts and where and how the balance amounts are used; and

(c) the amounts of money deposited in Regional Rural Banks during the last three years, and how much money out of that remained with their governing banks and how that was utilised?

Seizure of button cells

2834. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Customs, Excise and Income Tax authorities in Mumbai are examining the seizure of button cells imported by M/s. Shimmu Machine Tool Equipment Ltd., Mumbai;

(b) if so, the complete details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that offices of the above company and its associate companies were raided and Government have found incriminating documents; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken for filing of criminal cases against the above firms under IPC?

Refusal of claims of interest of Himachal Grameen Bank

2835. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the claim of interest worth Rs. 28,20,550/- on SLR deposits of Himachal Grameen Bank with Punjab National Bank, Mandi Branch (Himachal Pradesh) pointed out by authorized Chartered Accountant/Auditor has been dropped by the Board of Directors of the Bank;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the action of the Board of Himachal Grameen Bank having three senior officers of Punjab National Bank was taken under influence; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Reserve Bank of India and Government to safeguard the interest of the Himachal Grameen Bank?

Rate of interest on GPF contribution

2836. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the rate of interest on GPF contribution for the last three financial years;

(b) whether the rate of interest on both the EPF and GPF subscriptions has been the same since inception;

(c) whether the previous Government had created two different rates of interest on EPF and GPF for the employees;

(d) what steps are being taken by his Ministry to rectify the situation and bring the rate of interest on GPF and EPF at par for the last three financial years and maintain a single policy on this score; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Merger of banks

†2837. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the banks in the Public Sector are being merged to transform them into a bigger size;

(b) if so, what will be the consequences thereof; and

(c) what will be the role of Foreign Direct Investment in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Licence to open branches of foreign banks

2838. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to give permission to new foreign banks to open branches in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how many such foreign banks have shown interest to open branches in the country; and

(d) what are the guidelines for giving such permissions?

Kisan Credit Cards

2839. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs);

(b) the number of Kisan Credit Cards issued to farmers of Tamil Nadu, district-wise;

(c) whether any target is fixed for the issue of KCCs during 2005 to the farmers of Tamil Nadu;

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

(e) the percentage of farmers of the State covered by the scheme so far;

(f) whether Government considers the coverage of the scheme as satisfactory; and

(g) if so, the justification therefor and if not, the steps proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

Loan burden of States

2840. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the loan burden on various States of the country is increasing enormously;

(b) if so, the details thereof including external and internal debts as on December, 2004; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to reduce burden of loan on States?

Amendment of VAT System

†2841. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are bent upon implementing 'VAT' without full consent of State Governments;

(b) whether it is also a fact that traders from all over the country are agitating on being suspicious of VAT;

(c) if so, the reasons for adopting adamant attitude instead of finding peaceful solution of this matter by Government; and

(d) whether Government is considering to amend the present form of 'VAT' in view of country-wide protest?;

Withdrawal of money through fake cheques in Banks

†2842. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) number of cases of withdrawal of money through fake cheques, demand drafts during the last three years and details of

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

such Nationalised Banks situated in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh where such cases have taken place;

(b) the details of amount of loss suffered by each Bank, Bank-wise;

(c) number of Bank officers and employees found involved in this regard; and

(d) the details of their names Bank-wise and action taken against them?

Review of disinvestment policy

2843. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in October, 2004, Government had informed the Supreme Court that it was reviewing the disinvestment policy pursued by the NDA regime; and

(b) if so, whether the present decision of disinvesting shares of BHEL is in conformity with the submissions?

Agricultural loans in Tamil Nadu

2844. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of agricultural loans being provided by the various Nationalised Banks in Tamil Nadu during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to introduce new schemes to increase the amount of agricultural loan to the poor sections of the society?

Merger of private banks with Nationalised Banks

2845. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal is before Government to merge many small private banks with Nationalised Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Guidelines for FII investment in stocks and shares

2846. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the guidelines and regulations in respect of FII investment in stocks and shares in the country;

(b) whether Government are considering to impose a tax on FIIs to curb volatility in the stocks market and whether FIIs would be screened to ensure quality of their inflows; and

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

Corruption in Revenue Department

2847. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the officials of Revenue Department in the metros are more corrupt than any other departments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of officials booked by the anti-corruption bureau in 2004 in the country especially in metros; and

(d) what action has been taken against them?

**Loans sanctioned by NABARD in
North Eastern States**

2848. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount sanctioned by NABARD under various schemes and programmes in the NER during the last three years and the total number of development projects undertaken from this amount; and

(b) the number of projects for which the financial assistance has been sought by the States of NER during the year 2004-05?

**Income tax to Gujarat Port
Authorities**

2849. DR. A.K. PATEL:
SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what purposes are served by applying the Income Tax to the minor ports of Gujarat;

(b) whether the Central Government have given any thought on adverse financial implications on the applicability of the Income Tax to Gujarat Port Authorities;

(c) how much revenue is expected to be targeted from Gujarat Port Authorities;

(d) whether the tax so collected will be utilized for development of vital port infrastructure particularly for Gujarat Minor Ports; and

(e) whether the Central Government are considering granting total exemption from Income Tax to the State Maritime Board at Gujarat?

**Non payment of loans by
industrialists**

2850. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the top industrialists of India have become defaulters to the banking industry and not paying dues outstanding against their names;

(b) whether the banking industry is facing huge loss on account of non payment of loans taken by the top ten industrialists; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

**Merger of SBI with its associate
banks**

†2851. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Bank of India is being merged with its seven associate banks;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) by when this merger would come into effect?

Circulation of old notes

†2852. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various banks of the country give very old notes to their customers which are difficult to be circulated in the market;

(b) if so, whether Government would get the date of issue printed on the notes which would be issued by the Reserve Bank in future;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether Government would instruct the banks not to issue ten year old notes in future;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) if not, the reasons therefor?

Income tax assessees

2853. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there are only about three crore tax assessees in the country;
- (b) which are the major areas where tax evasion is taking place;
- (c) what measures Government are contemplating to take to reduce evasion and improve the tax base from three assessees; and
- (d) how many persons are there who are filing income-tax returns but do not come under the taxable income category?

Criteria of receiving funds under Backward States Grant Fund

2854. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) what are the criteria for receiving funds under the Backward States Grant Fund;
- (b) how much money is estimated to be released under this fund during 2005-06; and
- (c) the details of the States that have

approached Central Government for receiving funds under this scheme?

Capital investment in Textile sector

2855. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that he has made a statement that the Textile sector needs Rs. 2,700 crore capital investment to enable it to take on the evolving market opportunities under the seamless global textile trade;
- (b) if so, what is the action plan of Government to help the Textiles industry to improve their economy;
- (c) whether Government propose to give more fiscal incentives to textile cluster based captive power units to bring down their cost of power; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Utilisation of education cess

2856. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the huge education cess which is steadily flowing into Government coffers is being used less for educating or feeding children and more for providing fiscal comfort to the Centre;
- (b) whether it is fact that Government will be collecting Rs. 5,010 crore in 2004-2005 by way of 2 pre cent education cess but its expenditure on education is expected to go up only by Rs. 2,000 crore;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) steps Government propose to take to utilize the collected education cess properly?

Postponement of VAT System

2857. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various Federations and Chambers throughout the country observed a bandh against the implementation of Value Added Tax on 30th March, 2005;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to postpone the implementation of VAT;

(c) whether it is also a fact that many traders' organisations alleged the implementation of VAT was against the trading community; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to redress their grievances in this regard?

Recommendation of Expert Committee for small investors

2858. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have accepted the recommendation of the Expert Committee headed by SEBI Chairman G.N. Bajpai to link the rate of interest for small investors to inflation;

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government thereon; and

(c) how small savings during the year 2005-06 are likely to be affected thereby?

Penalty on banks disbursing less loans

†2859. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under

consideration of Government to impose penalty on the banks disbursing loans below the prescribed targets;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

Strike against merger of banks

†2860. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Public Sector Banks were on country-wide strike to protest against merger of banks and foreign investment;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

Study on functioning of RRBs

2861. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made a study on the functioning of RRBs;

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

(c) the steps Government propose to take to make the RRB's function effectively in rural sector;

(d) whether the Public Sector Banks would iron out their differences and reduce the number of RRBs to function under one Public Sector Bank in a region; and

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Duplication of credit cards

2862. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crime syndicates are duplicating credit cards of unsuspecting customers by using illegal technological means; and

(b) if so, what measures have been taken by the enforcement agencies to check this crime?

World Bank Structural Adjustment Loan facility for Punjab

2863. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Punjab has applied for World Bank Structural Adjustment Loan (SAL) facility of about 800 million dollars to enable to accelerate its development programmes;

(b) if so, when was the request received;

(c) whether the request has since been considered, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons for delay;

(d) the present status of the request; and

(e) by when a final decision is likely to be taken?

Agricultural loans to farmers in Punjab

2864. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of branches of the Nationalised Banks/Co-operative Banks in

Punjab which are providing agricultural loans to farmers;

(b) the amount of credit provided to farmers through Kisan Credit Cards and direct help to farmers especially in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab during the last two years, year-wise;

(c) the number of applications pending in Hoshiarpur district;

(d) whether Government propose to simplify the procedure for providing loans to farmers;

(e) whether it has come to the notice of Government that different banks are charging different rate of interest on loan; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Increase in the share of small investors in disinvestment of PSUs

2865. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to increase the share of small investors in the disinvestment of public sector companies; and

(b) if so, the names of the public sector companies likely to be offered for disinvestment during 2005-06 and the share thereof proposed to be offered to small investors?

Disclosure of income by companies

†2866. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of National and Multi-National Companies in the country which do not disclose the income of higher than one crore rupees; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

Involvement of MNCs in Customs cases

†2867. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Multinational Companies in the country have been found guilty in customs related matter; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

Amount deposited in Consolidated Fund

†2868. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount deposited in the Consolidated Fund in the country at present;

(b) whether Government have set any target regarding Consolidated Fund;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the schemes for which this Consolidated Fund is utilised?

Board for Regulation and Supervision

2869. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the R.B.I. has constituted a Board for Regulation and Supervision;

(b) if so, what is the purpose of this board;

(c) whether a system for settlements already exists;

(d) to what extent is RBI centralising most of its activities;

(e) whether National Payment Council will be abolished now; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Flow of Hawala money in Kerala

2870. SHRI N.K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Kerala had sought intervention to conduct any investigation to the flow of Hawala money to Kerala through the banks and other external routes;

(b) if so, whether the investigation has been completed and if so, what are the details of such investigation;

(c) whether any persons of financial institutions or firms have been held responsible for such illegal transactions and malpractices and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Hawala money was found to have been used in Kerala for any anti-national activities and if so, the details thereof?

Tax treaties with other countries

2871. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has recently initiated talks with Japan for a tax treaty;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there are other countries as potential candidates for such bilateral tax treaties and whether Government propose to discuss possibilities of tax treaties with those countries; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the details of such interactions and the scope of such treaties?

Relaxation of ECB norms

2872. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are seriously considering to relax External Commercial borrowing norms to enable the Indian corporates access to higher foreign capital at low-cost;

(b) what are the restrictions that the present ECB norms put on the Indian Corporates to raise borrowing from overseas;

(c) whether any time-frame has been fixed by which these restrictions are going to be relaxed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Increase in LIC's equity

2873. SHRI MURLI DEORA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are allowing Life Insurance Corporation to increase its exposure to equity from 7 per cent to 10 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof and from which date;

(c) whether banks and pension funds will also be asked to invest in equity and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether professional fund managers will be allowed to manage LIC's equity portfolio without any interference/direction from Government; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Investments by banks for development of industries

2874. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of investments made in the different States of the country by the nationalised banks and financial institutions for the promotion and development of industries during the last three years, State-wise/district-wise/year-wise/bank-wise;

(b) whether Government have formulated any specific Action plan to liberalise the terms and conditions for grant of loan by the banks for setting up of various industries including SSI units in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Entitlement of free local calls for officers

2875. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that since 1982, officers eligible for residential telephones are entitled to 650 free local calls on bi-monthly basis; and

(b) whether Government propose to review the matter and raise the limit of 650 calls?

Training to representatives of Panchayats

†2876. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes being run by Central Government to create awareness

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

among the representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions and members of the standing committees of Gram Sabha;

(b) the ratio of the share of Central Government and the State Governments in the amount provided, if any, by Central Government for imparting training to the representatives of Panchayats; and

(c) whether Central Government are contemplating to enhance its own share?

Working of Panchayats in Bihar

2877. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the modus operandi of implementation of panchayati raj in Bihar;

(b) the mechanism to ensure that the panchayats deliver goods;

(c) the mechanism to ensure accountability of panchayats; and

(d) the difficulties being encountered in implementation of panchayati raj in Bihar?

Two child legal norm for Sarpanches/ Panches

†2878. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the States of the country who have more than two children where such laws are in force which provide for removal of Sarpanch, up-Sarpanch and Panches from their posts in gram panchayat;

(b) the details of the persons who have been removed from their posts under this law during the last three years;

(c) whether this provision has also been applied on the officials of Block (district

Panchayat) and district panchayats constituted under the three tier system of panchayats;

(d) if so, the State-wise number of the officials so removed; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Improvement of Governance in PRIs

2879. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Advisory Council is shifting its attention to finance and administrative empowerment to PRIs in the country;

(b) whether the National Advisory Council has submitted any paper in this regard; and

(c) what effective measures his Ministry is taking to improve governance and efficient delivery system in PRIs?

Utilisation of funds by States under the Panchayati Raj system

†2880. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated/released and utilized under the Panchayati Raj system by the States/Union Territories State-wise, head-wise and district-wise by the State of Chhattisgarh during the year 2003-04 and 2004-05 till date;

(b) whether the funds have been fully utilized in the States particularly in every district of Chhattisgarh;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Training to the representatives of Panchayati Raj

†2881. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:
Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ
be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have received any proposal from Madhya Pradesh for imparting training to the representatives of Panchayati Raj and Gram Swaraj;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the proposal of the State would get the approval of the Centre?

Tapping of new sources of oil

2882. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a fresh strategy has been drawn to explore the possibility of tapping new sources of oil available in different regions of the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof and their present status;

(c) whether the economics of contracting oil supplies from Venezuela has been studied; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, including the prospects/feasibility of trading in such oil with other countries in the adjoining regions and to exchange/buy other goods, equipments etc. from those countries or elsewhere, which supplement the country's needs?

Export of petroleum products

†2883. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the export of petroleum products during the first 11 months of 2004-2005 has shown 24.8 per cent increase as compared to the first 11 months of the last year;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) the details of the petroleum products which have been exported alongwith the quantity thereof; and

(d) the average sale price rate determined with respect to each product?

Foreign investment in oil sector

†2884. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that several countries in the world have offered for capital investment in Oil sector in India;

(b) if so, the names of these countries and the content of the offers made by each country; and

(c) the decision Government have taken so far with regard to these offers?

Import of crude oil at lower prices

†2885. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

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

(a) whether it is the fact that in view of the increasing prices of crude oil in the international market and this

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

becoming a regular feature, it is the foremost need that the country gets crude oil at lower prices;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government have made efforts for making contacts with other countries in the world to get cheaper crude oil;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether it is a fact that private companies in the country have also taken initiative in this regard?

Dismal crude oil production

†2886. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that inspite of abundance of crude oil reserves in the country for the last several years, no specific increase is being effected in its production;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard and the reasons for not raising the production; and

(c) the quantity of crude oil produced in the country during the years 2002-2003, 2003-2004 and 2004-2005?

Investments in Russian energy sector

2887. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

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

(a) whether Russian Government has approved the modalities for the merger between the State-owned oil company and the natural gas monopoly, Gazprom, which would remove hurdles on the way to Indian investment in the Russian energy sector;

(b) whether any final decision between India and Russia has been reached; and

(c) if so, the details of the agreement reached and by when, it is likely to be implemented?

ONGC's projects in Russia

2888. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

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

(a) whether ONGC has agreed with Russia to undertake explorations and exploitations in respect of 11 oil and gas projects in that country including Yuganskneftgas former Yukos core asset;

(b) if so, the details of the basket of discovered fields and producing property in question; and

(c) the terms of the agreement and the benefits that are likely to accrue to India thereby?

US's assistance in energy sector

2889. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:

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

(a) whether US has offered its help to India to meet the energy requirements in the next decade through new and sophisticated technologies in this field; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereon? steps taken and being taken in this regard?

Production of crude oil

†2890. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:

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

(a) the total annual production of crude oil in tonnes in the country at present;

(b) the total import of oil in tonnes;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to increase crude oil production in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Production of natural gas

2891. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:

SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

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

(a) the amount of natural gas produced from different sources in the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Assam and other States during the last three years;

(b) the amount and rate of royalty paid to each State; and

(c) whether in the light of the recent judgment of the Supreme Court any enactment or regulatory model is contemplated to enable the States to have their own policy for exploitation of their petroleum and gas resources and if so, the

Removal of LPG from VAT

2892. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the All India LPG Distributors Federation has threatened that if LPG was not spared from the imposition of VAT, they would stop supply of LPG throughout the country with effect from the 15th of April, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto and the steps taken by his Ministry to take up the matter with the Ministry of Finance?

Production of petrol from vegetations

2893. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of the fact that a kind of vegetation is grown in the State of Uttaranchal which can be used in producing petrol and petroleum products;

(b) if so, whether a proposal for introduction of a plan in co-operation with State Government for encouraging the commercial production of such vegetation with financial help from ONGC will be considered by him; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ONGC's projects in Sudan

2894. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC is

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

laying a 741-Km long petroleum product pipeline in Sudan and will also build a 1.2 billion dollar oil refinery in Sudan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of Indian professionals who will get an opportunity?

Counterfeit gas cylinders

2895. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that adulterated and counterfeit gas cylinders are pushed into market which are serious threat to people;

(b) if so, the number of accidents and deaths which occurred due to such cylinders; and

(c) whether Government have taken any firm action to prevent it and to chastise the culprits?

Measures to check circulation of expired LPG cylinders

†2896. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many old and expired LPG gas cylinders are in circulation in the market which is totally in contravention of the explosives Act;

(b) whether there is more possibility of accidents by expired and rusted gas cylinders; and

(c) the details of measures taken by Government to check the circulation of old and expired gas cylinders of various companies ?

Long term oil supply contracts

2897. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering long term oil supply contract with oil producing countries as against their present contract tenure of three months to one year;

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

(c) whether such long term contracts will be a factor in a provision for India to export oil to the third countries; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard, along with the details of the third countries identified for exporting the oil and the revenue likely to be generated by such export?

Gas find in Krishna-Godavari basin

2898. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact ONGC has found gas in the Krishna-Godavari basin off the Andhra Coast; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and how much gas is estimated?

Energy cooperation agreement with Venezuela

2899. SHRIMATI. N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Venezuela, a member of OPEC and India are going to sign an energy co-operation agreement for joint production of oil and supply of petroleum on long term basis; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tie up with Saudi Arabia in oil/gas sector

2900. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to tie-up with Saudi Arabia for investment in Indian refineries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the two Governments have agreed to further explore possibilities in the field of gas fields; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Action against petrol pump owners for adulteration

†2901. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of cases registered during the last one year in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh involving adulteration of petrol and underweighing;

(b) the action taken against the owners found guilty; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Supply of Euro-III grade petrol/diesel

2902. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of States in which Ultra-low sulphur diesel is supplied at present;

(b) the details of cities in which Euro-III grade petrol is supplied at present;

(c) the details of cities in which Euro-III grade diesel is supplied at present;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to postpone the supply of Euro-II diesel in 7 States till next year; and

(e) if so, the reasons behind this postponement?

Gas reserves in Assam

2903. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether two new gas fields have recently been discovered in Assam;

(b) if so, the quantum of gas reserves expected in each field; and

(c) by when, commercial exploration of gas from these fields is expected to start?

Overseas oil acquisitions

2904. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to invest 25 billion dollars for overseas oil acquisitions;

(b) whether Government have identified the countries for investing in the oil sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

National policy on bio-fuel

†2905. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to frame a national policy on bio-fuel;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) by when, this national policy would be framed; and
- (d) the main purposes of this policy?

Road map for self-sufficiency in oil sector

2906. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any road map has been prepared to make the country self-sufficient in oil sector in the near future;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Import of crude from Saudi Arabia on long term basis

2907. SHRI MURLIDEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Western countries are normally importing crude from Saudi Arabia at lower price than the prices paid by Asian countries;
- (b) whether India is proposing to have an option to choose the benchmark at which it would import the crude by entering into long term oil contracts;
- (c) if so, the response of Saudi Arabian Government to the proposal; and
- (d) the financial benefit to be accorded to Indian oil economy by this price stability and supply security formula?

Unfair trade practices of RIL

2908. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether M/s IOCL in November, 2004 complained to Government regarding unfair trade practice followed by M/s RIL for marketing of diesel transported from Jamnagar refinery for sale in their retail outlets in Nagpur area in Maharashtra;

- (b) if so, the details of the complaint; and
- (c) the action taken by Government so far?

Taj Mahotsava

2909. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a Taj Mahotsava was organised recently to celebrate 350 years of Taj; and
- (b) if so, the salient features of the celebrations and the total number of foreign and Indian tourists who attended the celebrations?

Plans to boost tourism

2910. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have formulated plans to give a boost to tourism sector in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of proposals received from various States for development of tourism in respective States/UTs and by when these are likely to be cleared?

Road connectivity to places of cultural heritage

†2911. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

places of cultural heritage of world level in the country which are still not connected with road and Government are considering to link these places of cultural heritage with road very soon;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made with regard to the action taken/to be taken?

Public- private participation in tourism

2912. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to encourage public-private participation in tourism;

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

(c) whether Government propose to introduce "visa-on-arrival" and "inner-line border permits" to boost tourism; and

(d) if so, the details of the action plan?

Rationalisation of tax structure on hotels from tourism point of view

†2913. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have suggested to the States to make the taxes to be imposed on hotels rational with a view to provide facilities to the tourists;

(b) if so, the States which were given such suggestions together with the dates and the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the concerned States on the suggestions of the Central Government?

Promotion of rural tourism

2914. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned funds to Tamil Nadu to develop rural tourism during the last three years taking into account the fact that a number of historical temples are located in the villages of Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to develop village tourism in the country?

Promotion of tourism in A.P.

2915. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the integrated tourist circuits and destinations identified by the Central Government in consultation with Andhra Pradesh Government during the last three years and till date;

(b) the funds sanctioned for each tourist circuit in Andhra Pradesh and utilization thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to promote tourism in Andhra Pradesh?

Development of tourist places in Rajasthan

†2916. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have prepared any outline for the development of various tourist places in Rajasthan;

(b) whether Government have also plans to develop new tourist places alongwith old ones in the State;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the names of districts in Rajasthan in respect of which the proposals from the State Government have been received by the Central Government for the development of various tourist spots there alongwith the names of the tourist spots out of them for which Government have formulated plan for development, and

(d) the details of the target laid down by Government to complete the above plans?

Promotion of Port Blair as tourist destination

2917. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a request has been made to the Government to launch campaign to promote Port Blair tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the action plan of the Central Government to help the islands to re-construct their damaged economy?

Promotion of tourism in Punjab

2918. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have plans to promote Wagah Border and Punjab as the new tourist destinations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Identification of new places of tourist interest

2919. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether some fresh initiatives have been taken to identify new places of tourist interest in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and their present status;

(c) whether any proposal has been formulated to develop and/or upgrade the 'Dandi March' route from Dandi Pul, where the historic 'March' began 75 years ago right upto Dandi in South Gujarat, which does not have even a memorial enroute to commemorate the non-violent protest event, which shook the British Empire; and

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

Projects of Madhya Pradesh under Circuit Development Plan

†2920. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether several projects of Madhya Pradesh under Circuit Development Plan are pending for the approval of Central Government;

(b) if so, the latest position thereof, project-wise; and

(c) by when, these projects are likely to get approval of Government?

Promotion of rural tourism

2921. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated/propose to formulate a policy for promoting "Rural Tourism" in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Promotion of bio-tourism

2922. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to popularise bio-tourism;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

(c) whether Government have surveyed important places of Karnataka including Madikeri of Coorg District, Mysore, and other places to improve them as bio-tourism destinations?

Promotion of indigenous products at ITDC duty free shops

2923. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government will insist that ITDC duty free shops carry only Indian tea, coffee and cigarettes;

(b) whether any study has been done by Government on ensuring how best to promote Indian goods and avoid foreign goods like tea, coffee and cigarettes; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure that Indian goods are given a boost at the duty free shops of ITDC?

Clearance of projects from Orissa

2924. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Orissa has suffered regularly from natural calamities;

(b) whether the State has sent a proposal to the Central Government for construction of dams on the branch rivers of Mahanadi and there is also an imperative need for strengthening the embankments along the river for which a proposal has already been submitted to CWC;

(c) if so, what is the status of these proposals; and

(d) the time-frame within which these would be approved and funds allocated to the State for execution of the above projects?

National Project for restoration of water bodies

2925. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the National Project which has recently been launched for the repair, renovation and restoration of water bodies;

(b) whether this project is proposed to be implemented in any districts of Tamil Nadu; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the funds allocated therefor, district-wise?

World Bank conditions for irrigation projects

2926. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank has imposed certain conditions before financing irrigation projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereon;

(d) the details of the irrigation projects pending for want of money;

(e) whether it is also a fact that 22.5 per cent Central Budget was allotted for irrigation projects during the first Five Year Plan but only 6.5 per cent has been reserved during the current Five Year Plan, and if so, the reasons for decreasing the allocation; and

(f) the measures taken by Government to provide water to maximum irrigated area?

Action Plan for scientific water management of Brahmaputra river

2927. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any National Action Plan for scientific water management survey of Brahmaputra river with the help of World Bank;

(b) if so, the present status of the Action Plan; and

(c) the details of effective measures taken or proposed to be taken for implementation of the said plan?

Appearance of water in dried-up wells

2928. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that water has recently appeared in long dried-up wells and areas of wasteland in far flung pockets of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof including the names of areas where this miracle has happened; and

(c) whether this water is potable and fit for irrigation?

Management of irrigation and drinking water

2929. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are working on a better management of irrigation and drinking water; and

(b) if so, the modalities worked out in this regard and the steps taken thereon?

Funding of major irrigation projects

2930. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry and the Planning Commission have requested Government to fund some of the selected major irrigation projects in the country to ensure speedy completion;

(b) the details of major irrigation projects in the country, State-wise; and

(c) the details of major irrigation projects pending over the last 10 years in various parts of the country?

Rain water harvesting

2931. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several Civil Society Organizations Environmentalist and Non-Governmental Organisations working in the Water Sector had agitation on World Water Day for clean water, quality water, better water supply and community rights over water; and

(b) whether Government are taking steps for rainwater harvesting in view of the water scarcity in the country?

Regulation of ground water

2932. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have formulated or propose to formulate a comprehensive policy for regulation and management of ground water in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Construction of dams

2933. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of approvals and financial assistance for construction of major and minor dams;
- (b) whether any of those dams are located in Tamil Nadu;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Progress of irrigation projects

2934. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of major and medium irrigation projects of the country particularly in Uttar Pradesh formulated and implemented during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the present status of the above projects, State-wise;

(c) whether some projects related to the various States are pending with the Central Government for clearance; and

(d) if so, by when these are likely to be cleared?

Construction of dams in Karnataka

2935. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has received a proposal from the State Government of Karnataka for construction of vented dams across west flowing rivers and streams in Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada, and Udupi District in Karnataka; and

(b) if so, what are the measures taken to approve the project?

NEW DELHI;
The 13th April, 2005
Chaitra 23, 1927 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

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