

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the July 20, 2004/Asadha 29, 1926 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions—88

Feeder airline in West Bengal

696. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has received any proposal from the Government of West Bengal for establishing a feeder airline within the State; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to be taken in this regard along with the present position of the case?

Advance Passenger Information System

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Civil Aviation has sent a note to the Cabinet for its approval for introduction of Advance Passenger Information System which helps the immigration officials to get information about the passengers well before the aircraft reaches its destination;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry of Civil Aviation proposes to do away with baggage X-Ray of incoming passengers; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

Revamping of Alliance Air's fleet

698. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines has taken a decision to go in for dry leasing of A-319 aircrafts to revamp the fleet of its wholly-owned subsidiary-Alliance Air;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the salient features of A-319 aircrafts; and

(c) the terms and conditions of the agreement to be signed in this regard?

Investigation in helicopter crashes

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

(a) whether it is a fact that serious lapses of omission by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) were traced in the investigation conducted in the helicopter crashes in Jammu and Kashmir and off the Mumbai coast last year; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken against DGCA to check recurrence of such incidents in future?

CAT-3 Landing System at IGI Airport

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

(a) whether the CAT-3 Landing System has been made fully operational at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the delay in takeoffs and landings during winter season; and

(c) the number of Air India flights cancelled or diverted out of Delhi during December-January, 2003 and the additional costs incurred by Air India as a result thereof?

Revival of Rupsee Aerodrome in Assam

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

(a) whether Government have any plan to revive the Rupsee Aerodrome of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Overstaffing in Indian Airlines

702. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to buy new Aircrafts for Indian Airlines and Air India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the number of ground staff for aircrafts in Indian Airlines is much higher than that of private Airlines;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government have any proposal to reduce the strength of staff in the Government-managed airlines?

New International Airport in Navi Mumbai

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

(a) whether a project proposal for development of an International Airport at Navi Mumbai through public-private participation was submitted by the State Government of Maharashtra;

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

(c) the steps since taken thereon?

Restructuring of Delhi and Mumbai airports

704. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 29 given in the Rajya Sabha on 6th July, 2004 and state the details of the overseas and Indian companies that have evinced interest in the restructuring of Delhi and Mumbai airports?

Loss incurring airports

†705. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of airports in the country are incurring losses;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the measures taken by Government to meet the losses?

Aviation agreements with South-East Asian countries

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

(a) the details of bilateral agreements signed between India and South-East Asian countries including Singapore and Thailand in the field of aviation;

(b) the number of flights the two sides have agreed to fly on various sectors;

(c) whether it is a fact that many foreign airlines from South-East Asian countries have shown interest to cover various destinations in India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Penalty provisions in Companies Act

707. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Department of Company Affairs has asked the Committee examining existing penalty and compounding provisions in the Companies Act to fine-tune a proposal to grade violations under the Act;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has already submitted its recommendations; and

(c) to what extent Government have decided to simplify the Companies Act and by when the legislation in this regard is likely to be introduced?

Revamping of Companies Act

708. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI ROBERT KHARSHIING:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revamp the Companies Act;

(b) whether the proposal will be comprehensive and provide for deletion of several provisions which are no longer relevant;

(c) whether the details of the proposal will be shared with the industry associations and the public; and

(d) whether any time frame has been drawn up for the purpose?

Aid to Tripura

709. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount earmarked for Tripura for allotment during the Tenth Five Year Plan for both plan and non-plan expenditure;

(b) the amount released for Tripura upto 31st March, 2004;

(c) the status of the Tripura State's share of the Centre taxes upto 31st March, 2004; and

(d) by when the backlog in allotment as well as release of funds will be made clear?

GDP growth rate

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

(a) whether the country recorded 8.2 per cent growth in the year ending on 31st March, 2004;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the performance of the various sectors which contributed to this impressive growth rate; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to keep the growth momentum in the coming years?

Interest rate on farmers' loans

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

(a) whether the State Government of Maharashtra and Governments of other drought-hit States have approached the Central Government to secure Central intervention to have the interest due from farmers waived or to have the loans and interest due thereon clubbed and turned into long-term loans with period of moratorium to help out the drought-hit farmers;

(b) if so, the details of such requests made by the different State Governments; and

(c) Government's reaction and response thereto (including that of the NABARD and the RBI)?

Intervention of RBI in bond market

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the RBI has intervened to stop the relentless fall in bond prices in June, 2004;

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

(c) to what extent RBI would intervene in the bond market;

(d) whether it is healthy in the long run for the RBI to intervene sporadically and without any long-term commitment to the market; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Re-financing of farmers' loan

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

(a) whether Reserve Bank of India has devised a scheme to allow commercial banks to re-finance the loans taken from money-lenders by farmers all over the country;

(b) what are the details thereof;

(c) whether banks have finalized any terms for re-financing the private money-lenders' loans;

(d) to what extent banks have implemented this scheme; and

(e) the details of the implementation of this scheme in the various States?

Norms on NRI deposits

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank of India has revised the norms on NRI deposits by disallowing entities other than authorized dealers and banks from accepting deposits from NRIs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the banks and other financial institutions would be allowed to accept deposits from the NRIs by debiting to their non-residential external and foreign

currency non-resident accounts; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Foreign exchange reserves

715. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that enormous
rise in the foreign exchange reserves is going
to create problems in future;

(b) whether it is also a fact that according
to the National Commission of Applied
Research, with increase in foreign reserves,
there is every possibility of inflation going
up and thereby creating other problems in
the country; and

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

Black money

716. 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 introducing a new
scheme to unearth black money;

(b) if so, whether it is on the lines of the
earlier schemes;

(c) if not, the details of the new scheme;
and

(d) the details of the target proposed to
be achieved through this new scheme?

NPA norms for agricultural finance

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank
of India has refixed NPA norms for
agricultural finance;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the
Monetary and Credit Policy statement for
2004-05 asked the banks to waive off the
security requirements of agricultural loans
up to Rs. 50,000; and

(c) if so, in what manner it would help
agriculturists to improve their productivity
and get better results?

Revival of pension facilities

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

(a) whether Government have examined
the question of revival of pension facilities
of Government employees after 1st June,
2004; and

(b) if so, the decision since taken in the
matter?

Ban on External Commercial Borrowing

719. SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have imposed
a complete ban on External Commercial
Borrowing (ECB) by Indian companies;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Ministry of Finance has
undertaken a review on the issue of ECB;
and

(d) if so, whether Government propose

to lift the ban on ECB to help the corporate sector in getting cheap funds from abroad?

Disinvestment target

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

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had fixed an ambitious target of Rs.16000 crore from disinvestment proceeds during 2004-05;

(b) if so, what was the target set for 2003-04 and to what extent it was achieved;

(c) whether Government was forced to halt disinvestment programme, specially through strategic sale in 2003, due to Supreme Court verdict on sale of HPCL and BPCL; and

(d) if so, the new changes being made in disinvestment policy in 2004?

Profits of banks

†721. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of profits made by public sector banks;

(b) the details of profits made by banks in private sector;

(c) whether Government are taking appropriate steps to increase the profits of public sector banks which have lesser profits in comparison to that of private sector banks; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Budgetary support for social sector

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

(a) whether it is a fact that many States have requested to consider gross budgetary support in the Central Budget for the success of several social sector schemes in their States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

Improvement in the functioning of RRBs

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the 196 Regional Rural Banks are to be merged into one big entity;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a commercial financial institution will emerge from this merger;

(c) if so, what are the objectives of this proposal; and

(d) to what extent this will improve the functioning of the regional banking network?

Chelapati Rao Committee on RRBs

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

(a) whether Government had appointed the Chelapati Rao Committee to study various aspects of rural finance and the role of Regional Rural Banks;

(b) if so, when did the Committee submit its report; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to implement this report?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Closure of Banks in A.P.

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

(a) whether it is a fact that RBI has given permission to commercial banks to close a number of branches in Andhra Pradesh in 2002-03 and 2003-04;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that RBI encouraged banks to curtail their operations in rural areas; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

Government's holding in Banks

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

(a) whether Government propose to bring down their holding in Public Sector Banks and Financial Institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when a Bill in this regard would be introduced?

Sovereign Bond for agriculture

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

(a) whether Government are considering to float Sovereign Bond to raise funds for strengthening agriculture sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Pulling out of FIIs

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of

FIIs are pulling out their investments in India;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard along with figures for the last three years; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the factors influencing FIIs exit are the rising inflation and the falling value of Indian Rupee against dollar?

Customs duty on petroleum products

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to reduce customs duty on diesel, kerosene and cooking gas to shield domestic prices from the heat of flaring global crude prices; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Smuggling activities in the country

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

(a) whether Government are aware that Malboro, Bensen and Hedges and 555 cigarettes are being smuggled into the country in the name of "Lal-Chawal", and

(b) if so, what are the details of such cases during 2003-04?

Tax on fixed deposits of NRIs

†731. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 29 given in the Rajya Sabha on 6th July, 2004 and state:

(a) whether Government have studied the recommendation of Reserve Bank of

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

India regarding taxing of fixed deposits of migrant Indians; and

(b) if so, the decisions taken thereon?

Disinvestment policy

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

(a) whether Government have formulated new disinvestment policy recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and its basic difference from the one pursued by the previous Government;

(c) the major public sector undertakings which were selected earlier for disinvestment but have since made a turn around; and

(d) the estimated generation of resources as a result of disinvestment in the next three years and how they are proposed to be spent?

Education Cess

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

(a) whether it is proposed to levy a 2 per cent education cess on the Central taxes for financing part of the educational expenses;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that money collected by the cess does not get amalgamated into the Consolidated Fund of India and be spent on general expenses of the country instead of being spent for the educational purposes?

NPAs of Punjab and Sind Bank

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

(a) whether it is a fact that gross Non-Performing Assets of Punjab & Sind Bank have increased in the last fiscal year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a large number of cases are not settled as compared to other Banks, whose NPAs have declined due to early settlements; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to immediately settle the cases of those who are willing to pay as per Bank or RBI's guidelines?

Income tax refunds

735. DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the status of IT refund for the assessment year 2003-04;

(b) whether there has been considerable delay in the despatch of IT refunds compared to earlier years;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether any target has been fixed for despatch of all refunds?

Increase in rate of interest

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

(a) whether there is any proposal to encourage small savings and increase the rate of interest for the senior citizens;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

NRI status to students studying abroad

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank of India has any plan to give NRI status to students studying abroad; and

(b) if so, whether students are entitled to get all the facilities that an ordinary NRI entitled to get under FEMA?

Corruption cases against SEBI officers

738. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any enquiry in corruption cases pending against the officers of SEBI; and

(b) what are the details in this regard and the action taken by Government?

Debt Recovery Tribunal at Madurai

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

(a) whether a Debt Recovery Tribunal bench is proposed to be set-up at Madurai to deal with cases arising out of southern districts in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Foreign investment in Nagaland

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

(a) whether foreign companies have been invited by the Central Government to

make investment in power, tele-communications, surface transport, tourism, banks etc. in the State of Nagaland;

(b) if so, the details thereof and foreign investors' response thereto, so far; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government to make more investment in the State under the liberalization policy?

Study on borrowers

741. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study is done on borrowers who are unable to repay and those who have defaulted in payments in the wake of successive droughts in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of borrowers and total amount of loan in the above category, State-wise, category-wise as on today;

(c) whether above loans will be waived as a relief measure to the farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether growth rate of long-term credit to agriculture has declined during the last one decade; and

(g) if so, the reasons therefor?

Employment on compassionate ground in SBI, Himachal Pradesh

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

(a) the number of employees who died while serving in the State Bank of India,

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Himachal Pradesh during the year 2001-02;

(b) the details of names and designations of the said employees alongwith places of their posting;

(c) whether the dependents of the said employees were provided employment on compassionate grounds; and

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

Rehabilitation package for farmers of A.P. and T.N.

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

(a) whether a package for rehabilitation of farmers of Andhra Pradesh is being given;

(b) if so, whether the package will be extended to other States, especially the Tamil Nadu;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Concessions for revival of handloom sector

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

(a) whether a delegation of Andhra Pradesh weavers have sought certain concessions and measures to revive handlooms, handicrafts and power looms in the unorganised sector; and

(b) if so, what are their demands and what has been taken thereon?

Crude Oil Stabilisation Fund

745. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be

pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 52 given in the Rajya Sabha on 6th July, 2004 and state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set-up a Crude Oil Stabilisation Fund to insulate customers against frequent increase in oil prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

VRS in ONGC

746. SHRI RAMA MUNIREDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC has introduced a new VRS to prune its staff strength at least by 10 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the scheme is available to all employees who are on the rolls of ONGC or whether there is any cut-off mark; and

(d) what measures Government are taking to make the present scheme more attractive?

Compensations to OMCs

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

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

(a) whether excise duty reduction on petrol, diesel and cooking gas announced

by Government has cost the exchequer Rs. 2938 crores in the remaining part of current financial year;

(b) if so, to what extent marketing companies have been benefited by duty reduction;

(c) whether oil marketing companies (OMCs) still claim that they have not been fully compensated for raising global crude prices; and

(d) if so, to what extent they are bearing the loss and in what manner Government are helping them?

Re-appointment of contract engineers in EIL

748. SHRIMATI PREMA

CARIAPPA:

SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

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

(a) whether Engineers India Limited (EIL) have axed more than 300 qualified engineers working on contract basis for a period ranging from 3 to 8 years;

(b) whether Government have received recommendations from a high level committee for their absorption/continuation of service; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to re-appoint these contract engineers in EIL and other PSUs under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas?

Hike in prices of petroleum products

†749. SHRIMATI SAVITA

SHARDA:

SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

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

(a) whether Government have recently hiked the prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to reconsider the price hike keeping in view the large scale resentment among the masses?

Use of kerosene oil for adulteration

750. SHRIDATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had allowed import of kerosene by private parties/companies in 1992-93 to meet the demand of kerosene by consumers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received complaints of growing adulteration of kerosene in diesel;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have now decided to allow the import of Super Kerosene Oil (SKO) only through the public sector oil companies;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) what measures have been taken to ensure that this kerosene oil is not used for adulteration?

Fire in IOC oil depots

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a fire broke out in the oil depots of the Indian Oil Corporation at Rajbag near Durgapur on 3rd June, 2004 and at Baitalpur near Deoria on 30th June, 2004;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

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

(c) the loss of life and property suffered as a result of these fires; and

(d) the remedial measures, if any, taken by Government to check such incidents in future?

Establishment of Global Oil Company

†752. SHRIMATIMAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Oil Corporation is considering to set-up a Global Oil Company for exploring oil in foreign countries to enter the global market;

(b) if so, the modalities being considered for this; and

(c) what progress has, so far, been made in this regard?

ONGC Videsh's Sudan project

753. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved a pipeline project by ONGC Videsh Ltd. in Sudan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have exempted the OVL from taking political risk insurance even though it has been suggested by the Finance Ministry while approving the project; and

(d) the reasons therefor?

Oil pool account

†754. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to set up an oil pool account in petroleum sector;

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

(c) the purpose for which the said account needs to be revived?

Building of strategic oil reserve

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

(a) whether Government have reviewed a plan to build strategic oil reserve in the country aimed at providing oil security against sudden disruption in supplies from domestic refineries and/or imports;

(b) if so, the results thereof; and

(c) the present status of implementation of the proposal, including the details of costs involved, sources of investment finalized, arrangements made for import of crude oil and the creation of strategic storage facilities?

Establishment of National Gas Grid

756. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's action plan to address serious regional imbalance in natural gas sector in States like West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa in Eastern region which are totally gas-starved;

(b) whether a national gas grid is being planned on the lines of National Power Grid;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if so, whether such gas grid is being planned to be developed through GAIL like Power Grid Corporation in Power Sector; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Borrowings of oil PSUs

757. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total outstanding borrowings of oil PSUs as on March 31, 2004; and

(b) what is the amount of interest being paid on these borrowings?

LPG godowns in residential areas

758. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that LPG godowns have come up in residential colonies like West Enclave, Pitampura, Delhi recently;

(b) whether several accidents occurred in the past on account of blast in godowns causing great damage in different residential colonies; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken to shift such godowns to open areas?

Closure of Adulteration Prevention Cell

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have closed down the Petrol-Diesel Adulteration Prevention Cell;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any proposal is under consideration to check adulteration in petroleum products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Availability of natural gas in Tripura

760. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any plans for extraction and utilization of reserves of natural gas in Tripura;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Strike by workers of petroleum companies

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

(a) whether the employees of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and All India Petroleum Workers Federation had gone on strike on the 1st July, 2004 against the decision of Government for privatisation of Amguri Oil Field in Assam;

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

(c) the loss suffered by Government due to this strike; and

(d) what are the other demands of these employees and what steps have been taken by Government in this regard?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Introduction of CNG in Tamil Nadu

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

(a) whether it is proposed to introduce compressed natural gas in major cities in Tamil Nadu to check pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Availability of gas and oil in Rajasthan

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

(a) whether oil and gas reserves has been discovered in abundance in different areas of Rajasthan;

(b) the locations and the quantum of oil and gas reserves discovered in Rajasthan;

(c) by when the production is likely to commence from these reserves in the State;

(d) the details of other areas in Rajasthan where oil and gas refining process is in progress; and

(e) the areas where availability of oil and gas is possible alongwith the details?

Decline in foreign tourists

764. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, of late, there has been a decline in the foreign tourists to India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the decline in foreign tourists is due to increase in incidents of kidnapping, rape and murder;

(c) if so, the number of kidnapping, rape and murder cases involving foreign tourists, reported during the last three years and the outcome of the investigations made therein; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to make Delhi a safe city for foreign tourists?

Development of adventure tourism in HP

765. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to promote adventure and winter sport/ tourism in the Hill States to attract international tourists;

(b) whether any allocation of funds has been proposed to develop the desired infrastructure and facilities; and

(c) if so, what allocation has been made for Himachal Pradesh?

Renovation of historical tourist places

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

(a) whether it is a fact that loans from foreign countries have been received for renovation of historical tourist places in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of the historical tourist places for the renovation of which this amount will be utilised?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Scrapping of service tax on travel agents

767. SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:
SHRIMOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations from hoteliers and travel agents for scrapping of 8 per cent service tax on travel agents; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government propose to take in this regard?

Development of Ajmer and Pushkar in Rajasthan

†768. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1770 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th August, 2003 and state the progress so far made with regard to the development of the Dargah area of Ajmer and Pushkar?

Schemes to attract foreign tourists

†769. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States which have attracted the maximum number of foreign tourists during the last three years;

(b) the details of the schemes implemented by the Central Government to attract foreign tourists;

(c) the profit earned by the tourism sector from the said schemes; and

(d) the percentage of the tourism sector out of the total foreign revenue earned by the country?

Flow of foreign currency in tourism sector

†770. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of foreign currency flow into the country;

(b) whether there has been a decline in flow of foreign currency in the tourism sector in comparison to last year; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the plans of Government to meet this deficiency?

Special drive for foreign tourists

†771. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the arrival of foreign tourists to India during the last year was as per the target;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government will formulate an action plan by organising a special drive for the convenience of foreign tourists to achieve the yearly targets?

Development of Kali Temple Complex in Kolkata

772. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to develop the Kali Temple Complex in Kolkata into a centre of religious tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof with particular reference to financial assistance to the project; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Rain water harvesting system

773. SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY:
SHRIMANOJ
BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to revive the traditional rain water harvesting system in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof along with financial implication and allocation proposed to be made for the purpose; and

(c) the States where this programme is proposed to be implemented?

Sutlej Yamuna Link Canal

774. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the progress made in the construction of the Sutlej Yamuna Link Canal, as directed by the Supreme Court?

'Stop Water' campaign

†775. SHRIMATIMAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the financial assistance given by the Central Government to Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, during the last three years under 'Stop Water' campaign, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that these States have spent nothing from the financial assistance given to them; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the instructions which are being considered to be issued to the State Governments?

Agreement between Punjab and Rajasthan for supply of water

†776. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Governments of Punjab and Rajasthan had entered into agreements regarding supply of water in the past;

(b) if so, the details of such agreements and names of rivers for which these agreements were entered into; and

(c) the names of those rivers along with quantum of water Rajasthan is entitled to get as per the said agreements?

Utilisation of water

777. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that although eighty per cent of India's usable water resources are diverted for irrigation, only eighty-five per cent of the capacity is utilised;

(b) if so, whether this utilisation is low because of high irrigation costs for farmers; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to reduce the problem of under-utilisation of water in the country?

Sharing of Cauvery water

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

(a) whether Government have taken any step to resolve the issue of sharing of Cauvery water between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, what is the outcome thereof;
and

**Allocation of funds for Gandak
Irrigation Project**

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

†781. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES
be pleased to state the details of funds
allocated for Gandak Irrigation Project in
Bihar during the last three years; year-wise?

**Irrigation schemes in Bihar and
Jharkhand**

†779. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES
be pleased to state:

(a) the funds allocated by Government
under AIBP scheme for small irrigation
schemes for the States of Bihar and
Jharkhand during the last three years, year-
wise and scheme-wise; and

(b) the details of expenditure incurred
on the aforesaid schemes, year-wise and
item-wise?

Ground water survey

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

(a) whether Government are aware
that according to a survey conducted
recently by the Central Ground Water
Board, there is evidence of the presence
of dangerous substances in the ground
water being used for drinking purpose
in various parts of Delhi which pose
danger of causing heart diseases and high
blood pressure;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial measures proposed to
be taken by Government in this regard?

National Coastal Protection Project

782. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES
be pleased to state:

(a) whether a National Coastal
Protection Project (NCP) has been laid
down by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof, phase-wise
and the estimated cost;

(c) whether funding of the project is to
be shared by external funding agencies;

(d) if so, the details thereof including
the Central and State Governments funding,
if any; and

(e) the share of funding to be met by the
States of Maharashtra and other maritime
States?

Irrigation projects of Nagaland

783. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the
Minister of WATER RESOURCES be
pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of major and
medium irrigation projects of Nagaland;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(b) what is the present position of the above projects;</p> <p>(c) whether some projects related to Nagaland are pending with the</p> | <p>Central Government for clearance; and</p> <p>(d) by when these are likely to be cleared?</p> |
|--|---|

NEW DELHI;
The 14th July, 2004

Asadha 23, 1926 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

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