

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 22, 2003/Vaisakha 2, 1925 (Saka)

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

Total number of questions—155

Forgery case against Air India employee

3247. SHRI GHANSHYAM
CHANDRA KHARWAR: Will the
Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased
to state:

- (a) whether Canadian High Commission
in Delhi has filed a case against an Air India
employee in Delhi for committing a forgery;
- (b) if so, whether Air India has carried
out any investigation on the above said cases;
- (c) if so, what are the details of such
investigation; and
- (d) whether such employee is still
working with Air India and whether any
action has been taken/proposed to be taken
against such employee?

Upgradation of Bagdogra airport

3248. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY:
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

- (a) whether there has been any demand
regarding upgradation of Bagdogra airport
in northern part of West Bengal;
- (b) whether Government have taken any
initiative to explore the same considering
the strategic location of the airport; and
- (c) whether Government have any plan
to upgrade the airport?

Knowledge of English for international pilots

3249. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have made it
compulsory that pilots of foreign airlines
operating at Indian International Airports
must know English to avoid mis-
understanding in communications;
- (b) if so, since when; and
- (c) if not, in what manner Government
propose to avoid the risk of accidents in
mid-air and protocol violation because of
wrong communication?

Purchase of aircraft by corporate houses

3250. SHRI C. RAMACHAND-
RAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL
AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a number of
corporate houses have requested the
Director-General, Civil Aviation (DGCA)
for granting approval to purchase advanced
jet aircrafts;
- (b) if so, what are the names of the
corporate houses with the details of
proposals submitted by each of them; and
- (c) what is the policy with regard to
purchase of aircraft/helicopters by corporate
houses in the country?

**Contingency plan to contain
pneumonia**

3251. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
DR. A. R. KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the wake of reports of
unknown form of pneumonia spreading in
some Asian countries and Canada, the
Ministry had issued directions to all the
airports in the country to check all the
passenger before entering India;

(b) if so, what were the contingency
plans prepared by the Ministry of Civil
Aviation in this regard;

(c) what steps are being taken so that
this disease does not spread in India; and

(d) to what extent these steps have been
successful?

Airports at pilgrim centres

3252. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH
LIBRA:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering
proposals to construct airports at pilgrim
centres in some States and also renaming of
some of the existing airports; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

**Expansion of air services from
Bhubaneswar**

3253. SHRI B. J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION
be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that
Bhubaneswar is an important religious and
tourist-cum-business centre of Orissa;

(b) whether Government are also aware
that it is a Regional Software Centre where
inputs are derived from Bangalore and other
software centres of the country;

(c) whether lack of adequate airlinks with
these centres is the main impediment in its
efforts for development; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose
to provide air-link between Bhubaneswar
and Bangalore and also with other important
software centres of the country and if so,
the details thereof?

Upgradation of airports in Tripura

3254. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will
the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be
pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have decided
to take in regard to upgradation of the airports
in Kamalpur, Kailasahar and Dharmanagar
in Tripura;

(b) whether short services of small
aircrafts within the State of Tripura
connecting important towns are planned to
be introduced;

(c) whether a network of short services
of aircraft connecting important cities within
the north-east region has also been
contemplated; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Development of international airports

3255. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA
SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of
CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided
to set up a second international airport in the
vicinity of New Delhi on Agra-Noida
Express way;

(b) if so, by when work on development of this airport is likely to commence; and

(c) the other places where international airports are proposed to be developed?

Improvement of runways at Kangra and Pant Nagar Airports

3256. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the details of the steps being taken to improve and extend the runways at Kangra Airport (Himachal Pradesh) and Pant Nagar Airport (Uttaranchal)?

Profit earned by special flight to South Africa

3257. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India earned any profit from the special cricket World Cup flight to South Africa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Increase in airfares

3258. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been considering to increase international and domestic airfares; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the decision taken in the matter?

Concession on carrying human remains from Gulf

3259. SHRI N. K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India provides free

transportation of human remains and free air ticket for accompanying passenger and maximum of 50 Kg personal effects, to help workers in Gulf region who are unable to afford costs;

(b) if so, whether the Air India has commenced the implementation of the above scheme;

(c) whether the facility is also extended by the Indian Airlines; and

(d) if not, whether Government would consider to extend it in the Indian Airlines also?

Air service between Aurangabad and Jeddah

3260. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to introduce a direct flight to Jeddah for Haj pilgrims from Aurangabad in view of the long standing demand of local people; and

(b) if so, whether this flight would be introduced from the next Haj pilgrimage period?

Purchase of 'Air Force One' type aircrafts

3261. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has entered into negotiations with Boeing of the US for purchase of three 'Air Force One' type aircrafts exclusively for the use of the President, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister;

(b) if so, the special features of these aircrafts; and

(c) the cost of these aircrafts?

Indo-British cooperation in Civil Aviation sector

†3262. DR. A. K. PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India and Britain propose to co-operate in civil aviation sector;
- (b) if so, the details of such plan; and
- (c) the steps taken in this regard so far?

FDI in airports

3263. SHRI R. P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that no proposals for Foreign Direct Investment in airports have been received although Government have repeatedly emphasized that it would allow 74 per cent of FDI in airports and even 100 per cent in green field ventures;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that under the Airports Authority Act the AAI is the only body authorised to build and operate airports and, therefor, prospective investors are reluctant to commit their investments without the enabling legal provisions; and
- (d) if so, the steps being taken to remove such disabilities to encourage inflow investments?

Direct Air service between Delhi and Patna

†3264. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the route of Mumbai-Delhi-Patna flight No. IC 809 is diverted *via* Ranchi during summer which takes three hours time

for the journey from Delhi to Patna while it takes one hour and twenty minutes in a direct flight;

- (b) whether passengers, specially of 'J' class conveniently travel in other Airlines to save the time;

(c) the average decrease in number of passengers travelling to Patna *via* Ranchi *vis-a-vis* direct flight to Patna; and

- (d) the action being taken by Government for operating direct flight to Patna keeping in view the convenience of passengers and saving of their time?

Operation of private Indian Airlines in SAARC countries

3265. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are considering allowing private Indian Airlines companies to operate in SAARC countries;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (c) whether they will operate in countries now connected with Indian Airlines and Air India?

Plans for maintenance of aircrafts

3266. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of plans formulated by Government for maintenance of various aircrafts by Indian Airlines; and
- (b) the steps taken by Government for its implementation?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Investigation of companies by SEBI

3267. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Companies like HFCL, Zee Tele Films, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Piraal Group, Vidyut Investments, Ranbaxy are under investigation by SEBI; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

RBI's directions on stapling of notes

3268. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the RBI has issued directions to all the banks to discontinue the practice of stapling currency notes packets;

(b) if so, the details of the directions issued by RBI;

(c) whether stapling is one of the major causes for damage of currency notes; and

(d) if so, what are the other causes which spoil the currency notes?

Stock market manipulation by Ranbaxy

3269. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some companies have given large amounts for stock market manipulations; if so, the details thereof;

(b) if so, what action has been taken so far;

(c) whether Government have advised for inspection of the companies under Section 209 of Companies; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

Irregularities in sanctioning of loans

†3270. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the industrialists and their institutes/industries of the country which have been provided with the loans by banks during the last three years along with the amount paid to them and form in which the payment was made;

(b) the details of the money received from the said Industries/Financial Institutions so far;

(c) the amount of Banks and Financial Institutions which has been written off/put in NPA;

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to recover the said amount; and

(e) the action taken against the officials and bureaucracy responsible for issuing such loans?

Highest custom duty rates

3271. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that customs duty rates are the highest in our country;

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

(c) the details of exports and imports made during the last three years; item-wise quantity-wise with customs duty implications; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) whether experts have opined that Government should hasten the tax reforms to ensure export competitiveness of the domestic industry?

Debt recovery tribunal at Madurai

3272. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government propose to set up a debt recovery tribunal at Madurai;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Repayment of foreign loans

†3273. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total amount of debt on Government;
- (b) the amount of loan taken from the foreign countries; the financial institutions of the country and from the public, separately; and
- (c) the details regarding countries from which loans have been taken along with the amount of their loan and whether Government have formulated any special scheme to repay the same with?

4th Ministerial Conference of G-20 Countries in New Delhi

3274. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether recently the 4th Ministerial Conference of Group of 20 (G-20) countries was held in Delhi;

(b) the details of main subjects discussed and the decision taken in this meeting;

(c) whether the meeting reviewed the progress made on the decisions taken in the earlier meeting; and

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

IFCI in dire Financial Straits

3275. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Industrial Financial Corporation of India (IFCI Limited) is in dire financial Straits;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a few top industrialists in the country who are Members of the Prime Minister's Trade and Advisory Council and who are associated with some leading Business Houses owe a substantial amount to the IFCI Limited as outstanding loans; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and steps proposed to be taken to recover the same?

Fiscal Freedom to States

3276. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been demanding fiscal freedom for the State Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any formal request to this effect has been received by Government; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Reduction in administrative staff of PSUs

3277. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the actual ratio of management costs to total sales in PSUs;

(b) how far does this ratio differ from the norms; and

(c) how does Government propose to reduce the excess administrative staff which has made the PSUs top heavy?

Rate of tax on diesel and petrol

†3278. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of tax on diesel and petrol in India is higher than that of America, France, UK etc.;

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

(c) what is the percentage of tax, cess and surcharge on basic prices of above products in India; and

(d) the percentage of such tax, cess and surcharge in America, England and France?

Regulations for foreign companies

3279. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of foreign companies functioning in our country at present;

(b) whether Government have set up any mechanism to identify the foreign companies that are not observing the rules

framed by regulatory agencies and if so, the details thereof and what is the number of such companies identified by that agency; and

(c) what action Government have taken against them?

Excess refund of tax by CBDT

3280. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases in which excess refund of tax or interest under Income Tax Act was made by CBDT during the last two financial years;

(b) the amount involved and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to avoid recurrence of such errors?

Buy back of high cost debt bonds

3281. SHRI N.R. DASARI:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to buy back its own various high cost debt bonds; and

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

Committee on functioning of Nidhi Companies

3282. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since received any report of the committee headed

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

by Shri P. Sabanayagan to examine various aspects of the functioning of Nidhi Companies;

(b) if so, what are the salient feature of the recommendations made; and

(c) what action Government have taken thereto?

Insurance schemes of Vijaya Bank

3283. SHRI B.J. PANDA:

MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the proposed project of Vijaya Bank for grant of life cover to the clients as reported in the media;

(b) the rates of premium under this scheme for various categories; and

(c) whether senior citizens account holders would also be covered under the scheme, if so, the details thereof?

Winding of Special Deposit Scheme

3284. SHRI GAYA SINGH:

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to wind up the special deposit scheme launched in 1975; and

(b) if so, who are the major investors in this scheme and the redemption obligation of Government?

Recovery of income tax

†3285. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

SHRIMATI PREMA

CARIAPPA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States where the income tax recovery has decreased during 2001-2002;

(b) the reasons for decrease;

(c) the steps taken by Government to enhance the income tax recovery; and

(d) whether the estimated income tax recovery in these States is likely to be made during 2002-2003?

Increase in domestic borrowings

†3286. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that domestic borrowings of Government have been rising continuously for the last many years;

(b) if so, the said borrowings at the end of March, 1998 and at the end of December, 2002; and

(c) the reasons for increase in borrowings?

LICs policy for women

3287. MISS MABEL REBELLO:

SHRI JANARDHANA

POOJARY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that LIC has launched a new policy for women to cover cancer;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the number of women covered under the insurance net as compared to men is insignificant; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by Government to extend the benefits of insurance cover to more women?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Effect of NRIs income on GDP

†3288. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the income accrued as a result of business, jobs etc. by Indians in foreign countries has an impact on Gross Domestic Product of the country;

(b) if so, the contribution of such income in the Gross Domestic Product during 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003;

(c) whether there are possibilities of an increase in this income; and

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

Implementation of priority sector lending by SBI

3289. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Bank of India is not paying sufficient attention to priority sector guidelines of RBI;

(b) if not, to what extent State Bank of India is observing various guidelines issued by RBI for priority sector lending;

(c) whether it is a fact that complaints have been made in Andhra Pradesh on such matters;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the corrective steps proposed to ensure that State Bank of India implements RBI priority sector lending?

Anomalies in guidelines for recovery of NPAS

3290. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India regarding Non-Performing Assets are applicable only to the Public Sector Banks and not to the Private Sector Banks;

(b) whether such inconsistency is leading to banks working at cross purposes, thereby putting the Public Sector Banks to disadvantage *vis-a-vis* the Private Sector Banks in the matter of recovery of outstanding loans; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and how this anomaly is proposed to be remedied?

Gramin Bank in Betur district, M.P.

3291. SHRI KAILASH JOSHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of districts in Madhya Pradesh where there is no Gramin Bank functioning;

(b) whether Government have a proposal to start a Gramin bank in Betur district in view of concentration of majority Scheduled Tribes population; and

(c) by when the Bank is likely to be started together with the details of schedule bank by whom it is likely to be sponsored?

Meeting of 12th Finance Commission

3292. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the 12th Finance Commission held a meeting with economists and economic administrators on some of the key issues, in February 2003;

(b) if so, details of the issues discussed; and

(c) the outcome of the discussions?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Tax free bonds of UTI

3293. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UTI has announced 6.75 per cent tax free bonds to US-64 unit holders *w.e.f.* 1st June, 2003;

(b) whether it is also a fact that US-64 unit holders of 'A' category that is holding upto 5000 units are entitled to a repurchase price of Rs. 12/- per unit as on 1st May, 2003; and

(c) if reply to parts (a) & (b) above is in the affirmative, what consideration would be given by UTI to the unit holders of 'A' category for one month of May, 2003, in case they opt for tax-free bonds?

Implementation of VAT in Delhi

3294. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi Government has recommended that the Value Added Tax (VAT) system should not be implemented in Delhi without certain amendments to ensure that it does not destroy the capital city's distributive trading character; and

(b) if so, what specific amendments have been proposed and what shall be the modified form of VAT to be implemented in the capital?

Fiscal deficit of States

3295. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of total Fiscal deficit of the States as well as the Centre during the last five years in per cent of GDP and how these gaps are managed;

(b) the State-wise revenue deficit in the said period;

(c) the steps taken and proposed to be taken by Union Government to mitigate this recurring problem in the interest of overall growth of the country; and

(d) the details of specific guidelines given to the 12th Finance Commission, if any, in this regard?

Disputed tax liabilities of PSUs

3296. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the listed Indian Companies including PSUs have more than Rs. 28,000 crores in disputed tax liabilities as on 2001-2002;

(b) whether this is more than 40 per cent of the disputed liabilities of listed companies for the year 2001-02;

(c) if so, the details of companies/PSUs alongwith their tax liabilities under dispute; and

(d) what steps are being taken for the expenditure settlement of disputed liabilities?

Media Cell for the Ministry

3297. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Finance and Company Affairs have decided to set up a Media Cell of its own;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith likely expenditure on the cell and staff strength;

(c) whether the Indian Information Service is unable to do the job; and

(d) the fresh steps taken by Government to minimise the expenditure in view of its own direction of 10 per cent reduction in expenditure?

Realisation of service tax from television channel advertisements

3298. SHRI NANDIYELLAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have lost Rs. 150 crores during the last financial year as 5 per cent service tax on advertisements on various television channels, including Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the action taken/ proposed to be taken by Government to recover the tax arrears and the action taken against officials responsible for these losses of service tax; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to improve the Service Tax realisation system/ mechanism?

Allocation of funds for setting of media cell

3299. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) in the face of severe resource crunch being faced by the Finance Ministry, how far its allocation of Rs. 75 crores per annum for setting up a media cell of its own like External Publicity Division of EA Ministry is justified; and

(b) what additional benefits are likely to accrue and whether such a move will not promote a chain reaction in other Ministries to set up their media cells?

LIC pension scheme for private sector

†3300. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with Government to allow the pension scheme of Life Insurance Corporation of India for the private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

Private banks in rural areas

†3301. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA : Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to encourage private banks to start banking services in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the said scheme is likely to be implemented?

Revamping of accounting standards

3302. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to revamp the accounting standards and plugging the loopholes in the norms for mergers and acquisitions and allotment of preferential shares;

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

(c) by when it is likely to be completed?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Naresh Chandra Committee on
Auditors**

3303. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Naresh Chandra Committee which was appointed to look into issues relating to Auditor-Company relationship, appointment of auditors, etc. has since submitted its report;

(b) if so, what are the salient features thereof; and

(c) what action Government have taken thereon?

VAT exemption for khadi industry

3304. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of news-item captioned "khadi industry seeks VAT exemption" which appeared in "The Hindu" dated the 17th March, 2003;

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

(c) whether action will be initiated to exempt khadi industries from Value Added Tax?

Recovery of money through voluntary disclosures

3305. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred question 1289 given in the Rajya Sabha on 4th March, 2003 and state:

(a) the quantum of money recovered so far through voluntary disclosures, voluntary compliance of tax laws 1983-84;

(b) whether Government propose to conduct a fresh study on black money; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Tax on on-line shopping

3306. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are charging any tax on on-line shopping of articles; and

(b) if so, the details of such tax charged?

World Bank Loans

3307. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of loan taken by Government and each State from World Bank, IMF and other International Financial Institutions during the last three years;

(b) the amount outstanding at present;

(c) the interest being paid annually on this loan; and

(d) the amount of loan still not disbursed to the beneficiary and the reasons therefor?

PAN card holders in the country

3308. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of PAN card holders in the country including the four metros as on December, 2002;

(b) how many applications are pending for more than one year/six months for issuance of these cards;

(c) whether it is a fact that many cards are wrongly printed causing problems to the card holders;

(d) what action is being taken to correct these cards; and

(e) whether it is also a fact the services of this division is very poor and the steps taken to improve it?

Fake notes in banks

†3309. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention have been drawn to the news-item which appeared in Rashtriya Sahara under the caption, "Bankon se bhi asli note milne ki guarantee nahin rahi ab" dated the 27th March, 2003;

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

(c) the steps being taken by Government to provide genuine notes to the account holders through all the banks in the country?

Review of self-employment programme

†3310. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the self-employment programme meant for the educated unemployed youths during the last two years;

(b) if so, the result thereof;

(c) the State-wise number of applications received under this scheme during the said period and the number of cases for which loans were sanctioned and the number of cases where actual payment was made;

(d) whether any such cases are pending so far for sanctioning the loan;

(e) if so, the reasons for the delay;

(f) whether the banks have received any complaints in this matter; and

(g) if so, the action taken thereon?

Companies under Search and Seizure

3311. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during last two years, 80 companies have been under Search and Seizure; and

(b) if so, the names of the companies and the amount declared and the details of investigation pending?

Overseas banking units in SEZs

3312. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the RBI is thinking of issuing licences to some of the nationalised banks to set up overseas banking units in Special Economic Zones; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Amendment to the Companies Act, 1956

3313. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of bringing amendment to the Companies Act, 1956, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Naresh Chandra Committee;

(b) if so, the details of the amendments that are proposed to be introduced to the Companies Act;

(c) whether Government propose to bring the same before Parliament for its approval during the current Session of Parliament; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Gross budgetary support for states' annual plan

3314. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA
RAO:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a difference on the size of the gross budgetary support (GBS) for the States' annual plans and Central Ministries; and

(b) the details of shortfall in resource mobilisation expected and likely Central assistance for the States?

Recommendation of Fifth Pay Commission

†3315. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Fifth Pay Commission had recommended to double the existing rates of insurance for group A, B, C and D staff covered under Central Government Employees Group Insurance Scheme;

(b) if so, whether Government have implemented those recommendations; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and by when these will be implemented?

Non-refundable withdrawal from GPF

3316. SHRI N. JOTHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether interest lost on account of non-refundable withdrawal from General Provident Fund for the purpose of construction or acquisition of house, is allowed as deduction under section 24 of the Income Tax Act;

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether such benefit is given under Employees Provident Fund Scheme in view of the judgement of Income Tax Tribunal in O.P. Sharma Vs ITO (1986) 17 ITD 45(Jp); and

(d) if so, why this benefit is not being given to GPF subscribers?

Ban on new recruitment

†3317. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no effort has been made to find the solution of the problem such as unemployment in the budget 2003-04;

(b) the total number of unemployed persons in the country at present under literate/illiterate/semiliterate/skilled/unskilled categories;

(c) whether it is also a fact that instead of removal of unemployment ban is being imposed on new recruitment in Government jobs and many posts are being abolished;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) Government's attitude towards unemployment in the light of said facts?

Reappointment of Auditors

3318. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that company's auditors are re-appointed and continue to audit their accounts for 15-20 years leading to mal-practices; and

(b) what action Government propose to take to prevent the reappointment of such auditors?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

VRS in State Bank of Saurashtra

3319. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees who opted for VRS in State Bank of Saurashtra and number of those who were given VRS in the Bank;

(b) the reasons for not giving VRS to all of those who had applied for the same; and

(c) the operational costs saved by the Bank after implementing VRS in the Bank?

Impact of budget on economy

3320. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any study of the impact of Union Budget 2003-04 on different sectors of the economy;

(b) if so, the results thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that major inducements in the Budget which were supposed to kickstart growth in the economy have failed to materialise on the expected lines; and

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

World Bank projects in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

3321. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of World Bank projects under implementation in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and the names of the projects and the cost of project together with completion date;

(b) what is the number of World Bank approved projects pending implementation in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and names of such projects and the project cost; and

(c) the number of World Bank projects which are pending for approval in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh with names of such projects and cost?

Financial allocations to NER

3322. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the financial allocation to each one of the North Eastern State during last three years;

(b) whether Central Government are satisfied with the proper utilization of funds in north east by North Eastern States; and

(c) if not, what steps have been taken by Government to ensure proper utilization of funds allocated?

Janashree Bima Yojana Scheme in Andhra Pradesh

3323. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the Central Scheme, Janashree Bima Yojana meant for providing life insurance coverage to persons below the poverty line in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the number of persons so far covered under the Yojana in the States, rural and urban area-wise; and

(c) the occupational groups to which Yojana has been extended in the State?

IRDA's report on pension reforms

3324. SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA) has submitted report to Government on pension reforms to ensure income security for the country's vast unorganised sector;

(b) if so, what are the recommendations of IRDA in this regard;

(c) whether Government have considered the report and taken a decision on the recommendations; and

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

Enhancement of State's share

3325. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several States including Andhra Pradesh have requested the Centre to enhance the State share to 50 per cent of the divisible pool;

(b) if so, by when it will be given effect to; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider the request, as the present share is much less?

Payment of deposits to public depositors

3326. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in number of cases Company Law Board has approved the schemes, U/s J & AA of the Act for payment of deposits to the public depositors;

(b) if so, whether the companies are not paying these deposits to the public as per the approved schemes;

(c) what steps are being taken for speedy action in this regard; and

(d) what penal action is being taken against these companies for default?

Income Tax exemptions to authors of regional languages

3327. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the authors of the regional languages get income tax rebate/exemption but the authors of technical subjects (Engineering, Law etc.) do not get this facility;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for this discrimination;

(c) whether Government propose to reconsider the policy; and

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

Implementation of VAT in States

3328. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR
REDDY:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the States are supposed to adopt Value Added Tax (VAT) system from 1st April, 2003 onwards as per the decision on National Development Council Meeting held last year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the status of above decision as on today;

(c) whether a few States have announced that they are not switching over to VAT;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any proposal for new implementation schedule of VAT;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the details of revenue loss due to implementation of VAT, if any, State-wise and category-wise?

Allocation of kerosene to Uttaranchal

3329. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the per capita availability and consumption of kerosene oil in Uttaranchal, district-wise and panchayat-wise; and

(b) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to increase the allocation of kerosene oil to Uttaranchal?

Exploration of gas in Rajasthan

3330. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the districts in Rajasthan where exploration for petroleum and gas has been taken up after the discovery of petroleum and gas in Barmer district recently;

(b) whether this exploration is being done by Indian or foreign company; and

(c) the details in this regard?

LPG connections in Doda District

3331. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG connections provided by various agencies in Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir during the last three years;

(b) the number of consumers registered for new LPG connections during the above period; and

(c) the number of additional gas connections issued in the district along with the number of consumers on the waiting list, agency-wise during the last three years?

Earnings through export of petroleum products

3332. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public and private sector oil companies have increased export of petroleum products to reap benefits of increased prices in the world market;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for recent increase in the prices of petrol and diesel in India; and

(c) what is the amount of additional export earnings that are likely to accrue on the increased rate of petrol and diesel?

Errant petrol pumps in Maharashtra

3333. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps which have been found selling adulterated petroleum products on primary inspection in Maharashtra and specially in Mumbai during the last three years; and

(b) the list of the errant dealers and the actions taken against them?

Conversion of waste plastic into fuel

‡3334. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a Nagpur based scientist couple has successfully invented a unique process of converting waste plastic into fuel;

(b) if so, what are the salient features thereof;

(c) whether this invented fuel are upto BIS standard; and

(d) if so, whether the Ministry has formulated any scheme for promoting this work together with the details thereof?

Production of CBM

3335. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the steps taken by Government for producing coal-bed methane in the country; and

(b) the details of present Budget allocation for the purpose in this respect?

Deal between ONGC-Videsh and Chinese oil companies

3336. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the experts have favoured deal between ONGC-Videsh and Chinese oil companies;

(b) if so, whether the western oil majors such as Exxon-Mobile, BP and BG can get any oil property that they want and the India and China cannot compete with them;

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard; and

(d) whether any agreement between India and China has been reached or is likely to be reached on this issue?

VRS in HPCL

3337. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) has a proposal of a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to reduce its workforce by 15 per cent; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

New oil and gas found in Jaisalmer and Barmer

3338. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

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

(a) whether ONGC has recently found new oil and gas resources in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer and Barmer districts;

(b) whether the oil samples have since been tested, if so, with what results; and

(c) the details of plans for further exploration of oil and gas in this region?

Basic price of petrol

‡3339. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the amount of

‡Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

basic price of the petrol is less than the total amount imposed through taxes; and

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the per litre basic prices of the petrol are Rs. 15.15, Rs. 15.25, Rs. 15.57 and Rs. 15.45 in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai respectively whereas the retail prices of the petrol after taxes per liter are Rs. 38.59, Rs. 33.48, Rs. 34.99 and Rs. 36.39 in the said cities?

India's oil reserves

3340. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

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

(a) what are India's oil reserves and how long can they last;

(b) whether there would be a major hike in oil price in case Iraq goes to war; and

(c) if so, to what extent Government would control oil prices in the country in accordance with international oil market and keeping the oil reserves in mind?

Fresh capital investment in MRPL by ONGC

†3341. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has taken a decision to make fresh capital investment in Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd.;

(b) if so, the quantum of fresh capital investment decided to be made;

(c) the need for making this capital investment; and

(d) the total participation of ONGC in Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd.?

International and domestic prices of petroleum products

†3342. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

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

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of petrol and diesel were increased in the country on the basis of high prices of crude oil in the international market whereas the prices of petroleum products such as Naptha, Furnace oil, A T F, Benzene solutions were reduced;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard and changes brought in the prices of said items; and

(c) the reasons for changing the said prices?

Restriction on import of petroleum products

†3343. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the right to import petroleum products in the country have been given to the oil companies;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that certain restrictions have also been imposed on these imports;

(c) if so, the details of the said restrictions; and

(d) the reasons for not making the petroleum-industry restriction free from Government so far?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Shortage of LPG in Delhi

3344. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Delhi and some areas of Northern India has been facing LPG shortage;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the supply position of LPG in these areas?

Losses due to militant attacks in Assam

†3345. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of loss incurred from petroleum products received from Assam's refineries or the refined products and crude being transported through pipelines during the last three years on account of militant activities in Assam alongwith the year-wise details thereof;

(b) the details of steps taken by the Government to mitigate the losses increased on account of militant activities; and

(c) the number of persons killed and injured in petroleum industry during the last three years due to militant activities?

Outcome of Aviation Conference held at New Delhi

3346. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Aviation Conference with the help of Indian Oil and Natural Gas Commission was recently held at New Delhi; and

(b) if so, what were the decisions taken at the Conference to promote the sale of Indian Oil in order to grab a fresh hold in aviation tourism?

Import of crude from Iraq

3347. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is still contract-bound with SOMO of Iraq to import 2 million tonnes of crude a year;

(b) whether India has cut its import indent to just one cargo a month because of the on-going crisis;

(c) whether China, Japan and Korea have established direct oil import links with Iraq; and

(d) to what extent the present UN sanction on Iraq is effecting the sourcing of Iraqi crude by India and other SE Asian countries?

Recruitment of sports persons in oil PSUs

3348. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total quota, norms and criteria for recruitment of sports persons in various oil PSUs operating in NER;

(b) the list of sports persons of Oil India Limited participated in National and International events during the last 10 years showing the fields of activities, entry level achievements, yearwise position held, outstanding performance, if any, including awards won;

(c) the norms and criteria fixed for their promotion showing cadre-wise promotions given to each of them during the said period; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(d) the list of such sports persons yet to be promoted based on comparative performance in the sports field?

Uses of coal-bed methane gas

3349. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the works related to location of coal-bed methane gas have since commenced at Barmer where huge deposits of lignite have been discovered;

(b) what are the uses of CBM gas;

(c) what are the prospects of locating of CBM gas in this area; and

(d) the details in this regard?

Supply of HSD at Concessional rate to SRTUs

3350. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request has been received for supply of High Speed Diesel at concessional and fixed rates to State Road Transport Undertakings;

(b) if so, whether Government have worked out any plan to supply HSD to State Road Transport Undertakings at subsidised rates;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor keeping in view very weak financial position of SRTUs?

Fire in gas pipelines

†3351. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of places and number of times, incidents of fire in gas pipelines took place during the last two years;

(b) the details of loss of life and property due to recurrence of incidents of fire; and

(c) the details of steps Government are going to take to keep a check on the same?

OPEC Conference in Vienna

3352. SHRI NANDIYELLAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently a conference of oil Ministers of OPEC was held in Vienna, especially to increase the oil production with a view to bring down the prices of crude oil;

(b) if so, the details of the decisions taken in the said Conference; and

(c) the likely impact thereof on the prices of petroleum and diesel in India?

Separation of KRL from BPCL

3353. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to separate Kochi Refineries Ltd. (KRL) from BPCL in the course of its privatisation and merge KRL with OIC or ONGC; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Research on tamper proof seal on LPG cylinders

3354. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central grants are being provided to LPG Equipment Research Centre, Bangalore;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said Research Centre has so far failed in providing tamper proof seals on LPG cylinders resulting in cheating of consumers by supplying underweight cylinders; and

(d) the remedial measures Government propose to take in the matter?

LPG connections in Gujarat

3355. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of companies dealing with LPG connections and distribution in Gujarat;

(b) the number of distributors/dealers appointed by each company;

(c) whether Government have a proposal to increase the LPG connections in the State; and

(d) if so, the target set for 2003-2004?

Objectives of PCRA

†3356. SHRI FAQIR CHAND MULLANA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) when did PCRA came into existence alongwith the objective thereof;

(b) the savings made by the same in the field of petroleum-fuels and the scheme in this regard; and

(c) the steps Government are taking to enlarge the scope of PCRA keeping in view of rising prices of petroleum products?

Availability of LPG in villages

†3357. SHRI FAQIR CHAND MULLANA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in India where LPG is yet to be made available;

(b) by when LPG would be available in all the villages alongwith the details of the scheme in this regard; and

(c) the reasons for not making LPG available in these villages till date?

Shortage of LPG in Faridabad and Ghaziabad

3358. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for shortage of LPG in Faridabad and Ghaziabad for the last six months;

(b) the names of dealers of IOC, BPCL and HPCL who have delayed delivery of LPG to their customers beyond ten days during the last three months; and

(c) the details of the reasons ascertained by oil companies for the said delays and the steps taken/to be taken to normalize the situation in these cities?

Tender for transportation of LPG

†3359. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the dates on which various oil companies in North India issued tenders for transportation of L.P.G. in bulk and packaged form during the last two years and when they were to be implemented;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

whether there has been any delay in the implementation of the same; if so, the reasons therefor and the persons who are responsible for the same;

(b) when was the period of the said tenders expired and the reasons for not making arrangements for giving new contracts before the expiry of the said period; the names of the person who was responsible for this; and

(c) the scheme for transportation of L.P.G. in bulk and packed form in future?

Survey to assess tourism potential

3360. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any agency with adequate skills to undertake surveys to assess tourism potential;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any such survey has been done in 2002-2003 anywhere in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Funds allocated for development of tourist destinations in Karnataka

3361. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals sent by the Karnataka Government for the development of tourist destinations in Karnataka during 2002-2003;

(b) the number of proposals out of the above which have been cleared; and

(c) the amount released during 2002-2003?

Right of major communities to perform Puja in Bhojshala in M.P.

3362. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh have approached Government to issue an order about the rights of two major communities to perform puja and offer prayers, respectively, on specific days in the week in the protected monument of Bhojshala in Madhya Pradesh;

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

(c) whether the monument is open to the general tourists on the days other than Tuesdays and Fridays, when it is open for puja and prayers, respectively, by the two major communities?

Denial of Visa to the Literary elites of Pakistan

3363. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a much publicised International Punjabi Conference organised by the Punjabi Academy of Union Territory of Delhi, Pakistani delegates remained away for want of Visa; and

(b) the reasons for denying Visa to the literary elites from Pakistan apart from the perennial hostility?

Funds allocated for promotion and development of tourism

3364. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of projects formulated for promotion and development of tourism in the different parts of the country during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) the State-wise details of budget allocated for the purpose during the aforesaid plan; and

(c) the measures being taken by Government for implementation of the said projects in different parts of the country?

Revival of Fatehpur Sikri

†3365. SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared on the page number 7 of Nav Bharat Times dated the 16th December, 2003 captioned "Fatehpur Sikri ki durdasha dekh nirash hue UNESCO pratinidhi";

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

(c) when and how much amount was made available by UNESCO for the revival of Fatehpur Sikri; and

(d) the details of steps being taken by Government for the revival of Fatehpur Sikri?

Inclusion of Cheraideo in World Heritage Site

3366. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN:
Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Guwahati circle of Archaeological Survey of India conducted excavation at Cheraideo in Sivasagar District;

(b) if so, what measures are proposed to be taken for the preservation of the exposed underground royal burial structure, human remains and other articles discovered inside the "Maidaam" (tomb); and

(c) whether any scheme is being prepared to include Cheraideo as World Heritage Site, as it possesses a large number of such unique Royal Mausoleum far from thirteenth to nineteenth centuries?

Development of tourist spots in Maharashtra

3367. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN:
Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the schemes of Government to develop tourists spots in the country, particularly in the State of Maharashtra;

(b) the number of foreign tourists who visited Maharashtra during the year 2002-2003; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to increase the flow of foreign tourists in Maharashtra?

Development of Tourism in Eastern States

3368. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to set up a special task force for the development of tourism in the Eastern States;

(b) if so, the steps taken in that regard; and

(c) if not, what other steps are being taken to tap the tourist potential of the Eastern States and develop the infrastructure to attract more number of domestic as well as foreign tourists to those States?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Handing over of security of Red Fort to CISF

3369. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to handover the security of historic Red Fort to Central Industrial Security Force (CISF);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what prompted Government to come to this conclusion; and

(d) if so, whether Government are considering similar decision in connection with other historic monuments in different parts of the country?

Tourist spots in Punjab

3370. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the tourist spots now existing in Punjab;

(b) the details of these spots which are based on religious background and also on other aspects; and

(c) the amount earmarked for renovation and development of the existing tourist spots?

Effect of US-Iraq War on tourism projects

3371. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Tourism hit as war clouds burst" which appeared in the Times of India dated the 30th March, 2003;

(b) if so, whether the US-Iraq war has affected several tourism projects;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government have taken any steps to boost inflow and outgo of tourists inspite of war situation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Effect of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome on tourist arrival

3372. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World wide scare created by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome has an adverse effect on Indian Tourism industry;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether there is fall in arrival of tourists from Asian countries; and

(d) if so, the steps Government have taken to face the challenge?

Conservation of historical monuments and museums in Maharashtra

3373. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested Government in February, 2002 for conservation of important historical monuments of rich heritage and development of Government museums;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of assistance sought by the State Government;

(c) the action taken by Government so far; and

(d) the details of monuments selected and the assistance provided and if not, the reasons for delay?

Expenditure on advertisement

3374. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large part of the allocation of funds placed with the Department of Tourism, is used for advertising and promoting India as a premium tourist destination globally;

(b) if so, the details of funds incurred on advertising and promoting India abroad during the last three years; and

(c) the reasons for not developing integrated tourist circles in India and how much money Government propose to incur to develop beaches, back waters, temples and wild life in India?

Closing of excavation work in W.B.

3375. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Archaeological Survey of India has closed excavation work at Rajpat Khalisa Gosanimari Village, district Cooch Behar in West Bengal;

(b) the details of the excavation work and the objectives for the same;

(c) the details of excavated materials and whereabouts of the same; and

(d) whether ASI have any plan to resume excavation there?

Irrigation potential of Harihar Jor Irrigation Project in Orissa

3376. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the irrigation potential of the Harihar Jor Irrigation Project in Orissa;

(b) whether the project has been completed; and

(c) if so, the details of additional irrigation facilities added to the State after the execution of that irrigation project?

Clearance to flood control in Ganga Basin

3377. SHRI LALU PRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Bihar has submitted a scheme of flood control in Ganga basin at an estimated cost of Rs. 500.00 crore to Ganga Flood Control Commission;

(b) whether Government propose to sanction this scheme; and

(c) if so, by when?

Problem of water due to drought

3378. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many States due to severe drought in the country in the year 2002, will face gruelling problem of water in 2003; and

(b) if so, how the Ministry in coordination with the Ministry of Rural Development and other concerned Ministries are planning to solve the problem by assisting the State Government?

Baglihar Hydro-Power Project

3379. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether talks between India and

Pakistan held in early February, 2003 regarding Islamabad's reservations about the design of the 450 MW Baglihar Hydro-electric Power Project on river Chenab in Kashmir, have ended in a deadlock;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Pakistan has decided to invite a "neutral expert" to resolve the issue; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Completion of Polavaram Project

3380. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA:
SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State of Andhra Pradesh requested to help in completion of Polavaram Multi-purpose Project;

(b) whether a suggestion has been made to entrust this work to a private agency;

(c) whether on completion of this project people of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh will be greatly helped; and

(d) if so, the causes of delay in completion of this project?

Fund allocated for erosion of Ganga-Padma river basin

3381. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of heavy erosion of Ganga-Padma river basin;

(b) whether Government recognize the problem as national calamity;

(c) the amount Government of West Bengal has demanded to deal with the problem; and

(d) the amount sanctioned by Government?

Foreign aid for irrigation schemes of Uttaranchal

3382. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of irrigation schemes of Uttaranchal which have received or are likely to receive foreign aid;

(b) the scheme-wise foreign aid received during the period from its inception till date;

(c) the actual amount spent on irrigation schemes of the State during the said period; and

(d) the number of irrigation proposals pending along with its reasons?

Deficiency of rainfall in Rajasthan

3383. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a deficiency of (-) 64 per cent of overall rainfall in the State of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, what are all the relief measures taken; and

(c) whether Government are taking necessary steps to give financial assistance to the State of Rajasthan to overcome this calamity?

**Contaminated underground water is
Gangetic basin**

3384. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to a research study recently published in 'Nature' magazine, more than 449 million residents the Gangetic basin are exposed to arsenic poisoning through contaminated groundwater;

(b) if so, whether the wells surveyed in the region were found to contain five times more arsenic than the permissible limits and whether a deeper region-wise study has been suggested; and

(c) whether excessive arsenic content in drinking water causes skin lesions and Neurological problems for users and if so, the steps being taken to check the arsenic level?

**Construction of dam on
Bhavani River**

3385. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Cauvery Water Tribunal has directed Kerala Government not to build a dam across Bhavani river;

(b) if so, whether Kerala Government is still continuing to build the dam; and

(c) what steps have been taken to ensure compliance of Tribunal's directive by Kerala Government?

**PAP agreement for water allocation to
Kerala**

3386. SHRI N. K. PREMA-CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of water entitled to Sholayar Power House per water year as per the PAP agreement;

(b) the quantity of water released by Tamil Nadu to Kerala Sholayar during the last water year and the present year till 31st January, 2003;

(c) whether Government are of the view that Tamil Nadu Government violated the PAP agreement to distribute water to Sholayar; and

(d) whether Government are aware that Kerala suffer power crisis due to the violation of agreement and whether Government consider to intervene and ensure the due share to Kerala Sholayar?

Random checks of water boring

3387. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU) : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention have been drawn to the news-report captioned "Groundwater in deep trouble sinks in South" which appeared in Indian Express dated the 23rd February, 2003;

(b) if so, the details and facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether rain water harvesting undertaken at JNU and IIT has since been found fruitful;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of Government to initiate random checks of clandestine water boring to impose complete ban thereon to forestall depleting water table of Delhi;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Outcome of the meeting of World
Water Forum held at Kyota**

3388. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the third meeting of World Water Forum was held at Kyota in the end of last month;

(b) if so, the broad conclusion which were arrived at the Conference; and

(c) what solutions were offered at the Conference to tackle the problem of World-wide shortage of Water Resources in the 21st Century?

**Decline of underground water level in
Punjab**

3389. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the underground water level in Punjab is constantly declining;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government in this regard?

Irrigation projects in U.P.

3390. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the major and medium irrigation projects in U.P. which are not completed so far;

(b) what was the initial cost when each of the projects were taken up with target date of completion;

(c) the latest estimate of each of the projects with the likely time of completion of each projects; and

(d) what are the reasons for delay?

Agreement with South Africa

3391. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether South Africa has called for co-operation and partnership with India and other countries to provide safe drinking water to the World population;

(b) if so, whether there is a need for partnership among the States as also Government and private sector to enable the world populace have access to safe drinking water;

(c) whether South Africa has agreed to help India for providing drinking water and also providing proper sanitation facilities;

(d) if so, whether any agreement between the two countries have been signed; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Construction of canals

†3392. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise number of proposals for construction of canals or various kinds of means of irrigation pending with/under consideration of Government; and

(b) the reasons for the delay and by when approval is likely to be granted to these proposals?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Funds allocated for Reservoir Development Schemes in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh

†3393. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Reservoir Development Schemes being implemented in the country including Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh at present;

(b) the funds allocated to the States by Government, World Bank and other International Financial Organisations for the said schemes during the last three years; and

(c) the achievements made in this regard so far?

World Bank loan for irrigation projects of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh

†3394. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Water Commission (CWC) has accorded approval to some fresh irrigation projects of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh for getting loans from World Bank;

(b) if so, the amount of loan sought and the names of the other States which have sought the loans; and

(c) the number of irrigation projects likely to be completed through the above mentioned loans?

Appointment of Chairman ICICI to study the financial aspects of inter-linking of rivers

3395. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether ICICI Chairman has been appointed to study financial aspects of the project on interlinking of country's rivers;

(b) whether any group of engineers to study the technical feasibilities of the project has also been appointed; and

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

Outcome of the meeting of people's National Water Forum

3396. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of the People's National Water Forum was held in New Delhi in March 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the participants and the broad issues considered therein;

(c) whether the Forum unanimously identified that the scheme to link India's rivers as a major threat to the basic human right to have access to adequate and quality water; and

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

Financial grants by International Institutions and World Bank

3397. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of financial grants received from International Institutions/World Bank etc. for irrigation projects during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) the details of irrigation projects started by the various States during this period; and

(c) if so, the amount spent on each irrigation project?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Water crisis in Southern States

3398. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that most of the Southern States in the country are facing severe water crisis resulting in non-availability of water for drinking and irrigation purposes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take for the solution of water crisis in Southern States?

Comprehensive study of Sri Ram Sagar project in A.P.

3399. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to take up comprehensive study of effective use of surface and ground water in the areas irrigated by Sri Ram Sagar project in Andhra Pradesh through the Central Ground Water Board;

(b) if so, by when the study will start; and

(c) the probable time for its completion?

Scheme for Anti Sea Erosion works in the coastal region of Karnataka

3400. DR. VIJAY MALLYA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Centrally sponsored scheme for Anti Sea Erosion works in the coastal region of Karnataka was submitted by the State Government of Karnataka in December, 2001;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the total outlay proposed; and

(c) the present stage of consideration of the proposal and by when the approval and release of funds be expected?

Contaminated ground water in Gujarat plains of West Bengal

3401. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Ground Water Board has conducted studies into the arsenic contamination in ground water in the Gangetic plains of West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the details of the studies and the recommendations made thereon?

NEW DELHI;
The 16th April, 2003
Chaitra 26, 1925 (Saka)

YOGENDRA NARAIN,
Secretary-General.

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(Ministry-wise)

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