

RAJYA SABHA

List of Questions for WRITTEN ANSWERS

*to be asked at a sitting of the Rajya Sabha to be held on
Tuesday, the February 25, 2003/Phalguna 6, 1924 (Saka)*

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

Total number of questions—140

Installation of Advanced Landing System at Airports

627. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Advanced Landing System was installed recently at Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi;

(b) if so, what was the total expense incurred for this new system;

(c) whether Government have plans to install similar system at all major international airports of the country; and

(d) if so, by when?

Enhancing FDI limit for domestic aviation

628. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:
SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is contemplating to enhance the FDI limit in domestic aviation;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that it is also proposed to allow foreign airlines to operate on domestic routes;

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

(e) whether reciprocal arrangement is sought for Air India to operate in the domestic air routes of the such countries; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Operation of Indian Commercial Flights over Pakistan

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

(a) whether the Government of Pakistan has allowed Indian Commercial flights to operate over its skies;

(b) if not, whether there is an increase in passenger and cargo tariff whether for passengers or cargo as a result thereof;

(c) if so, whether Government have plans to negotiate with the Pakistani authorities regarding the use of its skies for commercial flights; and

(d) if so, the details of the negotiations reached so far?

Notification on route rationalisation

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Civil Aviation has issued a route rationalisation notification recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the notification is applicable only to Indian Airlines and Air India or it applies to private players also;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Profitt/Losses of AI and IA

†631. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state the profits earned of losses suffered by the Air India and the Indian Airlines during the last three years?

Amendments in AAI Act, 1994

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

(a) whether Government proposes to amend the Airports Authority of India Act, 1994 vis-a-vis the Bangalore International Airport project; and

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

Allowing Domestic/private airlines to fly to foreign destinations

633. SHRI DATTA MEGHE:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted

some domestic private airlines to fly to foreign destinations also;

(b) if so, the reasons and justification therefor;

(c) the benefits to accrue to the Government on allowing domestic/private airlines to fly foreign destinations;

(d) whether such a decision will have an adverse impact on Air India and Indian Airlines; and

(e) if so, the steps taken to check such impact?

Change in names of airports

634. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether names of some Airports have been changed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any expense was increased by the Airports Authority of India in issuing advertisement in relation to change of name of airports; and

(d) if so, the details of amount spent, airport-wise?

Media publicity of AAI

635. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the budget of Media publicity of Airports Authority of India every year; and

(b) the amount spent by Airports Authority of India on such media publicity during the last three years-wise ?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Ground handling at airports

636. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether private individuals and Indian Companies are debarred for the ground handling inside the Airports; and

(b) whether it is a fact that many companies are supplying manpower to various Airlines for ground handling?

Review of discounts schemes offered by IA

637. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to review all the discounts offered by Indian Airlines under various categories in order to control the mounting losses;

(b) if so, what are the details of the discounts offered at present and its impact on the Indian Airlines finances during the last two years; and

(c) what proposals are being considered to reduce the loss on this account?

Investment made in civil aviation sector

638. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the major project proposals received from State Governments during the last three years; and

(b) the details of major proposed to be taken/completed during the Tenth Plan period in the country?

International airport at Bodh Gaya

639. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new International Airport has been developed at Bodh Gaya;

(b) whether any such airport is also likely to be developed in other Buddhist centres to boost local economy; and

(c) whether the project at Bodh Gaya has been financed by foreign assistance, if so, the details thereof?

Air India employees self-contributory pension fund

640. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air India employees self-contributory pension fund has been depleted;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any changes were made in the Scheme adverse to the interest of the employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Delay in International Project near Bangalore

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

(a) whether Government are aware that the growth of Karnataka State has affected very badly due to delay in the implementation of the International Airport Project at Davanahalli, near Bangalore;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) when the foundation stone for the proposed project was laid by the Hon'ble Prime Minister;

(c) what are the reasons for delay in granting statutory clearances to the proposed project;

(d) whether Government are aware that the consortium could not go ahead with the proposed project due to delay in giving statutory clearances; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to give statutory clearances early?

Disinvestment plans of IA and AI

642. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have finally decided to abandon its disinvestment plans for Indian Airlines and Air India in order to facilitate the acquisition of aircraft for fleet modernisation; and

(b) if so, what are the modernisation plan for the two airlines and time-frame for its implementation?

Expansion of AI network

643. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal for the expansion of Air India network;

(b) if so, the steps taken in that regard during last three years; and

(c) what are the details of additional domestic and International Flights proposed to be introduced by Air India during 2003-04?

Renovation of airports in Bihar

† 644. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal under consideration for renovation and expansion of airports in Bihar;

(b) if so, whether any amount has been spent on the same so far; if so, the amount so spent and present status of each work; and

(c) the steps taken so far for setting up new airports in the country and State-wise details thereof?

Performance of Alliance Air

† 645. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the objective behind setting up of a separate airways called Alliance Airlines;

(b) whether these objectives have been achieved;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether number of plane crashes of Alliance airlines have increased recently;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of remedial steps taken for safety of passengers and planes; and

(f) whether any review of by when any review of the airlines is likely to be done?

Traffic at Tirupati airport

646. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air Traffic at the Tirupati Airport remains stagnant despite extending the Runway, Construction of

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Modern Terminal Building and making provision for night landing;

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

(c) the steps Government propose to take to increase Air Traffic at this pilgrimage Airport?

Composition of Tobacco Board

492. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the composition of the Governing Council of Tobacco Board as constituted now;

(b) the number of representatives from the farmers/traders sector from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka in the Council; and

(c) whether Government would give more representation to Karnataka on the Council since it has vast area under tobacco cultivation?

Modification in Indo-Nepal Trade Treaty

493. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Nepal Government has requested modifications in the Indo-Nepal Trade Treaty signed in the month of March, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons forwarded for changes in the treaty; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereon?

Decline in export of gold jewellery

494. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been sharp decline in the volume of export of Indian gold jewellery during the past months;

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

(c) the figures of exports of gold jewellery from the export processing zones and export oriented units of the country, month-wise; and

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

Compliance Panel Report on cotton bed linen

495. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to appeal in the World Trade Organisation Appellate Body against the Compliance Panel Report on cotton bed linen, which favoured the imposition of anti-dumping duty on the product; and

(b) if so, the latest position of the case?

Free Trade Agreement with WTO Members

496. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the free trade agreement, signed by the country with other WTO members, so far;

(b) the list of commodities that has been accorded duty concessions; and

(c) whether India and South Africa have any trade pact and if not, whether bilateral agreement is likely to be signed with that country?

Dwindling rice export

497. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether export of rice is dwindling since last year as compared to years prior to that;

(b) if so, the names of countries taking over that export;

(c) the quantity of rice exported during the last three years, year-wise; and

(d) the steps being taken to boost export of rice?

Mini-Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo

498. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that WTO is expected to discuss market access in agriculture and services, anti-dumping, Singapore issues etc. in the forthcoming Mini-Ministerial meeting in Tokyo;

(b) if so, the stand taken by Government on these issues; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to protect that interest of Country on these issues?

Incentives to cement factories to be set up in Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal

499. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that

offering incentives like excise exemptions etc. to cement factories to be set up in Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal will be an environmental hazard in these areas as it involves extensive transportation by road from the lime deposits to the factories and from the manufacturing sites to marketing places in North India due to paucity of additional demands of cement in Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal; and

(b) if so, whether the Environmental angle has been cleared from the respective agencies?

Lockout/closure of tea gardens

500. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tea gardens in the country being under lockout/closure during the last two years alongwith details, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that thousands of labourers lost their jobs due to closure and lock outs;

(c) whether it is also a fact that many starvation deaths were reported from the settlements of the tea garden workers;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) whether Government have conducted any study to ascertain the causes of the prevailing situation?

Use of Nimesulid drug

501. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT:
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether drug Nimesulide has been cleared by Government for prescription to the patients;

(b) whether it is a fact that though Nimesulide is freely prescribed in the Country, some medical experts still have some reservations about the safety of this drug, particularly among infants;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Nimesulide is still not licensed for use in certain developed countries like the USA, Australia and New Zealand; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to review its use in the Country?

AIDS cases in Orissa

502. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 40 lakh people in the country await certain death, as reported in the New Indian Express, Bhubaneswar, dated 11th December, 2002;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the country stand second to South Africa in the list of nations where AIDS has taken epidemic form;

(c) if so, the places in Orissa which are the vulnerable blocks; and

(d) the assistance rendered by the Centre to the State Govt. to control the incidents of this disease?

Adulteration in bottled water

503. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that bottled water available in various markets in Delhi and other places contains harmful pesticides;

(b) if so, whether the Department of Prevention of Food Adulteration has totally failed to check such adulteration in bottled water;

(c) whether Government have fixed any responsibility on PFA department about the adulteration; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Facilitis in PHCs in H.P.

504. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Primary Health Centres in remote areas/snow bound areas and backward areas in Himachal Pradesh are in bad shape due to lack of staff, adequate facilities and medicines;

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any scheme to provide proper facilities in these Health Centres; and

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

Scam in CGHS Medical Stores, New Delhi

505. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major scam of drug and medicines was unearthed during last year at the CGHS Medical Stores, Gole market New Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry was ordered into the matter and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the report of the enquiry has been received; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

Strike of Chemists

† 506. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the basis on which the strike of CGHS Chemists came to an end on the 16th January, 2003 which was continuing for the last three months; and

(b) the details of the demands made of the Chemists along with the benefits became available to the care holders and Government after the strike came to an end?

NABL certificate for clinical reference laboratories

507. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to make it mandatory for clinical reference laboratories to obtain the National Accreditation Board for Calibration and Laboratory Testing (NABL) certification before granting them licences to operate;

(b) whether out of 30,000 clinical reference laboratories in the country only a handful are NABL accredited; and

(c) if so, the details of the scheme and the likely date of completion of NABL certification?

Setting up of National Commission to formulate health related issues

5008. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY
SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the recommendations of the WHO sponsored Global Panel that health preceded economic development and consequently setting up a National Commission to formulate a strategy to address health-related issues; and

(b) whether this Panel would be able to give comprehensive recommendations within its terms of reference and within stipulated period of one year and whether a quarterly review of the working would be introduced to get desired result in one year?

Terms of Members of Central Council of Homoeopathy

509. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN:
SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN
AHMED:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Members of the Central Council of Homoeopathy are continuing in office even after expiry of their term as per the HCC Act;

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

(c) the steps Government propose to take to conduct elections/nominations in place of such Members; and

(d) the details of the time schedule of the above election/nominations procedure be completed?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi .

Disposal of bio-waste by hospitals

†510. SHRIMATI PREMA
CARIAPPA:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of hospitals in Delhi which do not have arrangements for disposal of bio-waste;

(b) the steps taken by Government for disposal of bio-waste in these hospitals;

(c) by when arrangement for disposal of bio-waste is likely to be made in these hospitals;

(d) the names of major hospitals in the country which do not have arrangements for disposal of bio-waste, till date; and

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

Encouragement to Ayurvedic Medicine

511. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal or project to encourage Ayurvedic Medicine;

(b) if so, whether the proposal also covers Education of Ayurvedic Medicine;

(c) whether the Ayurvedic Drug Manufacturers have approached Government regarding the problems faced by them in competition to parallel drugs in the country;

(d) whether Government propose to play a part of reviving the ancient Ayurvedic Medicine System in the country; and

(e) if so, to what extent?

Guarantee on AP's loan from World Bank

656. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conveyed its guarantee on Andhra Pradesh's loan from World Bank last year; and

(b) if so, the amount of loan sought by Andhra Pradesh Government from World Bank?

Tax relief for disabled sector

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

(a) whether the disabled sector has sought tax relief and concessional import duty on aids/appliances meant for rehabilitation of the handicapped;

(b) if so, whether any memorandum has been submitted to Government by Disabled Rights Group on their behalf; and

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

Debarring of NBFCs from doing business

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

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has debarred certain Non-Banking Finance Companies from doing business beyond 9th January 2003 for not meeting the 'Net owned fund' criterion;

(b) if so whether this action is pursuant to RBI receiving complaints from several depositors on the failure of NBFCs to honour commitments to deposit holders; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the list of such NBFCs debarred from operating from 9th January, 2003?

Recommendation of Kelkar Task Force on corporate tax

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

(a) whether Kelkar Task Force has recommended the rate of tax for Corporates be reduced from the existing 36.75 per cent (including surcharge) to 30 per cent for domestic companies, while the tax on foreign companies be reduced from 42 per cent to 35 per cent;

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

(c) whether Kelkar Task Force has suggested taxation on agriculture income;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether above proposals were accepted by competent authority; and

(e) the action taken/proposed to be taken based on the above proposals?

Raj Nath panel on Kelkar Committee report

660. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

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

(a) whether the Kelkar Committee Report submitted to Government has dispelled any misconception that the middle class would be hit by the Task Force recommendations on tax;

(b) if so, whether on the other hand Kelkar Committee has stated that the tax

incidence of various income groups would be much less and not more as claimed in certain quarters;

(c) whether Government have fully considered this and if so, to what extent Raj Nath panel set up by Government to Kelkar report has given final approval to the Kelkar Committee's report; and

(d) what is Government's final decision in this regard?

Separate apex body for UCBs

661. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on stock market scam has endorsed the Reserve Bank of India's proposal for setting up a separate apex body to regulate the entire Urban Cooperative Sector; and

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

Recovery of indirect taxes

†662. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:
SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that during current financial year the recovery of indirect taxes is unlikely to be according to the Budget estimates;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to meet the Budget estimates?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Merger of Nedungadi Bank with PNB

663. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Nedungadi Bank has been merged with the Punjab National Bank; and

(b) if so, the terms and conditions of the merger agreement and since when it has become effective?

Investment climate for NRIs

664. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-
CHANDRAYYA

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

(a) whether Government are considering a slew of policy measure to create an attractive investment climate for non-residents Indians and PIOs;

(b) if so, whether the proposals are being considered including issuing of special infrastructure bonds, removing restrictions on repatriation of profits, and setting up of exclusive special economic zones;

(c) if so, the measures Government propose to take to attract NRIs and PIOs to their roots and involve them in social and economic development of the country; and

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

Banks loan to SSI units

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

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the public sector banks of the country extend loans to small scale units;

(b) if so, the loans extended by banks to these units in the year 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002?

(c) the quantum of loans extended by banks to the units of small scale industrial sector during each of the above years in each state of the country?

Loans by public sector banks

†666. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that public sectors banks have provided loans to agriculture and industry sector and have invested capital in the buying and selling of shares;

(b) if so, the details of the amount invested in the abovesaid sectors during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002; and

(c) the amount of return earned in the form of interest and profit by these banks during the said each year?

Loans to small scale sector

†667. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH
'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

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

(a) whether government propose to increase the loan given to units of small scale sector and to make it more accessible to SSI units;

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

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Foreign currency regulation Act

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

(a) whether Government propose to
amend the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act
to monitor the use of these funds by NGOs;
and

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

(c) details of the proposals to amend the
Act?

Debt burden of farmers

†669. SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that burden of
debt on the farmers is increasing as a result
of higher rate of interest on loans provided
to them;

(b) if not Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a request
has already been made to Government for
lowering the interest rate; and

(d) if so, the decision so far taken on this
matter?

Investment by RBI in foreign countries

†670. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH
'LALAN':

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Reserve Bank
of India invest capital in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details of the capital invested
in foreign countries during the years 1999-
2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 and first
nine months of 2002-2003;

(c) the details of the countries where such
investment has been made to gather with
the capital invested; and

(d) the annual profit earned as result of
such investment during the said years?

Compensation of States over implementation of VAT

671. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA
RAO:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Central
Government have decided not to give 100
per cent compensation to States while
switching over to VAT which starts from
April, 2003; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor? such a
decision and diluting its pensions
commitment of compensating 100 per cent

Outstanding dues against Essar Power Ltd.

672. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Essar Power
Ltd. has defaulted on the payment of
principal and interest thereon of the I.F.C.I.
since 2000;

(b) if so, what are the details of the
outstanding dues against the company at
present; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether recovery proceeding against the company has been initiated by I.F.C.I. and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

(e) if not, whether Government are willing to consider giving any medical concessions to the poor suffering from cancer?

BPL population

673. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that World Bank has lauded India's progress in poverty reduction during the last decade;

(b) if so, the percentage of India's population living below poverty line in 1991 and the percentage of below poverty line people in 2002; and

(c) what percentage of population below poverty line is likely to be achieved at the end of Tenth Five Year Plan?

Investment of Non-Resident Indians

675. SHRI C. O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of NRIs investment made during the last three years, State-wise and sector-wise;

(b) what are the guidelines by Government on NRI investment; and

(c) the details of offers received from the NRIs during the recently concluded Indian Diaspora Meeting?

Allotment of funds to States for cancer treatment

674. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: SHRI R.K. ANAND:

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

(a) whether Government have any proposal of allting funds to States for cancer treatment for people of BPL in all major Government hospitals of all States;

(b) whether the Finance Ministry is willing to co-ordinate with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to formulate such a Plan;

(c) whether the Finance Ministry is willing to co-ordinate with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to formulate such a Plan;

(d) if so, by when any official proposal would be worked out between the two Ministries; and

Loss making bank branches in rural

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

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

(a) whether Government have identified those bank branches in rural areas which are running into losses continuously;

(b) if so, the States where these branches are located and the state-wise numbers thereof;

(c) the details of the average annual losses incurred by each branch of the said banks in each State;

(d) whether Government have decided to close down these branches; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Increase in outstanding guarantee of States

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

(a) whether Government are aware of the alarming situation on the guarantee front in respect of 24 States where the outstanding guarantees increased from just Rs. 40,317 crore in 1992 to Rs. 1,33,062 crore in 2000 and further to Rs. 1,69,562 crore in 2001;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to issue directions/guidelines to State Governments to honour the guarantees given by them; and

(c) whether there are any monitoring mechanisms in this regard and, if so, whether timely warnings were given to the state Governments?

Foreign exchange reserves

678. DR. MONMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the increase in foreign exchange reserves thus far in the current fiscal year;

(b) the factors responsible for this increase;

(c) whether Government have fixed any target for optimum level of reserves; and

(d) if so, what is that level?

Additional funding by Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation

679. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation will pump in an

additional \$ 150 million in its Indian Operations, as reported in the New Indian Express, Bhubaneswar dated the 3rd November, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Bank has obtained the required permission from the competent authority in this regard?

Increase in Income-tax Surveys

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

(a) whether the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has issued fresh guidelines with regard to the increase in the number of Income-Tax surveys and in the number of returns to be taken up for scrutiny;

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

(c) the amount of tax collections during the first three quarters during the current financial year vis-a-vis the figures for the last two years during the same period?

Commutation of pension to Government servants

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

(a) whether the 5th Central Pay Commission recommended a new formula for the commutation of Pension to the Government servants retiring on or after 1st January, 1996 and gave them a higher benefit;

(b) if so, the total increase in Government's liability as a result thereof;

(c) whether this formula was extended to pensioners who retired before 1st January,

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

1996 to whom other pensionary benefits were made applicable;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether it is proposed to extend the same now?

Infrastructure finance

682. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have initiated a dialogue with banks to give a big push to infrastructure financing in the country, which is seen as being crucial in achieving a growth rate of 9 percent; and

(b) if so, what is the outcome of these discussions and the steps taken to facilitate the banks to provide credit to infrastructure projects?

Restructuring of UTI schemes

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

(a) whether the Unit Trust of India has decided to offer fresh options to its investors by restructuring some existing schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that it has also been decided to foreclose several assured return schemes;

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

(e) by when the will be finally decided and investors informed about the changes?

Cut in Government expenditure

† 684. SHRI RAMASHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry of Finance has suggested reduction in expenditure of some of the Department of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government propose to take in this regard alongwith the fate officers, employees and research as when these suggestions are implemented?

Reduction of duty burden on aids for disabled persons

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

(a) whether Government are aware that Custom duties on aids and appliance for disabled are at par and often higher to consumer goods like Computers, TV's, Components of Cellular phones etc.;

(b) whether any study has been conducted in the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to reduce the duty burden on goods for disabled persons?

Structural adjustment loans

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

(a) whether Government have decided to impose stricter guidelines on the State Governments seeking structural adjustment loan from multilateral institutions;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of guidelines proposed to be imposed on the State Governments; and

(c) the measures Government propose to take to reduce the fiscal deficit of the States to less than three percent of States' domestic product?

World Bank assistance to AP

687. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for World Bank's assistance for its Structural Adjustment Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposal had been recommended for consideration of the World Bank;

(d) if so, the reasons of the World Bank; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Loans for unemployed graduates in HP

688. SHRI ANIL SHAMRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the problems faced by the unemployed graduates in getting loans from the Banks, in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether Government propose forward relax such rules for the unemployed from backward, snow bound areas and other weaker sections in the State as special case; and

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

Malpractice in allotment of cases to advocates by insurance companies

†689. SHRI GHANSHYAM CHANDRA KHARWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are malpractice in allotment of cases to advocates in the National Insurance; the Oriental Insurance, the New India Insurance companies in Delhi and losses allotted in consideration of money;

(b) if so, the company-wise and advocate details of the cases allotted during the last two years;

(c) the reasons of such discrimination; and

(d) the efforts made to check this malpractice?

Naresh Chandra Committee

†690. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Naresh Chandra Committee has suggested a provision with regard to mandatory authentication of declared facts in the account books of the company by the Chief Executive Officer and Director (Finance) of the company;

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

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

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Financial assistance to Kerala from ADB

691. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has signed agreements with ADB for availing loan;

(b) whether the Central Government are aware of the condition, if any, agreed with for sanctioning financial assistance from ADB;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether it is a fact that the conditions agreed to in the ADB discussions under lead the State Government in debt trap and the same would?

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

Cases registered against default companies

692. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases registered by the Department of Company Affairs against companies for alleged violation of existing rules and regulations during the last four years and other details arising thereof, year-wise;

(b) how many of these cases have been concluded and their outcome and other details arising thereof?

Conversion of US-64 units into tax free bonds

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

(a) whether it is a fact that UTI has given an option to all the holders of US-64 Units to convert their Units into a five-year tax-free tradeable bond; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard together with the details of the benefits that would accrue on such conversion?

Recovery of taxes

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

(a) whether Income Tax Department is unable to recover tax from a large number of defaulters;

(b) if so, the total amount to be recovered together with the number of defaulters and the reasons therefor;

(c) the I.T. arrears from top 20 industrial house, film stars and other professionals; and

(d) the measures proposed to be taken by Government to recover the dues and the time target set for the purpose?

Computerisation of banks branches

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

(a) whether it is a fact that despite Government's policy of early modernisation and complete computerisation of the banking sector a number of PSU banks are still lagging behind;

(b) if so, the names of the PSU banks which not yet made their branches fully computerised, branch-wise and location-wise;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) the reasons for not making these bank branches fully computerised; and

(d) by when these branches are likely to be made fully computerised?

Corruption cases against employees to IT and Customs

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

(a) the number of officers and employees of Income Tax and Customs Department caught red-handed in corruption cases during the last financial year;

(b) the details of the items confiscated from them;

(c) the number of persons out of the above against whom trials are going on alongwith the status thereof; and

(d) the details of the initial departmental action taken against them?

Currency rates of five and ten thousand denominations

697. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to print currency notes of five thousand and ten thousand denominations; and

(b) if not, whether Government propose to constitute a Committee to undertake a study of its necessity?

Reservation of SCs/STs/OBCs in RRBs

698. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the benefit of reservation/concession to SC/ST/OBC, handicapped and Ex-serviceman has been allowed to Regional Rural Bank Staff; and

(b) if not, by when Government are going to give them this benefit?

Domestic and Foreign debt

699. SHRI BALBIR K. PUNJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total debt on Government of India as on February 1, 2003;

(b) what is the break-up of the debt both domestic and foreign;

(c) what is further break-up on the debt alongwith its servicing costs of each debt, and the rate of interest thereon; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to retire the high cost debts and replace them with low cost ones?

Foreign Exchange reserves

700. SHRI BALBIR K. PUNJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the foreign exchange reserves (with a break-up of various components) on the 1st of every month for the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that reserves have appreciated in a very significant manner;

(c) the reasons therefor;

(d) what are the returns of these huge reserves and where are they parked; and

(e) whether Government are considering any plan to ensure that the funds are invested in a manner which will optimize the returns on them?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Advisory Group on bankruptcy laws

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

(a) whether Advisory Group on Bankruptcy Laws headed by Dr. L.N. Mitra has recommended for a comprehensive bankruptcy code incorporating the provisions relating to windup up and liquidation of a corporate entity re-organisation and settlement of all other related issues;

(b) if so, whether any action has been initiated in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

External debts

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

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to pre-pay high interest external debts;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if so, how much interest will be saved?

MH Kenia committee on demutualisation of stock exchanges

703. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the M.H. Kenia Committee on Corporatisation and demutualisation of Stock Exchanges has recommended the abolition of regional stock exchanges in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith other recommendations;

(c) whether the Government have examined these recommendations; and

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

Change in the premium of motor insurance

704. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a drastic change in the premium of insurance and of No Claim Bonus (NCB) in case of motor vehicle users;

(b) if so, the details of thereof and since when;

(c) whether there is any uniformity between the position prevailing in Government and private general insurance companies in this regard;

(d) if so, the justification and reasons for change over the past practice;

(e) whether the changes would hit hard to the honest motor vehicle users and whether Government have received any representation in this regard; and

(f) if so, the action taken thereon?

Floating of IPO by Indraprastha Gas Ltd.

705. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indraprastha Gas Ltd. is being allowed to float an IPO with a Rs. 150 crore issue which is more than its current equity base of Rs. 140 crore;

(b) if so, details thereof and the reasons for allowing first utility company to float IPO;

(c) whether it will have any impact on disinvestments in BPCL which has equity participation in IGL; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Steps to improve foreign investment

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

(a) whether Government have taken note of the American Chamber of Commerce Gallop Business outlook Survey 2002 which brings out that India is losing out as an investment destination;

(b) whether Government have made a study about the factors that attract foreign investment; and

(c) what steps are envisaged to improve the climate for foreign investment to reach the stipulated target of \$10 billion a year?

Outcome of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Meet

707. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government failed to get active and committed support of NRIs for the economic development of India during Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Meet in January, 2003;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, what has been the outcome of Meet in the field of economic, trade and commerce and benefits accruable to India?

Gross domestic capital formation

708. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the foreign direct investment in India during the last from years in actuals, year wise;

(b) the break-up of these investments sector wise, year-wise; and

(c) the domestic savings as percentage of GDP and gross domestic capital formation during the last from years, year-wise?

Starvation death

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

(a) whether Government agrees that many people died of hunger and starvation in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government also agrees that stress should be laid on the need for a review of whole lot of economic policies to enable the people to overcome starvation;

(c) if so, whether Government have given any serious thought to this problem; and

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Aid Asian Development Bank

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

(a) whether the Asian Development Bank has decided to double its volume of aid to India during the next four years;

(b) if so, what other social sectors are to be covered by the ADB fundings apart from infrastructure funding; and

(c) whether the ADB plans to float rupee denominated long-term bonds in Indian

capital markets and if so, whether the RBI clearance has been obtained?

Study on enforcement system on adulteration

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

(a) whether it is a fact that in India adulteration of petrol and diesel is rampant largely because of easy availability at cheaper rate kerosene and some solvents from petrochemical units;

(b) whether a joint team of senior officials was sent to Australia and Malaysia to study the enforcement system, which the oil companies in those countries had adopted to prevent the adulteration of petrol and dies;

(c) if so, what are their findings; and

(d) by when these are likely to be given shape?

Research on bio-diesel

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to spend about Rs. 17,500 crores in the Tenth Five Year Plan on biodiesel;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed investment, year-wise;

(c) whether the Planning Commission has recommended for setting up of a Commission for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Impact of crude prices on oil import

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

(a) the impact of the recent increase in international crude oil prices on POL imports and the balance of trade;

(b) to what extent, the subsidies on POL have gone up; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to increase domestic POL prices in order to reduce subsidies?

Enhancement of gas production

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a comprehensive plan has been formulated to double the gas production in the country in the next five years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, with the present status of its implementation;

(c) whether it is a fact that detailed block-by-block analysis has been carried out to identity the areas with huge potential and the oil and gas major would be advised to carry out their drilling operations there; and

(d) if so, the details of the region-wise studies carried out so far?

Exploration of gas and oil in Barmer (Rajasthan)

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

(a) whether gas and oil reserves have struck during exploration to the Barmer District in Rajasthan recently; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Exploration of oil by ONGC in Karnataka

716. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation had undertaken survey in Karnataka for oil exploration;

(b) if so, what was the outcome of these surveys;

(c) whether ONGC has identified areas on the offshore side in Karnataka for oil exploration; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to take up oil exploration in Karnataka?

Decanalising import of Petroleum Products

717. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to decanalise import of Petroleum Products;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) whether these imports will jeopardize the existing refineries in the country and whether Government are planning for such contingencies as well if so, the details thereof?

Bidding for HPCL

718. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the reason for Government's proposal to give HPCL's Bhatinda Refinery to ONGC or any other organization;

(b) whether Government are bringing down its share to 15%;

(c) the reasons for Government not allowing ONGC to bid for HPCL; and

(d) whether it is a fact that large number of people bid for HPCL so that Government gets better price for HPCL sale?

Oil exploration projects with Iran

719. 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 videsh, IOC and oil India have signed an agreement with Iran for exploration and production sharing contract with the National Iranian Oil Company for the Farsi oil fields in Iran; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Oil reserves in East Coast

720. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Director-General of Hydrocarbons has recently revealed that the East Coast will be the country's future Oil and Gas bowl with a potential of supplying upto 7 billion tonnes of Oil and Oil equivalents as reported in The Times of India of 7th January, 2003; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the steps taken to tap the oil reserves?

LPG bottling plant at Rajahmundry in AP

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

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a new LPG bottling plant at Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any plan to increase the capacity of LPG bottling Plants in the country during the Tenth Five Year Plan period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Petrotech-2003

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

(a) the aims and objects of organizing Petrotech 2003 in New Delhi during January last;

(b) the amount of money spent on it;

(c) whether foreign experts/oil companies visited Petrotech 2003 and gave business or offered services for tapping hydro carbons in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Allocation of exploration work

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

(a) whether it is fact that India has 3 percent of world's oil reserves;

(b) if so, the total sedimentary area and the proven area having crude oil and gas as on 31st December, 2002;

(c) what is the anticipated monthly rate of production of crude oil and gas from 1st January, 2003;

(d) the steps being taken to explore and exploit virgin sedimentary areas during 2003-04, 2003-05 and 2005-06; and

(e) in what manner the work is allcated among ONGC, OIL and foreign firms?

Shortage of LPG in Kerala

724. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many places in Kerala are experiencing acute shortage of LPG for the last few months;

(b) if so, the reasons for the ndefinite delay in supplying LPG cylinders to customers and the arrangements made to overcome the shortage;

(c) whether Government propose to consider to reduce the booking backlog experiment in the worst hit rural areas of Kerala; and

(d) the number of newly allotted LPG connections in Kerala during this year?

Companies engaged in oil exploration

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

(a) the numebr and names of Indian and foreign companies that have been assigned the work of oil exploration on Indian Oil and off-shore places; and

(b) the name of the companies that have been successful in finding gas?

Performance of Barauni Refinery

†726. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the financial condition of Barauni refinery;

(b) whether Barauni refinery has been carrying out production as per its capacity; and

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Research on bio-fuel

727. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government aware that biofuel has been prepared in the USA from grains like wheat, Bajra, Jowar, Maize, Soyabean, etc. at a cost of Rs. 45 per 3;80 litres (90 cents per US gallon) and in India, it will cost the same as cost of grains is similar in the USA and India, and that a microlight plane powered by this biofuel landed on 2nd February, at Nagpur Airport, as reported in the LOKMAT dated the 3rd February, 2003; and

(b) if so, whether the R&D of Petroleum Ministry propose to consider feasibility of preparation of thus fuel in India?

Mangalore-Hasan-Bangalore pipeline project

728. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken up the laying of the Mangalore-Hasan-Bangalore LPG pipeline work;

(b) if so, what is the present status of the work;

(c) what is the estimated cost of the above work;

(d) whether Government are aware that a large number of LPG tanker accidents are taking place every day on Mangalore-Bangalore route; and

(e) if so, whether Government would take the above work on priority?

Auction of new blocks by ONGC

729. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the process of auction of new exploration blocks for Crude and Natural gas by ONGC is on;

(b) if so, what are the conditions attached thereto; and

(c) whether production sharing is a pre-condition to such licences and if so, the rates on which the explorer and the ONGC will share the yield?

Creation of clean energy corridor

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

(a) whether GAIL has submitted a plan to Government for creating a clean energy corridor;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether GAIL has expressed reservation about 'right of use'?

Joint ventures in oil exploration

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

(a) the total outlay on oil exploration during the Ninth and Tenth Plan, the quantum of oil and gas explored and expected to be explored during these plan periods;

(b) the details of deep water beds identified for oil and gas exploration during the current plan period;

(c) whether it is a fact that ONGC has been permitted to enter into Joint Venture

with other oil majors in oil exploration in the country; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard, the terms and conditions, the total inflow of equity and outgo on dividends during the next three years?

Hike in natural gas prices

732. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMA-CHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the power Ministry and various State Governments including Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have vehemently opposed Ministry's proposal to hike gas prices to Rs. 4,200 per thousand cubic meters by January 1, 2003 and subsequently to Rs. 5,800 per thousand cubic from April;

(b) if so, the reasons for the objections of the power Ministry and various States; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the objections of the power Ministry and various States; and

(d) to what extent Government have dropped the proposal in view of the great opposition?

Revision of Commission to petrol dealer

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Commission of Petrol dealers also gets affected due to the daily fluctuation in petrol prices in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that petrol dealers have presented a memorandum to

Government recently in order to increase their commission;

(c) if so, the details thereof and necessary action taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) the effective steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government so far to fix the commission of petrol dealer as per the percentage?

Remedy for oil spills at sea

734. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has developed a product, Oilzapper, as an environment friendly remedy for oil spills at sea;

(b) whether it is a fact that Oilzapper was developed by the Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI) in a project supported by the Department of Bio-Technology (DBT); and

(c) if so, the details of this scheme?

New Tourism projects

735. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise number of projects approved and implemented for the development of infrastructure in the field of tourism during the last three years;

(b) the funds sanctioned for each of the projects so far;

(c) the details of achievements made so far in this regard; and

(d) the new tourism project propose to be sanctioned during the current fiscal year?

Tourism potential in the country

736. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that as per expert estimates every one million additional foreign visitors would give India an additional revenue of Rs. 4,300 crores and that every additional investment of Rs. 1 million has a potential to generate 47.5 jobs; and

(b) if so, in what manner Government propose to launch an intensive tourism promotion programme, fixing target, monitoring their periodic progress with a view to achieving anticipated benefits both in terms of job creation and revenue accruals?

Promotion of adventure tourism in Uttaranchal

†737. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action plan has been formulated to promote Adventure Tourism in Uttaranchal; and

(b) if so, the facilities and financial assistance to be provided by Government to the State Government for implementation of this plan?

Loss due to closure of museums

†738. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of museums under the jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India and the number of museum which are

opened to general public and the which have been closed;

(b) the reasons for closure of such museums and details of revenue losses suffered by Government so far from the date of closure of such museums; and

(c) by when Government propose to open such museums for general public and tourists as well?

Setting up of Multi Purpose Cultural Complex at Majuli, Assam

739. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 182 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th December, 1999 and state:

(a) whether Government propose to consider the possibility of setting up of regular Multipurpose cultural complex at Majuli Island, the cultural nerve centre of Assam since Srimanta Sankaradev Kalashetra at Guwahati was set up as a special complex under the obligation of Assam accord;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, in what manner Government propose to permanently nourish the living cultural heritage of India maintained in the island throughout past five centuries for posterity as well as for organized exhibition to short stay visitations?

New tourist centres in U.P.

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

(a) what is the amount proposed to be allocated project-wise for the development of new tourist centres in Uttar Pradesh;

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

(b) what are the details of steps to be taken by Government to complete the said projects on time?

Promotion of Eco-tourism

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

(a) whether Government have a proposal to introduce a country wide programme to promote Eco-tourism;

(b) if so, by when the programme would be implemented;

(c) whether any state has taken any step in this regard with the assistance of Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the programme drawn up by Government in this regard for 2003-04?

Removal of encroachments from monuments and tourist spots

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

(a) whether Government have decided to stop funds to those States which failed to remove encroachments from monuments and places of tourist interest;

(b) if so, whether Government have also directed the State Governments to send implementation reports of removing such encroachments;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when all the encroachments from monuments and places of tourist are likely to be removed?

Outstanding dues of NDMC to ITDC hotel Ashok

†743. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India Tourism Development Corporation owned hotel Ashok owes New Delhi Municipal Council Rs. 18.75 crores;

(b) if so, whether NDMC has sent notice to the hotel for payment otherwise water connection in the hotel would be snapped; and

(c) if so, the actual position in this regard?

Produce for filling up the post of President of Union Academies

744. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that different procedure is followed for filling in the post of president of Sahitya Academi, Sangeetha Nataka Academy and Lilit Kala Academy;

(b) whether Government feel that a uniform procedure is advantageous; and

(c) if so, what measures Government propose to take to have the same procedure for all these academies?

Promotion of tourism in Bihar

†745. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state what is Government's plan to promote tourism in Bodhgaya, Rajgir, Nalanda and Vaishali in Bihar?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

**Setting up of Oceanarium reports in
Castal areas in various states**

746. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country's first oceanarium is being set up in Kerala as an addition of tourism attraction;

(b) if so, the details thereof including its site, dimension and the cost;

(c) whether work on the project has already been started and if not, by when it is expected to begin;

(d) whether Government would consider setting up more such resorts on the coastal places in Maharashtra, Goa, Orissa, West Bengal etc.; and

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

**Funds allocated for centrally protected
Monuments**

747. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have identified 753 Centrally Protected Monuments for structural, conservation, chemical preservation and development under the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the names of the identified monuments; and

(c) the total amount of funds earmarked and allocated so far for such development activities, State-wise and year-wise?

Setting up of National Tourism Fund

748. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to set up a National Tourism Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Criteria for World Heritage Sites

749. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

DR. ABRAR AHMED:

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

(a) what is the criteria laid down for considering sites as World Heritage Site; and

(b) the sites selected for the purpose for the year and progress made thereon?

**Development of tourism in Northern
States**

750. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

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

(a) whether tourism secretaries from Northern region have decided to form a joint working group to improve coordination between various States for developing the tourism industry and to formulate credible legal framework;

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

(c) what steps are taken to implement them?

**Cracks developed in Charminar,
Hyderabad**

751. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that cracks have developed in the Charminar, historic monuments of Hyderabad;

(b) if so, the main reasons for this; and

(c) what steps the Archaeological Survey of India is taking to protect the monument?

Theft of rare antiques

752. SHRI PRASANTA
CHATTERJEE:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that CBI unearthed a huge racket involving stealing and selling of priceless antiques from the country's museums and temples;

(b) whether a well-organised syndicate of antique smugglers bare behind the racket;

(c) whether any arrests have been made so far; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take for the safety and preservation of these rare antique items which date back to the first century A.D.?

Rural tourism

†753. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:

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

(a) whether Government have asked the

State Governments to send proposals for development of rural tourism during Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, the number of proposals received in this regard alongwith the names of States from whom they have been received?

**Use of heavy earth moving machine
JCB in protected areas of Red Fort**

754. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Archaeological Survey of India has deployed a heavy earth moving machine viz. JCB in the protected areas of Red Fort;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the use of JCB for conservation work flouts basic conservation rules laid down in Vanice Charter for International conservation and followed the world over; and

(d) since when the use of the machinery has been stopped?

**Development of cultural and spiritual
tourism**

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

(a) whether Government have developed/proposed to develop cultural and spiritual tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the kind of incentives proposed to be given for its promotion and development in different states of the country; and

(c) what have been the achievements of efforts made in this regard so far?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

Pani Panchayat in Orissa

756. SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

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

(a) the details of Irrigation Project both externally and internally aided, proposed to be included during the Tenth Plan for the State of Orissa, giving areas that would be converted for irrigation;

(b) the on-going Projects expected to be completed during the plan period;

(c) whether certain Pani Panchayats are controlled managed and run by all women, if so, the details with success achieved in Orissa state, as reported in the New Indian Express dated 21st January, 2003;

(d) whether such unique projects are also running in other States, if so, the details thereof?

Aid for Indian Lift Scheme in Rajasthan

†757. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide adequate financial aid to Government of Rajasthan for construction of middle level irrigation projects;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to sanction the said project at the earliest by providing hundred percent aid for Indira Lift Scheme at river Chambal; and

(c) if so, by when the said sanction will be accorded?

Danger due to siltation of Kharasrota river in Orissa

758. SHRI RAMACHANDRA
KHUNTIA:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "12 villages face threat of watery grave" in Orissa which appeared in the New Indian Express dated the 17th November, 2002;

(b) whether Kharasrota river is posing a danger to the villages;

(c) whether heavy siltation over the last five years has made the river change its course; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government to help the state to save the villages and their crops?

Accumulation of water in the Ganga basin

†759. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that additional water accumulates in Ganga river basin during the rainy season;

(b) if so, the quantum of such additional water;

(c) whether it is also a fact that large area of dry land can be made fertile by mixing this additional water in Kaveri river water; and

(d) if so, the estimated area of land which can be made fertile?

Agreement on safety of downstream structures

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Soil and Materials Resources Station and the Norwegian Geo-technical Institutional co-operation programme/agreement in the field of biological hazards in dam reservoirs for safety of downstream structures recently; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement?

Linking of North-Eastern Brahmaputra river with Farakka

†761. DR. ALLADI P. RAJ-KUMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken a feasibility study regarding linking of North-Eastern Brahmaputra river with Farakka in West Bengal via-Bangladesh;

(b) whether State Governments have been consulted in this regard because this will be a short route for linking the above rivers; and

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

Improvement of water supply in Northern India

762. SHRI KARENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the major states in Northern India are likely to face a gruelling shortage of water during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the short-term and long term

measures proposed to be adopted to improve the water supply in these States?

Meeting of Chief Ministers of Andhra and Karnataka on Almatti water

763. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka Chief Minister have decided to talk on Almatti water;

(b) if so, whether the request of the Andhra Pradesh for release of 37 to of water from Almatti dam has been considered by the Karnataka Government;

(c) if so, to what extent talks have been fruitful;

(d) whether any concrete plan in this regard have been worked out; and

(e) if so, to what extent they are being implemented?

Search for Water in various states

764. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem of which appeared in the Times of India under the caption "Export water emergency in 2003" dated the 11th December, 2002;

(b) whether Rajasthan, Punjab, Orissa, Maharashtra etc. would face a gruelling search for water in 2003; and

(c) the action plan for water harvesting, water literacy, better data, centralization, etc. as suggested by Agricultural scientists?

Loss due to flood in North Bihar

†765. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the details of the plan if any for solving the problem of floods permanently which affects and causes loss of life and property on a large scale every year in North Bihar?

**Development of water management
India**

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

(a) whether the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) has decided to

apply Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to develop a Water Management Index (WMI) in order to ensure optimum utilization of ground water resources;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that, besides, assisting in tapping and management of water resources, the GIS would also be useful in assessing and analysing any underground wealth including mineral resources, natural gas and crude oil; and

(d) whether any pilot project has been executed to judge its suitability of GIS and if so the details thereof?

New Delhi;

The 19 February, 2003

Megha 30, 1924

YOGENDRA NARAIN,

Secretary General

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