

[Translation]

Excise duty and Customs duty on Medicines

4357. SHRI SURAJBHANU SOLANKI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of medicines which are exempted from Central excise duty and customs duty, separately; and

(b) the reasons for not levying duties on these medicines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The main notifications fully exempting finished formulations from Customs and Central Excise duties are Notification Nos. 238/81-Customs dated 22.9.81, 29/88-Central Excises dated 1.3.88, 25/90-Central Excises dated 20.3.90 and 32/89-Central Excises dated 1.3.89. The details of medicines which are exempted from Central Excise and Customs duties are available in the relevant notifications which have been published in the Official Gazette and duly laid on the Table of the House.

(b) The exemptions from Central Excise and Customs duties have been given in order to ensure availability of essential and life-saving drugs in the country.

[English]

ADB Office

4358. SHRI RABIRAY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Asian Development Bank has set up its resident office in New Delhi with a view to widen its role in India in terms of assisting the structural adjustment programme; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). Yes Sir. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has opened its India Resident Office in New Delhi on 10th December, 1992 which will enable greater inter-action between the ADB and the Government as well as foster identification of increased investment opportunities in the private sector.

EPF Scheme

4359. SHRI HARISH NARAYAN PRABHU ZANTYE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the total collection under Employees Provident Scheme as on March 31, 1992, State/Union Territory-wise and rate of interest paid thereon;

(b) whether the Government have reviewed the Scheme in depth with a view to make it more effective and attractive for the employees;

(c) the details of the changes made in the recent past and reorientation/restructuring proposed for the benefit of employees apart from periodical increase in interest rates; and

(d) the steps taken to utilise these funds on more profitable manner?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR): (a) As on 31.3. 1992, an amount of Rs. 17,287.28 crore was received by the EPF Organisation on account of Provident Fund Contributions under the EPF Scheme, 1952. The information about the state/union territory-wise contribution is not maintained. The EPF subscribers have been

allowed interest at the rate of 12% per annum for 1992-93.

(b) and (c). The provisions of the Employees Provident Fund Scheme are periodically reviewed by the Central Board of Trustees and the Scheme is amended as and when considered necessary. Recently, Government has decided to enhance the amount of advance for illness from three months' basic wages and dearness allowance to six months' basic wages and dearness allowance or members' own share of contribution in the fund together with interest, whichever is less. The Government has also decided to allow a separate withdrawal upto 24 months' basic wages and dearness allowance from the fund to enable the employees to purchase a site for construction of house.

(d) The accumulations in the Provident Fund are invested as per the pattern prescribed by the Ministry of Finance from time to time.

Cooperation with U.K. in Defence Field

4360. SHRI SARAT CHANDRA PAT-TANAYAK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether an Indian delegation visited United Kingdom to discuss cooperation in the field of defence and aerospace; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b). This is part of on-going discussions between various entities of the Ministry of Defence with their counterparts in U.K. It is not in the public interest to disclose details of these discussions.

[Translation]

Land Issues in Cantonments in Rajasthan

4361. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cantonments and defence institutions and centres in Rajasthan and area of land under their occupation;

(b) whether the Cantonment Boards have any scheme for extending the limit for civilian population;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government propose to hand over Cantonment Boards to the State Governments; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c). There are two Cantonments and eleven Military Stations in Rajasthan with a total area of 46,298.28 acres. Besides, there is one Defence establishment occupying 305 acres.

The Cantonment Board, Nasirabad, has proposed extension of limits of the existing civil area by approx. 216 acres.

(d) and (e). There is no proposal to hand over Cantonment Boards to the State Governments.

[English]

Foreign Exchange Borrowings for Private Sector Power Projects

4362. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: