

(4) India is a member of one regional preferential trading arrangement known as Bangkok Agreement among developing countries of ESCAP region. India, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka are its members.

[Translation]

Ceiling on Bonus

451. SHRI RAJESH KUMAR:
SHRIMATI BHAVNA CHIKHLIA:
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter regarding increase in the ceiling on bonus to the employees of the Central Government is pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) : (a) to (c) The demand of staff side of the National Council of the Joint Consultative Machinery for raising the eligibility ceiling for the grant of bonus to the Central Government employees was, inter alia, considered in the Standing Committee of National Council (JCM) in September, 1993, and it was decided to raise the ceiling for PLB to Rs. 4500/- for Railway employees and Rs 3500/- for other PLB Schemes for Central Government employees. The demand to raise the eligibility ceiling for grant of ad hoc bonus to Central Government employees was not accepted, which remains at Rs. 2500/-.

[English]

Illegal Transportation of Coal

452. SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that coal is being illegally transported to Bangladesh in massive scale;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have set up any machinery to check such illegal transportation; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) : (a) and (b) available reports do not indicate smuggling of coal to Bangladesh.

(c) and (d) Anti smuggling agencies and paramilitary forces of the Central Government, on Indo Bangladesh Border are alert to detect and prevent smuggling.

Merger of Associate Banks of S.B.I

453. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA:
SHRI CHETAN P.S. CHAUHAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the associate banks of State Bank of India have demanded cross merger;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the proposal is under consideration of the Government; and

(d) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) : (a) to (d) Associate Banks have not formally demanded/requested for cross merger. However Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had received a proposal in 1992 for merger of the Associate Banks of State Bank of India.

RBI had discussed the proposal with the executives of State Bank of India. At present there is no active proposal for consideration of the Government for merger of Associate Banks of State Bank of India.

[Translation]

Loss in SBI Branches

454. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
SHRI BRIJBHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH:
SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of branches of State Bank of India running in loss in the country at present;

(b) the total amount of loss incurred in these branches during the year 1991-92, 1992-93 and 1993-94;

(c) whether the Government propose to close down these branches; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) (a) State Bank of India (SBI) has reported that as on 31.3.94 the number of its loss making branches was 3416.

(b) SBI has reported that the amount of loss incurred during 1991-92, 1992-93 and 1993-94 was Rs. 70 crores, Rs. 74.83 crores and Rs. 122.05 crores, respectively.

(c) and (d) SBI has intimated that closure of loss making branches will be considered only after other strategies to turn them around have failed. However, no loss making branch has, so far, been closed.