

- (ii) Demands claimed to have been paid but pending verification;
- (iii) Demands stayed by Courts, Settlement Commission, Tribunal and I.T. Authorities; and
- (iv) Demands for which instalments have been granted.

The following steps are taken to reduce/collect the outstanding demand:-

Income Tax Act prescribes a statutory procedure for collection and recovery of taxes. The recovery of the outstanding tax is a continuous process. The process starts after the demand falls due after 30 days of the service of the Demand notice. Thereafter, action is taken by Assessing Officer in respect of unstayed demand by attaching bank accounts, charging interest, levying penalty etc. In difficult cases, matter is referred to Tax Recovery Officer who takes various coercive measures as per the Act like attachment and sale of defaulter's movable and immovable properties, arrest of defaulter and his detention in prison, appointment of Receiver for the management of the defaulter's movable and immovable properties. The recovery action taken by the Assessing officers and TROs is closely monitored by the higher Income-tax authorities.

Further dossier cases having outstanding demand of Rs. 10 lakhs and above are monitored by higher authorities on a regular periodic basis and necessary instructions are issued for taking various coercive measures for effecting the recovery of demand.

New Tourism Policy

1515. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK :

SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHRY :

SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to make India the global tourist destination, to achieve the objectives of New Tourism Policy;

(b) is so, the main features of the policy which are being formulated:

(c) whether India has also decided to set up Tourism Recreation Centre in Delhi and other States Capitals;

(d) if so, the details of the steps being taken to provide assistance and cheap accommodation to the foreign tourists;

(e) whether recently a number of foreign tourists were badly treated in India which gave a wrong signal about India in other countries;

(f) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and

(g) the number of tourists who visited India during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) : (a) and (b) India is already an international tourist destination. The efforts of the Government is to achieve sustained economic development and positive social change through development of Tourism-both Domestic and International-while preserving and protecting the environment and heritage.

(c) and (d) It is proposed to set up a Bharat Paryatan Bhawan in Delhi to provide information services and other facilities including air and rail reservations to tourist at a single place. The Ministry of Tourism and the information counters of State Govts. would also be housed in the Bharat Paryatan Bhawan.

The Ministry of Tourism has provided financial assistance to State Govt./Union Territory Govts. for the construction of tourist reception centres and low priced accommodation units in various tourist centres.

(e) and (f) Some incidents came to the notice of the Ministry of Tourism and those were taken up with the concerned law enforcing agencies to book the culprits and to avoid such incidents in future.

(g) The foreign tourist arrivals during the last three years were as given below :

| Year | Arrival |
|------|---------|
| 1995 | 2123683 |
| 1996 | 2287860 |
| 1997 | 2374094 |

Non-Performing Assets

1516. SHRI ANNASHEB M. K. PATIL :

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK :

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-performing assets in the banking industry and financial institutions have been on increase

over the past several years and have assumed an alarming proportion;

(b) if so, the details of the trends regarding magnitude of the problem for nationalised banks/financial institutions during the last three years, state-wise particularly in Maharashtra;

(c) the number of debt recovery tribunals set up so far with locations and review of their performance during the last three years;

(d) whether even in metropolitan cities such Tribunals have not been established so far;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the details of the steps proposed to be taken for strengthening/upgrading/expanding debt Tribunal network in the country to deal with the problem of debt recovery effectively?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that though Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of public sector banks have increased in absolute terms over the last three years, it has been showing a declining trend as a percentage of total advances over the same period. The increase in the amount of NPAs of public sector banks during the three year period 1994-95 to 1996-97 was Rs. 5192 crore as against the increase in advances to the extent of Rs. 46812 crore during the corresponding period. According to RBI the NPAs most Fls have also come down over the years in percentage terms.

(c) Under the provisions of Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 nine Debts Recovery Tribunals have been established at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta, Delhi, Jaipur, Chennai, Guwahati, Jabalpur and Patna. An Appellate Tribunal has also been established in Mumbai. The performance of these Tribunals for the last 3 years is as under:

| | Apr' 94 to Mar '95 | Apr. 95 to Mar '96 | Apr' 96 to Dec '97 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. No. of cases filed | 2036 | 6768 | 5685 |
| 2. Amount involved (Rs. in crores) | 1468.46 | 4526.58 | 5690.00 |
| 3. No. of cases settled | 61 | 224 | 1556 |
| 4. Amount recovered | 21.15 | 86.51 | 74.39 |

(d) and (e) Government had approved setting up of Debts Recovery Tribunal at 10 places in the country. Nine Tribunals have already been set up. The only Tribunal yet to be set up is at Mumbai. The Tribunal at Mumbai is also likely to be set up shortly.

(f) RBI has recently constituted a Working Group which is going into various problems associated with Debts Recovery Tribunals including legislative amendments. After the recommendations of the Working Group are available, a decision would be taken whether there is any need for amending of any provisions of the Act for making Debts Recovery Tribunal more effective and also about setting up of more DRTs in the country.

[Translation]

Coal Depots in Bihar

1517. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any decision to make available the fuel to peasants and rural people with objective of reservation of forests;

(b) if so, whether as per the decision, coal depots in the block headquarters of Giridih, Kodarma and Hazaribagh districts of Bihar have been opened;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the effective steps to be taken by the Government in this regard to ensure check on illegal felling of forests for want of fuel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) to (d) Earlier coal companies have been producing and supplying soft coke to meet the domestic fuel requirements. The production of soft coke has however been declining over the years, since the process adopted is not free from pollution hazards. However, to meet the demand for this product, especially in some of the Northern States, where people use soft coke as a domestic fuel, efforts are being made to encourage SSF technology, which produces a fuel which is an ideal substitute for soft coke. Necessary coal linkages are being provided by CIL. CMPDIL is offering necessary technical assistance for installation of these plants. Coal India Limited is also providing linkages to briquetting units, the product of which is also a substitute of soft coke. Furthermore, steps have been taken to offer coal through the Liberalised Sales Scheme.