

(b) RBI has issued instructions to all scheduled commercial banks that applications upto a credit limit of Rs. 25,000/- should be disposed of within a fortnight and those for over Rs. 25,000/- within 8-9 weeks from the date of receipt of applications. Banks have also been advised that request for increase in credit limits should be considered expeditiously and decision taken promptly and in any case within six weeks.

#### Tax Exemption to Sikkim

5419. SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received representations for exemption of residents of Sikkim from direct taxes including income tax; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No such proposal is presently under consideration.

#### Air-Strip Miyorpur

5420. SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether air-strip in Miyorpur, U.P. is lying unused for the last few decades;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take to make use of the air-strip?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (c). Miyorpur airstrip is an airstrip belonging to Rahand Dam Authority of State Government of U.P. Airports Authority of India has no plan at present to operationalise this airstrip though private scheduled/non scheduled airlines are free to use it in their best commercial judgements.

#### Economic Relations with U.S.A.

5421. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposals to establish and expand economic relations with United States of America;

(b) if so, whether any agenda has been prepared by either or both countries for constructive economic cooperation and action plan; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to execute the agenda?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY): (a) to (c). It is the endeavour of Governments of India and United States of America to further strengthen their bilateral economic and commercial relations. During recent visits to India of US Under Secretary of State for Economics, Business and Agriculture and US Treasury Secretary, bilateral issues of mutual interest were further discussed and it was decided that both Governments would take further steps to develop their economic and commercial relationship. As a step in this regard, both Governments have since revived the Indo-US Economic and Commercial Sub-Commission which provides a forum to deliberate on measures to facilitate stronger and closer economic and commercial relationship between two countries.

#### Child Labour

5422. SHRI M.V.S. MURTHY : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Child Labour-Authority adopted a programme of identification, release and rehabilitation of child labour in hazardous industries;

(b) if so, whether under the chairmanship of Labour Minister it has been emphasised that a survey should be conducted under the overall supervision of the district magistrate in the districts where child labour is prevalent to identify the phenomenon;

(c) if so, whether in addition to the survey, inspection and investigations were intensified to locate the children and file prosecutions against employers under the existing laws;

(d) the extent to which the rehabilitation plan as adopted has been implemented; and

(e) the number of children who have been rehabilitated so far?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e). The National Authority for Elimination of Child Labour has adopted the Plan of Action titled "Identification, Release and Rehabilitation of Child Labour" on 16th January, 1995. It, inter alia, calls for surveys to identify child labour and states that launching of prosecutions on employers of child labour should be a pre-condition for taking up rehabilitation of workers. This plan of action also calls for a convergence of services and schemes of the Central and State Governments at the implementing level - the district to effectively handle the identification of child labour, the economic rehabilitation of the family with child labour and stricter enforcement of relevant laws. This plan of action has been sent to all the States/UTs for adoption.