

(c) ITDC has recently entered into overseas marketing and reservation tie-ups for promoting its properties/services with Odner Hotel Representative Limited, Hongkong and Golden Tulip World-wide Hotels, Holland. Through these agreements, booking facilities for ITDC hotels are now available on world-wide basis.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) While ITDC has its own counters at Delhi Airport, the Department of Tourism operates Tourist counters at all the International Airports which disseminate information about tourist facilities made available by ITDC and other organisations at various tourist centres in the country.

[English]

**Import of Steel due to dismal
Performance of SAIL**

1778. PROF. RAMKRISHNA MORE : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether performance of Steel Authority of India Limited has been dismal for the last six months or so and that Government proposes to import 1.5 million tonnes of steel during the year;

(b) if so, the quantity of steel produced by SAIL during the period April—September, 1985 as compared to the production during the previous six months stating the reasons for the shortfall in production;

(c) the estimated gap between the demand and supply of steel and the extent to which the import of steel is likely to bridge the gap; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to improve the indigenous production ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) and (b). The production of saleable steel at the integrated steel plants of SAIL during April—September, 1985 was 2.61 million tonnes against their production of 2.23 million tonnes during the corresponding period of last year. Production during this

period was 17 per cent higher in 1985 than in 1984 and 98 per cent of the target. The target would have been achieved but for the 38 day illegal strike in Bokaro in April—May. This performance is neither dismal nor unsatisfactory.

Production during the period April—September, 1985 amounted to 2.61 million tonnes against a production of 3.05 million tonnes during the period October, 1984—March, 1985. Targets and production are kept higher in the second half of the year because of better availability of power, coal and other inputs as well as higher labour productivity.

(c) At the beginning of the financial year, it was assessed that in 1985-86 the demand for finished steel in the country would be 11.4 million tonnes and domestic availability was expected to be 9.9 million tonnes, requiring an import of approximately 1.5 million tonnes to fully meet domestic requirements.

(d) To improve the production of SAIL plants efforts are being made to ensure adequate inputs of the right quality. Schemes have been drawn up for better maintenance of public sector steel plants, their modernisation and for removal of bottlenecks. Efforts are also being made to ensure cordial industrial relations and to inculcate a new work culture in the steel fraternity.

**Opening of Leh-Manali Highway for
Tourist Traffic**

1779. SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Leh-Manali road is closed for tourist due to damage of road in the inner line limit;

(b) whether due to this many tourist who wished to have round trip travel from Srinagar Leh-Manali and vice versa are not in a position to do so resulting in losses to tourist industries of Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) if so, whether the Ministry will take up the matter with the Ministry of Home

Affairs for consideration for opening of the highway to tourism ? [Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT) : (a) to (c). Part of the road on Le-Manali route is closed for visitors and travel on this sector is only authorised by issue of permits by Ministry of Home Affairs. The restricted area of the road from South of Upshi in J & K upto Sarchu in Himachal Pradesh is closed to tourists without valid permission. The foreign tourists are, however, permitted to visit the Gompas, at Gya, Miru and Rumtse, lying south of Upshi provided they are in possession of necessary permits from the District Magistrate concerned, travel in group of upto 20 persons and are accompanied by a 'guide' provided by J & K State authorities. The Indian tourists can visit these areas after obtaining permit from the State authorities.

The question of relaxation of entry formalities in the area are constantly under discussion and relaxations to the extent possible are made.

Control on speculation business to curb Black Money

1780. SHRI G. BHOOPATHY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the steps taken by the Union Government to control speculation business and to eradicate black money menace ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARI) : Trading in securities in the Stock Exchanges is governed by the bye-laws and regulations of Stock Exchanges. Various regulatory measures such as imposition of different kinds of margins, restrictions etc. are prescribed with a view to ensuring smooth settlement of transactions. Government are keeping constant watch on the functioning of the stock exchanges.

All possible measures to check tax evasion and growth of black money, including legislative, administrative and institutional are being taken from time to time.

Branches of Nationalised Banks in Uttar Pradesh

1781. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of branches of different nationalised banks in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether these banks are sufficient keeping in view the population of the State; and

(c) if not, the steps proposed to be taken by his Ministry to open branches of different banks in the State according to the requirement ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARI) : (a) The total number of branches of the 28 Public Sector Banks functioning in Uttar Pradesh was 4,150 as at the end of 30th June, 1985. In addition on that date there were 2896 branches of other commercial banks and Regional Rural Banks functioning in the State.

(b) and (c). The branch licensing policy for 1982-85 was aimed at achieving a coverage of a bank office for an average population of 17,000 in rural and semi-urban areas in each district. According to the information furnished by Reserve Bank of India this objective has been achieved in the State of Uttar Pradesh except in four districts.

The branch licensing policy for 1985-90 recently announced by Reserve Bank of India aims at achieving a coverage of 17,000 population per bank office in respect of rural and semiurban areas of each development block and eliminating spatial gaps so that a bank office is available within a distance of 10Kms. Reserve Bank of India has already addressed State Governments including Uttar Pradesh to identify centres for opening branches in the light of the above branch licensing policy. The question of allowing more bank offices in Uttar Pradesh will be considered by the Reserve Bank of India on receipt of the list of centres from the State