

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

Government and in the light of the above policy.

[English]

Production and Import of Coins

1782. SHRI SHARAD DIGHE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the production of coins in the mints during the quarter June-September, 1985;

(b) how many million pieces of Re. 1/- coins were imported;

(c) whether the shortage of coins in the country has been met with; and

(d) if not, the further steps contemplated to meet the shortage of coin ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARI) : (a) The production in the mints at Bombay, Calcutta and Hyderabad during the period 1.6.85 to 30.9.85 was 631,422 million pieces, in various denominations.

(b) Orders have been placed for import of 1000 million pieces of Rupee 1 coins. As against this order, 223.88 million pieces have been received so far.

(c) Though the shortage of coins in the country has been met to some extent, reports of shortage are still being received from various parts of the country. It is expected that with increased production in the Mints and import of coins, the situation would ease around February—March 1986.

(d) The following steps have been taken to meet the shortage of coins :

(i) Incentive schemes have been introduced in all the 3 Mints.

(ii) Number of working hours per week per shift had been increased from 48 hours to 54 hours in all the 3 mints.

(iii) It has now been decided to increase the working hours of the Bombay Mint from 54 to 60 hours per week per shift to increase production. It is also proposed to similarly increase the working hours of the Calcutta and Hyderabad Mints.

(iv) As part of the modernisation of the existing three Mints, 22 new coining presses have been procured. 18 of them have already been commissioned and the remaining 4 are being installed and would be commissioned within a period of 2-3 months.

(v) The 20p coin has been re-introduced so as to reduce the demand of 10p coins.

(vi) A second shift in the Calcutta Mint has been introduced with effect from 25.2.85 which would result in an additional production of 360 million pieces per annum.

(vii) It has been decided to establish a new Mint at NOIDA with an estimated capacity of 2000 million pieces of coins per annum. The new Mint is scheduled to be commissioned by 1988-89.

Import/Export Policy

1783. SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Import/Export Policy announced earlier this year is valid for three years;

(b) the number of amendments notified to this policy till 31 October 1985;

(c) the details of amendments carried out and the dates of their announcement; and

(d) the reasons and justification in each case ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.