

*[Translation]***Teller Machines in Banks**

4510. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the bank branches in Delhi, location-wise where Automatic Teller Machines have since been installed;

(b) the details of the bank branches where the said machines are proposed to be installed in the near future; and

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

*[English]***Free Foreign Investment Under WTO**

4511. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the developing countries are under pressure to endorse the inclusion of an European Commissions proposal in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) which may take away their freedom to regulate foreign investments; and

(b) if so, India's reaction to the proposal to set up a new investment regime, called Multilateral Investment Agreement (MIA), under the umbrella of WTO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b). European Commission has supported Canada's proposal that the WTO constitute a Working Party to discuss issues on investment policy. India, alongwith some other countries, has advocated that:

- the Agreement on TRIMS already has a time frame of considering the discussion on this issue, which should be adhered to; and
- the issue should first be fully analysed and discussed in UNCTAD before a decision is taken whether it needs to be taken on to the agenda of the WTO.

Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights

4512. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's bio-diversity is being patented by private companies;

(b) whether the Government propose to take steps to patent the entire plant and animal bio-diversity under the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

(c) if so, the details thereof,

(d) whether the Government have prepared an inventory of the country's total plant and animal species, including lower forms of life; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c). Plants and animals are not patentable under the Patents Act, 1970. The Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) also permits members to exclude plants and animals from patentability.

(d) and (e). The Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) are responsible for the survey and inventorisation of the plants and animals species of the country, respectively, including lower forms of life. Approximately, 70% of the geographical area of the country has been surveyed so far by these organisations. Based on these surveys, 45,000 plant species and 81,000 animal species have been recorded.

Functioning of DGS & D

4513. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gazetted/non-gazetted Secretariat officers posted in the Department of Supply;

(b) the details of their role in the functioning of DGS & D;

(c) the achievements made by them to strengthen the functioning of DGS & D;

(d) whether the Government propose to set up Supply Board by disbanding the Department of Supply; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The number of gazetted and non-gazetted officers posted in Department of Supply is indicated below:

Gazetted : 34

Non-gazetted : 146