

The annual rate of inflation measured in terms of the above Index has declined from 11.7 per cent in January 1982 to 6.7 per cent in May, 1982.

New Branch Licensing Policy for Commercial Banks

233. SHRI R. L. BHATIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Reserve Bank of India had recently evolved a new Branch licensing policy for commercial banks under which 8,000 additional branch offices are expected to be opened during the next three years (1982-83 to 1984-85); and

(b) particulars of branches expected to be opened in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) In terms of their branch licensing policy for the three years 1982-83 to 1984-85, the Reserve Bank of India have estimated that commercial banks including the Regional Rural Banks will have to open 7540 additional branches in underbanked Community Development Blocks to achieve an average population coverage of 1 branch for 17000 people in rural/semi-urban areas (on the basis of 1981 census). In addition, about 808 branches are estimated as likely to be required on the basis of specific developmental needs in areas having better banking coverage.

(b) Relevant details in this regard are set out below:

State	No. of districts with average population per Bank office higher than 17,000 (As per 1981 census)	No. of Rural/Semi-Urban branches required to achieve targetted coverage in deficit districts	Rural/Semi-urban branches likely to be opened in the remaining districts
Punjab	104
Haryana	5	46	40
Himachal Pradesh	1	2	23

Increase in Monthly Rent for Cols. and Lt. Cols.

234. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Cols. and Lt. Cols. are entitled to hire a house upto Rs. 1200/- p.m.;

(b) if so, whether due to high cost of construction etc. no suitable house is available for Rs. 1200 p.m. in big cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay etc. for them and they have consequently to live in small houses which are not commensurate with their ranks ; ; .

(c) if so, whether Government propose to increase the monthly rent for Cols. and Lt. Cols. from Rs. 1200/- to Rs. 1600/- p.m.; and

(d) if so, the details of the decision?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO): (a) Colonels and Lt. Colonels are entitled to hire houses upto Rs. 1200/- p.m. in Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta. For other stations, the ceiling is Rs. 1000/- p.m.

(b) Due to general escalation in rentals, it has become difficult to hire houses for these officers within the ceiling as per their entitlement.