

[Translation]

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**Criteria for Opening of Sub-Regional Office of EPFO**

3623. SHRI RAJO SINGH : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to open a sub-regional office of Employees Provident Fund Organisation in Sheikhpura district of Bihar;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be opened; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) to (c) The Sub-Regional Offices in the E.P.F. Organisation are opened keeping in view the parameters like number of establishments, number of employees, number of claims received/settled, service to the subscribers in the area etc., While considering the proposal the recommendation of the Regional E.P.F. Committee is also kept in view in this regard. There is no proposal at present to open a sub-regional office at Sheikhpura in Bihar.

[English]

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**Duty Free Shops at Airports**

3624. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India has sought a minimum five year sale guarantee of Rs. 1,500 crores and a royalty of Rs. 420 crores from bidders for the Duty Free Shops at Indian Airports;

(b) if so, whether the amount fixed for the guarantee and royalty is much more than the revenue generated by the India Tourism Development Corporation during the last five years from duty free trade; and

(c) if so, the reasons for the hike in the amount for bidding for the next five years for the Duty Free Shops at airports?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has sought a Minimum Reserve Licence Fee (MRLF) of US \$127.99 million (Rupees 537.56 crores) from Global Bidders payable over a period of 5 years on account of space licence fee and royalty on projected gross

turnover for the Duty Free Shopping Areas measuring 1992.22 sqmtrs. at five international airports viz. Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai, Mumbai, Thirunvanathapuram, and six Customs Domestic Airports i.e. Ahmedabad, Calicut, Hyderabad, Varanasi, Bangalore and Goa.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) The Amount of MRLF was decided based on the highest financial bid that AAI had received in August, 1996 for the Additional Duty Free Shopping Areas measuring 1380 sqmtrs. at five international airports i.e. US \$ 72.65 million (Rupees 305 crores) over a period of 5 years.

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**Withholding of Indian Digital Flight Control Computer by U.S.**

3625. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN :  
SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian scientists working at the LCA had taken the 'Digital Flight Control Computer' to United States for software validation;

(b) whether as an aftermath of the Pokhran-II, US authorities have confiscated the equipment and asked Indian scientists to return to India without equipment; and

(c) if so, the steps, if any, taken to recover the equipment from the US?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Two Laboratory Models of Digital Flight Control Computer (DFCC) were taken to US for system integration and validation tests in the laboratories of collaborating US company under a contract for joint design, development and testing of Flight Control System for Light Combat Aircraft.

(b) Immediately after the Pokhran tests, sanctions were imposed by the US Government. Consequently collaborating US company expressed their inability to continue the joint work under the contract. Therefore, the team of Indian scientists working there was withdrawn. The US company also expressed their inability to re-export the two Laboratory Models of DFCC to India.

(c) The Government have taken up the matter with the US company through Embassy of India in the USA for re-export of the Laboratory Models of DFCC. Further payment to the US company has been stopped. A national team has been formed to complete the development work within the country.