

[English]

Schemes to Encourage Tax Payers

751. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
DR. ASHOK PATEL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for awarding 'Aaykar Ratna' to the top income tax payers for encouraging the income tax payers and giving importance to their contribution;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the date from which the said scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All individual taxpayers falling in each of the three categories *i.e.*, business, profession and salary having a declared income of Rs. 20 lacks or more in four out of five immediately preceding years shall receive Samman at the national level. The top tax-payer in the country, one in each of the three categories shall be honoured with 'Aaykar Ratna' at national level, subject to certain exceptions.

(c) The scheme is expected to be implemented in the first quarter of next Financial Year.

Medium Term Fiscal Adjustment Programme

752. SHRI LAXMAN SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the IMF has asked India to launch a medium term Fiscal Adjustment Programme at Central and State level and initiate steps to revive the investment and growth momentum;

(b) if so, to what extent the Government have accepted the suggestion; and

(c) the extent to which it has been found to be helpful?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) Yes. On the basis of discussions at the Board on India, the IMF, on September, 22, 1998 had stated, *inter-alia*, as follows:

"Looking beyond the 1998-99 budget, Directors urged the authorities to launch an ambitious and front-loaded medium-term fiscal adjustment program, involving actions not only by the centre, but importantly also, by the States. Reviving the fiscal reform process would help lower real interest rates, improve debt dynamics, create room for meeting essential social and infrastructure spending, and reduce the drag on growth...Expressing concern about the lack of any perceptible fiscal adjustment by the states as a group, Directors stressed that states will need to intensify and broaden efforts to lower deficits, and also improve the composition of spending."

(b) and (c) Government of India takes policy actions on the basis of its own priorities. Appropriate policy measures are undertaken whenever necessary in the light of emerging economic situation. Government has taken a number of steps to restore fiscal health and promote investment. On the fiscal side, the basic approach has been to raise revenues through a tax structure which is simple, rely on moderate tax rates with a wider base, coupled with prudential expenditure management.

Purchase of Long wall Machines by ECL

753. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ECL has purchased longwall machines from abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating their costs;

(c) the authority responsible for purchasing the machines;

(d) whether the machines are not being used by the collieries;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the justification of purchasing such costly machines; and

(f) the details of interest burden on ECL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) and (b) It has been reported by Coal India Limited that the following long wall face