

### Visa Relaxation to Pakistani Citizens

5044. SHRI N. DENNIS : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether relaxation is made in respect of visas issued to the Pakistanis visiting India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b) In pursuance of our policy of encouraging people-to-people contacts, Government have unilaterally eased the visa regime for Pakistani nationals. Under the liberalised policy, Government have decided to (i) permit Pakistani tourists to visit India in Groups ; (ii) grant one-year multi-entry visas to Pakistani businessmen and permit them to enter and exit India either through Mumbai or Delhi if travelling by air; (iii) exempt young and elderly Pakistani visitors from police reporting; and (iv) waive visa fees for senior Pakistani citizens, cultural groups, artistes, poets, writers, students and journalists

### Hydel Power Projects

5045. SHRI AYYANNA PATRUDU : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the salient features of the proposed new hydel power projects in the country;

(b) the response received from the private sector to set up such new power projects; and

(c) the likely rate of return for hydel power projects ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c) The private power policy enunciated by the Government in 1991 offers investment opportunities to private entrepreneurs both for thermal and hydro-electric power generation. In January, 1995, the notification No. S.O. 251 (E) issued by the Government in 1992 was amended for including calculation of tariff for sale of electricity from hydro electric power generating stations set up in the private sector. As on date, 11 proposals on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)/ Letter of Intent (LoI), etc. route (costing more than Rs. 100 Crores) and 10 proposals on the competitive bidding route (costing more than Rs. 1000 crores) have been received for setting up Hydro-electric power projects in the private sector. The likely rate of return from these projects can be determined only after the promoters obtain the requisite statutory and other clearances and achieve financial closure.

### Execution of Contracts

5046. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have observed any irregularities in execution of contracts for production of Oil and Gas by private parties during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

### Revenue through Custom Duty

5047. SHRI SUDHIR GIRI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount of revenue collected through additional customs duty on all imported items in 1996-97; and

(b) the estimated amount likely to be collected on this account during the next financial year ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Revenue realised through additional customs duty in 1996-97 is not readily available. Requisite information is being collected.

(b) Revenue from additional customs duty for 1997-98 has not been estimated separately.

### National Sample Survey Organisation

5048. SHRI SYDIAH KOTA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether job opportunities declined after liberalisation as per survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation;

(b) whether change had an adverse effect on the interests of women as it could give her only short term employment instead of permanent employment;

(c) whether the number of job seeking women had gone up during the period; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to solve their employment problems ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

### Misuse of Gold Import Scheme

5049. SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the scheme of import of gold by NRI's is being grossly misused and payments through Hawala Channels are made for the legal gold; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to put a check on this malpractice ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The Government have no information of gross misuse of the scheme though intelligence reports suggest some payment are made through illicit channels. However the main objectives of the liberalised gold Import Scheme, *inter alia*, are to

encourage the import of gold through licit channels against payment of customs duty in foreign exchange and to discourage smuggling of gold. It has been reported that the introduction of this scheme has had a healthy impact on checking clandestine Import of Gold.

#### Income Tax Payee

5050. SHRI N.N. KRISHNA DAS : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether only 4 lakh and 50 thousand New Delhi residents pay income tax while the city has 26 lakh vehicles, 80 lakh telephones and 15 lakh house owners;

(b) if so, whether such a disparity arise out of lack of proper enforcement of the existing laws; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to plug such loopholes ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) to (c) The number of assesseees in Delhi as on 31.3.1997 is 7,71,340 (provisional figures). Under the provisions of Income-tax Act, a person is required to file return of income if his total income during the previous year exceeds the maximum amount not chargeable to income-tax.

There can be a number of reasons for the disparity between the number of income-tax assesseees and the number of persons owning telephones, vehicles, houses etc. At the same time it is true that the number of tax payers in the country is substantially low as compared to the population and the Government has, from time to time, taken various steps to increase the number of tax payers. With a view to further widen the tax-net, the Finance Bill, 1997 has introduced a proviso to Section 139(1) of the Income-tax Act requiring every person who satisfies any two of the following conditions namely :

- (i) occupation of an immovable property exceeding a specified floor area, whether by way of ownership, tenancy or otherwise, as may be specified by the Board in this behalf; or
- (ii) is the owner of the leasee of a motor vehicle; or
- (iii) is a subscriber to a telephone; or
- (iv) has incurred expenditure for himself or any other person on travel to any foreign country,

to file return of income. By imposing such requirements for filing return of income, the task of identification of potential tax payers is likely to become easier

#### Hawala Rackets

5051. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of major hawala rackets that have been unearthed by the Enforcement Directorate during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the action taken in each of the hawala racket; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to plug the loopholes in the law that facilitate the hawala racket ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The Enforcement Directorate has busted a number of hawala rackets during the last three years. Adjudication proceeding have been initiated against the persons *prima facie* involved in the said rackets. Year-wise details regarding number of cases and the amount involved therein, are as under :

Year	No. of cases	Amount involved
1995	249	25389
1996	185	65355
1997 (upto 31.3.97)	200	11313

(c) The Government maintains a constant vigil and whenever any instance of suspected contravention of the provisions of Foreign Exchange Regulations Act, 1973 comes to its notice, appropriate action as may be warranted is taken.

#### Tannery and Footwear Corporation of India

5052. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the BIFR had appointed the Industrial Finance Corporation of India as Operating Agency for preparing and submitting the revival package in respect of Tannery and Footwear Corporation of India Limited;

(b) whether the Financial Institution did not act in pursuance to above order of the BIFR;

(c) whether the Government have also not taken any action to advice the Financial Institution to abide by the rules or directions; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof alongwith the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) to (d) The Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) has reported that after exploring all avenues for revival of Tannery & Footwear Corporation of India Ltd. (TAFCO), it concluded that TAFCO was not likely to make its networth exceed the accumulated losses within a reasonable time while meeting its financial obligations and that the company as a result thereof was not likely to become viable in future and it was just and equitable that the company be wound up under the provisions of Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985. The opinion of the BIFR was forwarded to the concerned High Court for further necessary action.