

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
FINANCE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4027  
ANSWERED ON:05.09.2012  
ALLOTMENT OF BANK LOCKERS  
Gaddigoudar Shri P.C.

**Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether any complaints/reports, regarding allotment of the bank locker allotted to a person being reallocated to another person without any prior notice to the original owner, have been received by the Government recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto indicating the total value of the valuables lost by the said customers;and
- (c) the corrective steps taken in this regard ?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA )

(a)&(b): Under the existing RBI Master Circular on Customer Service, banks have the right to cancel allotment of the locker and open the locker if appropriate clauses are incorporated in their locker agreements. The Circular is available at [www.rbi.org.in](http://www.rbi.org.in).

RBI data system, however, does not maintain registration of complaints under this particular head as well the value of estimated losses suffered by the customer.

Generally, where the lockers have remained unoperated for more than three years for medium risk category or one year for a higher risk category, banks should immediately contact the locker-hirer and advise him to either operate the locker or surrender it. This exercise should be carried out even in the locker hirer is paying the rent regularly. Further, banks should ask the locker hirer to give in writing, the reason why he/ she did not operate the locker. In case the locker- hirer has some genuine reasons as in the case of NRIs or persons who are out of town due to a transferable job etc., banks may allow the locker hirer to continue with the locker. In case the locker-hirer does not respond nor operate the locker, banks should consider opening the lockers after giving the due notice to him.

(c): In order to ensure due diligence in allotment of lockers, RBI Master Circular on Customer Service, inter-alia, states that:

(i) Banks should carry out customer due diligence for both new and existing customers at least to the levels prescribed for customers classified as medium risk. If the customer is classified in a higher risk category, customer due diligence as per Know Your Customer (KYC) norms applicable to such higher risk category should be carried out.

(ii) Banks should have clear procedure drawn up in consultation with legal advisors for breaking open the lockers and taking stock of inventory.

(iii) Further, Banks should ensure that identification code of the bank/ branch is embossed on all the locker keys with a view to facilitate Authorities in identifying the ownership of the locker keys.