

[Translation]

**Procedure for FDI**

1617. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :

SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the industrialists from United States have requested to the Union Government to simplify the procedure for investment in the broadcasting sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) No, Sir. No such proposal has been received from the industrialists from United States.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[English]

**Investment Limit of SSI**

1618. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :

SHRI SURENDRAN CHENGARA :

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY :

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to reduce the investment limit for Small Scale Industries from 3 crore to 1 crore;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the affect on the SSI as a result thereof?

(d) whether the Government propose to continue the reservation of items meant for small scale sectors; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Yes, Sir. Prime Minister had announced on 29th April, 1998 in the Seminar organised by Laghu Udyog Bharati that investment limit for small scale industries will be reduced from Rs. 3 crore to Rs.1 crore. Necessary follow-up action, based upon the announcement of the Prime Minister, is being taken.

(b) and (c) A large number of SSI Associations have been demanding lowering down the investment ceiling as they were apprehending cornering away of credit by new segment of SSI Sector and competitions therefrom.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The reservation policy of the Government will continue. However, the reserved item list is reviewed from time to time keeping in view the prevailing economic and other factors.

**Death Claim Cases Pending with LIC**

1619. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

SHRI MADHAVRAO PATIL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of death claim cases pending for settlement with the Life Insurance Corporation of India for more than three years, zone-wise;

(b) the reasons for delay in settlement of such cases; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for speedy settlement of such cases?

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) LIC have reported that the total number of death claim cases pending for settlement with them for over three years on 31.3.1998 is 917. Zone-wise details are as follows:

	Name of Zone	Cases
1.	Northern	44
2.	North-Central	122
3.	Central	2
4.	Southern	29
5.	South-Central	177
6.	Eastern	72
7.	Western	471
	<b>Total</b>	<b>917</b>

(b) The reasons for delay in settlement of such claims are generally non-receipt of requirements from the claimants, legal dispute regarding title to the policy moneys, non-availability of latest address of the claimant, early claim investigations etc.

(c) LIC has a system of regular follow up of pending claim cases by the Managers (Claims) and Marketing Managers at the Divisional Offices and by Regional Managers (Mktg) at the Zonal Offices. The follow up is through letters to the claimants at periodic intervals as also through personal contacts wherever necessary through LIC's Branch Officials with a view to assisting the claimants for compliance of claim requirements.

#### **CBDT Turns Attention to "Economic Criteria"**

1620. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether after the success of Voluntary Disclosure of Income Scheme, the Central Board of Direct Taxes has turned its attention towards making economic criteria scheme a paying venture;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the scheme which ended on February 28, aimed at enrolling 30 lakhs new tax payers during the last financial year;

(d) whether the scheme was targetted for 12 major cities in the country in an effort to bring on the rolls of income-tax department new tax assesseees and broaden the tax base; and

(e) If so, to what extent the scheme has been successful?

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) and (b) Yes, Sir. The primary objective of the Economic Criteria Scheme is to cast an obligation on tax payers to file returns of income and thereby widen the tax base. The underlying presumption of the scheme is that, any-body fulfilling the prescribed economic criteria should be having either taxable income or should be a potential tax payer. The scheme is expected not only to increase the number of tax payers but also bring in additional revenue.

(c) to (e) The object of the economic criteria scheme which aimed at enrolling new and potential tax payers, was to widen the tax base. The scheme was first introduced in 12 major cities and their urban agglomerations. The first year for which return was to be filed under this scheme was assessment year 1997-98 and the last date for this year was 28th of February, 1998. In the year a growth of approximately

20% was recorded in the number of returns filed as against the earlier year.

#### **Export Processing Zones**

1621. SHRIMTI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of export processing zones set up in the country so far;

(b) the location of those export processing zones; State-wise

(c) whether the Government propose to set up some export processing zones (EPZ) during the Ninth Plan; and

(d) if so, the States where these EPZs are proposed to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAM KRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The seven Export Processing Zones (EPZs) functioning in the country are located at Kandla (Gujarat), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Noida (Uttar Pradesh), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Cochin (Kerala), Falta (West Bengal) and Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).

(c) and (d) Keeping in view the availability of funds and the need to optimise infrastructural facilities in the existing Export Processing Zones, there is no proposal at present for the Central Government to set up new zones in the country. However, Export Processing Zones can now be established by State Governments or in joint/private sector.

#### **Re-opening of Closed Coal Mines**

1622. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reopen the closed mines of Coal India Ltd.;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the names of the coal mines closed in Coal India Limited since nationalisation till March 31, 1998?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Coal India Limited (CIL) decides on closure and opening of mines on techno-economic considerations. CIL has no proposal at present to re-open the closed mines which were closed due to exhaustion of mineable reserves, difficult geo-mining conditions, techno-economic unviability and safety considerations. Several coal mines of CIL which were