

Tax Exemption on Withdrawal of Deposits

1616. SHRI VAIKO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the one time withdrawal of deposits are made tax free;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the time by which it is applicable;

(c) whether the deposits in National Savings Certificate can be withdrawn tax free;

(d) if not, the recovery therefor;

(e) the maximum beneficiaries of both the schemes;

(f) whether the retired savers are permitted for withdrawal of National Saving Scheme 1987 funds tax free; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) It is not clear which deposits are being referred to.

(c) Yes, Sir. No tax is deducted from the payment of discharge value in National Savings Certificate (VIIIth Issue). The interest earned is taxable on an annual accrual basis, but exempted under the limits prescribed under Section 80L of Income Tax.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) It is not clear which two schemes are referred to. For National Savings Certificates no such data is available.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

Debt Recovery Tribunals

1617. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of appeals filed to Appellate Authority of Debts Recovery Tribunal at Mumbai from Karnataka during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government propose to conduct the sitting of the above Appellate Authority in Bangalore every month to facilitate the banks and the borrowers of Karnataka; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

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) As reported by Debts Recovery Appellate Tribunal, Mumbai, during the years 1996, 1997 and 1998 (upto November, 1998), 50 cases have been filed in the Tribunal relating to State of Karnataka.

(b) and (c) Under the provisions of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993, the Appellate Tribunal have powers to regulate its own procedure including the places at which it shall have its sittings. Therefore, Appellate Tribunal is competent to hold its sittings anywhere in the country including Bangalore.

Profit/Loss of Vizag Steel Plant

1618. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vizag Steel Plant has been suffering losses during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons identified for losses alongwith the corrective measures taken/being taken by the Government to make it profitable;

(c) the infrastructure facilities created for export of steel products as envisaged in the project plan;

(d) the fabrication units set up by the steel plant to meet the domestic and export demands; and

(e) the present and future of the steel plant as per the review made by the experts and export committees, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) and (b) Details of the profit and loss registered by RINL/VSP

during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in Crores)

Year	Profit(+)/Loss(-)
1995-96	(-) 204.27
1996-97 (April'96-Sept'97)	(-) 452.20
1997-98 (Oct'97-March'98)	(+) 29.53(*)

(*) During 1997-98 (Six months' period), the nominal profit is on account of write-back of interest due to Government following conversion of loans from Government into preference capital.

The losses are explained chiefly by high capital related charges viz. interest and depreciation, on the one hand and sluggish market conditions on the other.

With a view to assist RINL become financially viable, the Government approved a financial restructuring of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. in May, 1998 and further directed RINL to prepare a comprehensive revival plan. The company engaged an international reputed consultant to study the turnaround strategies and prepare a comprehensive revival plan for long term viability of the company. The consultants have since submitted their report. And a comprehensive proposal for the revival of the Plant is under inter-ministerial consideration.

(c) No such separate infrastructural facilities were created for export of Steel products.

(d) No fabrication units have been set up by the Steel Plant to meet the domestic and export demands.

(e) As stated in reply to, (a) and (b) above, a comprehensive proposal is under consideration.

[Translation]

Export of Vegetables

1619. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of the Government regarding export and import of vegetables; and

(b) the details of the vegetables being exported?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) The policy of the Government to permit exports of agricultural products and farm goods is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm income and earning foreign exchange. Review of export performance of agricultural products is an on-going process and accordingly policy interventions are made, as and when considered necessary with a view to making agricultural exports increasingly viable. The import policy of the Government is primarily based on augmentation of domestic supplies to meet the local requirements and providing inputs at reasonable price to the processors/manufacturers of food items.

The export of all vegetables except onions is presently allowed freely. The export of onions is canalised through the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd., (NAFED) and the Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board. The export of Bangalore Rose onions, Krishnapuram onions and 3000 Mts. of all varieties of onions on a Government to Government basis to Sri Lanka, is allowed through NAFED. Export of 25,000 Mts of onions per month for three months is allowed through the Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board.

The import of vegetables which is covered under the classification of consumer items, is not permitted except against a licence or in accordance with Public Notice issued in this behalf. However, import of certain fruits and vegetables are freely allowed from SAARC countries subject to condition that the items are in new/prime condition and are of origin of the SAARC countries listed in the Notice. However, these imports are subject to normal admissible import tariff.

(b) The vegetables exported from the country include onions, potatoes, okra, tomatoes, mushrooms, cucumber, gherkins, capsicum, green chilly and peas.

[English]

Coir Geo Textiles

1620. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal for promoting the production and marketing of Coir Geo-Textiles;