

ordination is being maintained between all the agencies concerned in the prevention and detection of smuggling including that of video tapes.

Formation of Rural Bank of India

5797. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the All India Gramin Bank Workers Organisation in regard to formation of the Rural bank of India by merging rural branches of commercial banks as well as regional rural banks in it; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b). One of the demands made by All India Gramin Bank Workers Organisation relates to the formation of a Rural Bank of India by merging all Regional Rural Banks as well as all Rural branches of Commercial banks in the country. Government have no such proposal under consideration.

Deposits of Goans in Portugal

5798. PROF. GOPALRAO MAYEKAR:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the value of gold, silver and cash deposits of Goans in the custody of Banco Nacional Ultramarino in Portugal and the number of deposits; and

(b) recent efforts, if any, made by Union Government for the return of the same?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) The book value of the gold ornaments pledged with the erstwhile Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU), when it was operating in Goa, was estimated at Rs. 16.33 lakhs in 6531 loan accounts at the time of their transfer to Portugal. As per available information, no silver or cash is reported to be held by BNU.

(b) Government of India is consistently pursuing the matter relating to the return of the gold ornaments with the concerned Portuguese authorities through diplomatic channels. This matter was also raised during the recent visit of the President of India to Portugal.

Financial Assistance for strengthening Tourism infrastructure to Kerala

5799. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Tourism has provided financial assistance to Kerala for strengthening tourism infrastructure during the Seventh Five Year Plan

(b) if so, the details of assistance and the work done for the development of tourism in the State; and

(c) the approximate amount likely to be given to Kerala during the current year?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Central Department of Tourism have sanctioned scheme worth Rs. 871.38 lakhs and released Rs. 573.39 lakhs for development of tourism in the State. The projects/schemes include

(i) Construction of Yatri Niwases at Quilon, Trivandrum, Cochin, Trichur and Cannanore.