

(c) Yes, Sir.

[English]

Joint Current Account of Mahatma Gandhi

5807. PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Pune Branch of the Bank of India (Maharashtra) has preserved the records relating to the joint current account of Mahatma Gandhi opened by him in 1942; and

(b) if so, the action taken or proposed to take over such rare records in safe custody as these records are of national importance?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b). Bank of India has reported that its Pune Main Branch is preserving the records relating to a Joint Current Account opened by Mahatma Gandhi in January 1946. The bank has been advised to keep the records of this account in safe custody.

[Translation]

Hill Allowance to Central Government Employees

5808. SHRI M.S. PAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government Employees working in the foothill areas of Nainital district are given hill area allowance at par with those working in Dehradun;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor when the height and geographical conditions of the foothill areas of Dehradun and Nainital district are same; and

(c) the remedial steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) to (c). The information is being collected.

[English]

Loans Advanced by Nationalised Banks for Construction of Leased Accommodation for their Branches

5809. BABA SUCHA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of loans advanced by the nationalised banks for construction of leased accommodation for their branches;

(b) the rate of interest charged on such advances;

(c) the criteria fixed for determining the monthly lease amount; and

(d) the reasons for acquiring leased accommodation and not having their own accommodation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that the present data collecting system does not yield this information.

(b) Advances to landlords/lessors of premises are treated as term loan and as such the interest chargeable on such advances is the same as applicable to all other term loans which is presently 15% (minimum) per annum.

(c) The rent is generally fixed by the banks taking into consideration various aspects such as location of the premises, prevailing market rent in the area, facilities to be provided by the landlord, etc. and within

the overall guidelines issued by RBI.

(d) Considering the large number of branches spread all over the country, it may not be feasible for banks to have their own accommodation at all places. Further, it may also not be desirable for banks to invest in land and buildings in large scale as it is not a commercial and prudent banking proposition.

[*Translation*]

SAIL's Distribution Policy

5810. SHRI RAMESH BAIS: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether under the distribution guidelines of iron and steel evolved by the Joint Plant Committee, the small users are suffering more than the bigger ones;

(b) whether 'SAIL' gives priority to its bulk users over its small users;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to streamline the system;

(d) if so, when it would be done and the details thereof; and

(e) if not, how Government propose to remove the difficulties of small users?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES AND THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e). Do not arise.

[*English*]

Excise Duty Realisation from Cigarette manufacturers

5811. SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the revenue collection on account of Excise duty from the cigarette manufacturers as compared to the production during 1986-87 and how does it compare with the Central Excise duty collection for 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90 in relation to the production during these years;

(b) whether the ratio of realisation of Central Excise duty from cigarette manufacturers during 1986-87 was higher as compared to the budgetary proposals of the year 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90; and

(c) the reasons for not improving the Central Excise duty structure to protect Government revenue?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANAVATE): (a) The estimated figures of production of cigarettes as furnished by DGTD are given below:—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Production (in million pieces)</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
1986-87	70,684
1987-88	61,730
1988-89	58,033
1989-90 (Prov.)	61,000