

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) According to the information provided by the State Governments, the number of foreign tourists who visited Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan during last two years is as follows:—

State	Number of Foreign Tourists	
	1994	1995
Punjab	11350	10964
Jammu and Kashmir	24683	20589
Assam	350	479
Uttar Pradesh	582000	640000
Rajasthan	436801	534749

(b) The estimates of foreign exchange earning are not computed State-wise. However, the total earnings of the country during 1994 and 1995 are estimated to be Rs 7103.53 crores and Rs. 8640.02 crores respectively.

Premium Collected by Life Insurance Corporation of India

248. **SHRI ASHOK MITRA:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the premium collected by the Life Insurance Corporation of India in each of the years since 1991-92 from each State and Union Territory;

(b) investments undertaken by the LIC for each of the same years in the different States and Union Territories; and

(c) whether a directive is proposed to be issued to ensure that the investment premium ratio is evened out for the different States and Union Territories?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The

information is given in Annexure-I [See Appendix 178, annexure No. 15]

(c) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

Jointly sponsored programmes by Air India and Indian Airlines

249. **SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND:** Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India and Indian Airlines have jointly sponsored some frequent flier programme-Flying Returns etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the procedure for participating for travelling public in such programmes;

(c) whether such programme will benefit the travelling peple of the country in any way; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the amount spent on such arrangements?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The frequent flier programme was started in June, 1994 and under the programme members are entitled to accumulate 'mileage points' which can, under specified conditions, be redeemed for free tickets and/or other benefits.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The programme has received a good response from travelling public. As on 31.05.96, its 32640 members had accrued a total of Rs. 56.95 crores mileage points of which 4.65 crore mileage points were redeemed.

Withholding of Consignments by Custom Authorities at IGIA

250. **SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that custom authorities at IGIA, Delhi have been

withholding consignments of exporters for more than 5-6 months on one plea or the other or on technical legal issue;

(b) whether it is also a fact that consignments of such exporters do not contain any other material than the declared goods;

(c) whether delay on the part of authorities could not be reduced despite plea of exporters causing losses of foreign exchange earnings by such exporters;

(d) whether any other step will now be taken for helping such exporters; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (e) Exports consignments are generally cleared for export at the Indira Gandhi International Airport Air-Cargo Complex in less than 48 hours. In few cases, however, verification of value or description, particularly where exports are made under the DEEC Scheme or under claim for higher drawback takes a longer time. It has been reported that against the average receipt of over 1000 export consignments per day, around 6 consignments, on an average, are detained in a month for detailed investigation. Many such cases appear to involve serious infraction of law.

Senior Officers in the Customs House continuously monitor the pendency of shipping bills and the pace of export clearance so as to ensure that clearance time does not exceed two days. The requirements of and procedure for testing the samples have also been relaxed. The Delhi Customs are also planning to bring the exports under the EDI System shortly, which will drastically curtail the time-frame for processing documents and clearance for exports. Instructions have also been issued that all officers and staff must assign top priority to export consignments and adopt a positive approach in dealing with exporters.

Imposition of Declining Rate of Income Tax

251. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any of the countries in the World are imposing declining rate of income tax to encourage declaration of higher income;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to introduce similar policy?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The Central Board of Direct Taxes does not have any information of country or countries following a policy of declining rate of income-tax. There is no proposal to introduce a declining rate of income tax.

Uplinking of Satellite Television

252. SHRI GURUDAS DAS

GUPTA:

SHRI JANARDHANA

POOJARY:

SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have agreed to grant permission for "uplinking of facilities to foreign T.V. Networks" as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 21.6.96;

(b) if so, what are the details of discussion held by the Indian Prime Minister and Chairman of the News Corporation and his team of top STAR television executives besides other foreign delegation visiting India recently; and

(c) whether Government of India kept in mind the Supreme Court's judgement while granting such permission and also