

(d) whether it is a fact that the Bank of Maharashtra Karmachari Sena is a side track while negotiating settlement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The pay scales and other major terms and conditions of service of the award staff in the public sector banks are governed by the industrial awards/bipartite settlements. The Bipartite Settlements are signed between Indian Banks' Association (representing the Banks' managements) and the workmen unions having bipartite relationship with IBA under the provisions contained in the Industrial Disputes Act. In addition, there are certain agreements between the individual bank managements and the majority unions representing the workmen in each bank. While the banks may have discussions with all the recognised unions in the bank, the agreements are usually signed with the majority unions and other unions may later on subscribe to such agreements. The decision regarding inviting recognised unions and other unions operating in a bank lies solely with the management of the banks. On the same analogy, Bank of Maharashtra Kara-mchhari Sena is not invited for negotiations/settlements as they do not enjoy bipartite relations either with IBA or the bank.

Strike by Central Government Employees

3723. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the Financial Express dated 12th August, 1993 captioned "Central Staff threatens stir as Government fail to act on demands" as well as on the recommendation of the last 4th Pay Commission's Report;

(b) if so, what are the main demands of the National Joint Action Committee: and

(c) what steps Government propose to take or have taken so far to avert an indefinite strike next month by over 35 lakhs Central Government employees over revision of pay wages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main demands of the National Joint Action Committee are as follows:

- (i) Merger of a portion of DA with basic pay.
- (ii) Setting up of permanent Wage Review Committee for Central Government employees.
- (iii) 20% increase in wages as Interim relief.
- (iv) Implementation of Arbitration Awards.
- (v) Removal of ceiling on income for the purposes of Bonus for all non-gazetted employees.

(c) The matter is under consideration of the Govt.

Cigarette Manufacturers' Assurance to boost Foreign Exchange Earnings

3724. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cigarette manufacturers assured Government of foreign exchange earnings and to augment excise revenue provided there is no increase in excise duty on cigarettes, during the current budget proposals; and

(b) if so, what are the results for the last five months?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The Tobacco Institute of India and certain manufacturers of cigarettes in their pre-budget representations had requested the Government to maintain a stable tax structure and suggested that this would help to improve the export potential of tobacco and tobacco products.

(b) The value of exports of tobacco, un-manufactured and manufactured, for the period March-April, 1992 and March-April, 1993 are placed at Rs. 51 crores and

Rs. 64 crores respectively. The export data for May, June and July 1993 are not yet available.

Hike in the price of Gold

3725. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that gold prices during the month of May, 1993 and June, 1993 have risen very high;

(b) if so, whether the liberal action of gold import policy in 1992 budget has not reduced the prices;

(c) if so, whether earlier the gold prices had declined but have again increased; and

(d) if so, what are the main reasons for this increase?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) to (d) Since the domestic supply of new Gold is negligible, the gold price in the country is largely influenced by the price quoted in the London Market. During 1991, the difference between the domestic price was substantial. With the introduction of the gold import policy, the domestic price of gold showed a downward trend thereby reducing the difference between the domestic price and the London price. However since the London price shot up after reaching a seven year low during the first quarter of this year, the effect of the same is reflected by the increase in the domestic price.

Processing of Cases by Settlement Commission (IT&WT)

3726. PROF. I.G. SANADI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the applications received by the Settlement Commission (IT&WT), Department of Revenue, Lok Nayak Bhawan, New Delhi are not admitted for being proceeded with further for settlement on the basis of date of

receipt of the application or date of completion of formalities; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons in details and what other Criteria is being adopted by the Commission for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Ordinarily, settlement applications are processed for admission in their chronological order, except in the following categories of cases:

(i) Settlement applications are taken up for admission out of turn in a case or in a group of cases where the aggregate additional tax offered in the application is Rs. 10 lakhs or more. This ensures timely collection of additional tax in big cases which is to be paid within 35 days of the service of the order admitting a case.

(ii) Where in a group of cases some settlement applications filed on a particular date are taken up for processing as per chronology, the other applications in the same group filed on a later date are also taken up simultaneously for consolidated and coordinated disposal of the entire group of cases.

Similarly, in a case where settlement applications for certain assessment years filed on a particular date are taken up for processing as per chronology, the settlement applications for certain other assessment years filed on a later date in the same case are also taken up simultaneously for consolidated and coordinated disposal of applications for different years.

States of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal

3727. PROF. I.G. SANADI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of Income Tax Appellate Tribunal of his Ministry;

(b) whether it is a fact that if an appeal in a case is pending before the Tribunal, any other Commission of other Ministry i.e. Income Tax Settlement Commission, can consider an application in the same case; and