

policy of the Government is to develop people-ownership of public sector undertakings while ensuring that Government equity does not fall below 51% equity and retaining management control with the Government. The cases of disinvestment would be decided on a case by case basis.

- (d) The proceeds would be channelised into the National Investment Fund.

#### **Pensionary Benefits**

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

(a) whether Government proposes to consider granting of 20 per cent basic pension to its present living pensioners who have attained the age of 75 years or above because of ill-health and other financial problems being faced by them; and

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to make any budgetary allocation this year to announce additional quantum of pensionary benefits to its living pensioners who have attained the age of 75 years instead of asking them to wait upto 80 years of age as recommended by the Sixth Pay Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

#### **Service conditions in banks**

300. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that pay, allowances, pension and other social security benefits are different in all Nationalized Banks, State Bank of India and all Gramin Banks;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor when all of them belonged to Government-control banks and the officers' and employees' are doing the same work;

(c) whether State Bank of India, Nationalized Banks, Gramin Banks, General Insurance, Life Insurance Officers' and employees' organizations have given strike calls; and

- (d) if so, what are the steps Government proposes to avoid the strike calls?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Pay and allowances, pension and other social security benefits are by and large the same in the Nationalized Banks, State Bank of India and the Regional Rural Banks. There are variations in the pension scheme available in State Bank of India and the Nationalized Banks. Regional Rural Bank employees do not have pension facility. Special Pay positions for the Award Staff is different in the State Bank of India compared to the Nationalized Banks. Gratuity Rules in State Bank of India and Nationalized Banks are also different.

(b) State Bank of India historically had different service conditions compared to other banks. When salary structure of other banks got rationalized in 1st Bi-partite Settlement of 19.10.1966, the State Bank of India was not a party to the said settlement. Therefore, some differences remained in the service conditions of Nationalized Banks with that of State Bank of India. Subsequently, the service conditions of Nationalized Banks were extended to employees of Regional Rural Banks in the year 1991. However, pension scheme is not extended to them.

(c) As of today, no strike call is pending in the Banking Industry except the notice given by the six constituents of United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an apex body of Employee Unions of Public Sector Bank dated 22nd June, 2009 for a day's strike on 6th July, 2009 against the proposed merger of State Bank of Indore with State Bank of India.

(d) Wage Negotiations are under way between United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA). Issues such as Compassionate Appointment, another option for pension etc. are also being discussed between IBA and UFBU.

#### **Unlawful financial business**

301. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that naxalites in Bihar and adjoining States have set up banks capitalizing on money from robberies, kidnapping etc. and loaned out the same at lower rates of interests;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to stop this unlawful and unregulated financial business?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

#### **Inflation and rise in retail price**

302. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the retail prices of sugar, tea, pulses, cereals etc. have gone up steeply during the last few months when the wholesale price index-based inflation was going down nearing zero level;

(b) if so, the comparative retail prices of main agricultural/food products since January 2009 and wholesale price index month-wise; and

(c) what are the reasons for variation in the prices during these months?