

(c) if so, whether these non-response cases are brought to the notice of the Parliament as is being done in respect of other constitutional bodies like UPSC; and

(d) whether there are adequate provisions under CAG Act of 1971 to ensure timely Government response?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) As per the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee (9th Report), all Ministries/Departments of the Union Government have been advised to furnish Action Taken Notes within a period of four months.

(b) As per information collected from the Office of the C&AG, CAG presented 209 Audit Reports containing 14886 paragraphs to Parliament during 1995-96 to 2008-09, out of which 3370 audit paragraphs/Performance Audit Reports are pending settlement.

(c) Ministry of Finance has issued instructions on 4th November, 2009 to all the Secretaries to the Government of India directing them that, starting from the Financial Year 2010-11, the status of submission of Action Taken Notes in respect of Audit Observations may be included in the Annual Report of their Ministry/Department, which is placed in Parliament.

(d) There are no specific provisions in the CAG's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971 for ensuring timely Government response on audit observations. The responsibility for ensuring timely action on CAG's Audit Reports lies with the Government Departments.

Cost of goods under GST

1244. SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the long awaited reforms of India's indirect taxes system are set to get a fillip, with a broad consensus forming within his Ministry on a rate of 16 per cent for the proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST) for both Centre and States combined;

(b) whether any limits on the annual minimum turnover is to be levied on the manufacturing company under the proposed GST;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether proposed GST will streamline movement of goods with a single tax structure replacing current multiple taxes; and

(e) how new tax system will reduce cost of goods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The design of proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST) and rates of tax are yet to be finalized.

(b) and (c) This issue is yet to be finalized.

(c) The proposed GST, which will have two components viz. Central GST and State GST, is likely to subsume multiple taxes and will help in moving towards achieving the objective of having a common national market.

(d) The proposed GST is likely to remove cascading of tax and thus likely to reduce cost of most of the goods.

PPF scheme by Andhra Bank

1245. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Sector Banks like Andhra Bank, which were nationalized in 1980 have not so far been allowed to operate PPF scheme, 1968, where as many private banks have been allowed to operate the scheme;

(b) if so, the reasons for neglecting Public Sector Banks nationalized over three decades ago, which have since expanded their operations manifold in the country;

(c) whether representations have been received for including such banks to operate the scheme;

(d) if so, by when all such banks are proposed to be included under PPF scheme, 1968; and

(e) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):

(a) and (e) Authorization of banks to handle Government transactions comes within the purview of Controller General of Accounts (CGA). Once the decision in principle is taken to authorize the bank for handling the PPF Scheme, the specific number and location (depending upon existing coverage, volume of transactions, etc.) of branches are decided by the Chief Controller of Accounts (Finance). The PPF Scheme, 1968 is being operated through Post Offices as well as Public Sector Banks. The scheme was initially available through State Bank of India (SBI) and its subsidiaries. In 1987, the scheme was extended to branches of 14 nationalized banks that were engaged in the collection of direct taxes. In 2003, branches of Corporation Bank and in 2005 branches of HDFC Bank, IDBI and UTI Bank were authorized in consultation with Chief Controller of Accounts (Finance) and the CGA to operate the scheme. With regard to authorizing the Andhra Bank to handle PPF Scheme, this Ministry has not received any proposal either from Andhra Bank or CCA (Finance).

Refund of IT

1246. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any time-frame has been fixed for settlement of refund of Income Tax (IT) cases;

(b) whether it is a fact that people are not getting their refund order within the prescribed/reasonable time limit and therefor Income tax Department has to pay huge amount as interest; and