

(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