

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) to (c) The issue of reducing the lock-in period of Insurance Companies Public Offer (IPOs) is under examination in consultation with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) and other stake holders. A final view has not yet emerged.

Fees for statutory auditors

2617. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the comptroller and Auditor General has proposed to increase fees paid to statutory auditors of all Government companies;

(b) whether the high inflation is leading to auditing cost escalation and increased compliance burden on auditors;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government auditors are being paid substantially lower fees as compared to Chartered Accountants (CAs) working in private sectors;

(e) whether CAG's proposal will help to enhance the quality of audit in Public Sector Units; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) to (c) As informed by the office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India (C & AG), as per section 224(8)(aa) of Companies Act, 1956, the remuneration of auditors appointed under section 619 of the said Act by the C & AG, shall be fixed by the company in general meeting or in such manner as the company in general meeting or in such manner as the company in general meeting may determine. The C&AG's office has not made any specific proposal this regard but has requested all PSUs to review/revise the audit fee appropriately considering various relevant factors.

(d) Comparative data of this nature is not maintained centrally.

(e) and (f) As per the office of the C & AG, it may not be possible to comment on the enhancement in quality of audit due to the revision of audit fees.

Launching of unit linked insurance policies

2618. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: