(b) The details of the Protocol signed with the Swiss Government regarding exchange of information are:

- Under the current DTAA between India and Switzerland, India has not been able to obtain banking information from Switzerland. The protocol now seeks to amend the Article concerning Exchange of Information to enable exchange of such information.
- Information which is foreseeable relevant for carrying out the provisions of this agreement or to the administration or enforcement of the domestic laws concerning taxes can be exchanged under the DTAA, whereas earlier information which was relevant only for carrying out the provisions of DTAA could be exchanged.
- Information exchanged is to be used for tax purpose only. However, the new Article also provides for use of information by such other purposes which are allowed under the laws of both States and the competent authority of the supplying State authorizes such use.
- There is a specific provision to ensure that information will be exchanged even if there is no domestic interest.
- There is a specific provision for providing banking and ownership information.
- The new provision will be applicable only for prospective information and not for past information.

(c) Once the Protocol that is signed with the Swiss Government becomes effective, the Government proposes to access the information about the Indian account holders in Swiss banks in specific cases to be utilized for framing the assessments in such cases under the Indian domestic laws.

Pension scheme for the workers in unorganized sector

834. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently launched a pension scheme for workers in the unorganized sector who do not have access to the social security net;

(b) if so, the salient features of the scheme;

(c) the response of the various State Governments to the scheme; and

(d) the manner in which the scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a), (b) and (d) Yes, Sir. To address the longevity risk of poorer sections of the society, the

Government has announced Swavalamban Scheme in the Union Budget 2010-11 Under this Scheme, the Government of India shall contribute a sum of Rs. 1,000 during the current year and the next three years, to each account in the New Pension System (NPS) of such subscribers who contribute any amount between Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 12,000 per annum provided they are not part of any statutory pension scheme or employer assisted retirement benefit scheme. The Government has targeted to cover ten lakh subscribers each in the four years beginning 2010-11, bringing the total number of subscribers to 40 lakhs by March, 2014. The Operational Guidelines on Swavalamban Scheme which, *inter alia*, provide details on the applicability, benefits and coverage of the Scheme, eligibility criteria, funding, etc. of the Scheme have been approved and the Interim Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has placed these Guidelines in public domain on its website *http://www.pfrda.org.in*. PFRDA will be the implementing agency for the Swavalamban Scheme. PFRDA has appointed agencies called Aggregators for enrolment of subscribers and contribution collection under the Swavalamban Scheme. A higher level of enrolments under the Scheme will ensure old age income security for such subscribers.

(c) In his Budget Speech, the Finance Minister had also appealed to all the State Governments to contribute a similar amount to the scheme and participate in providing social security to the vulnerable sections of the society. In response, two States, **Haryana** and **Karnataka** have also announced co-contributory schemes for specific occupational groups for the workers in the un-organised sectors by contributing Rs. 1200 per annum over and above the subscribers' contribution and the contribution of the Central Government under Swavalamban Scheme.

Loan given to Punjab for combating militancy

835. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to completely write off the entire loan given to the State Government of Punjab to combat militancy;

(b) whether Government has imposed any conditions in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the status of loan as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) As per available record, Government of India has written off loan and interest amounting to Rs. 9913.59 crore, against Special Term Loans pertaining to the period 1984-85 to 1993-94. The last of the dues on account of these loans were written off in 2007-08. No conditions were imposed while waiving these loans.