

FOREIGN CURRENCY IN INDIA

55. SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Will the Minister for FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan coins and currency notes and Burma currency notes are being smuggled into India for circulation; and

(b) If so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take to check the smuggling of such foreign currency into India?

THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE (SHRI C. D. DESHMUKH) : (a) Government have no information that Pakistan coins are being smuggled into India for circulation. As these coins can be easily distinguished from Indian coins there is no likelihood of their passing into circulation in India. There have, however, been a number of cases of over-printed Pakistan and Burma currency notes having been imported into India and passed off as Indian notes after cleverly removing the over-printing by some chemical or other process. This is not, however, a recent development and the number of such notes in circulation has decreased considerably of late as a result of the steps taken by Government to check their circulation.

(b) Government have banned the import of Burma notes from Burma. The import of Indian notes from Burma is also restricted. Every possible step is taken by the Customs authorities to enforce these restrictions effectively. Government have warned the public against acceptance of altered notes and have also published the serial numbers of over-printed notes of larger denominations. In addition arrangements have been made for exchange of over-printed Burma currency notes which have been so altered that the alteration cannot be readily detected.

EXTRACTION OF OIL IN WEST BENGAL.

56. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the Minister for NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Standard Vacuum Oil Company has submitted any proposal for the prospecting of oil in West Bengal;

(b) what is the quantity of oil reserve in the areas surveyed by the Company in West Bengal; and

(c) when the work to extract the oil will commence?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD) : (a) to (c). Attention of the hon. Member is drawn to the reply given on the 3rd December 1952 to unstarred question No. 28 in the Council of States. A copy of that reply is placed on the Table of the Council for convenience of reference. The situation has not altered since then.

Statement referred to above

OIL RESOURCES IN BENGAL

28. SHRI P. SUNDARAYYA: (a) Will the Minister for NATURAL RESOURCES AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH be pleased to state whether an aero-magnetic survey for petroleum products in the Bengal basin has recently been concluded?

(b) If so, what are the results of the survey?

(c) Has the survey shown any oil resources in the Bengal basin area?

(d) If the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative what is the estimated area covered by oil and what is the estimated amount of oil to be mined there?

(e) Are the Government taking any steps for the mining of this oil?

(f) Are any experts coming from the United States for carrying out further exploration?

(g) If so, who is sending out those experts, and what are the terms of their work and stay in India?

(h) Are any foreign concerns being given rights for prospecting oil in these areas? If so, who are they and what are the terms?

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (MAULAN A ABUL KALAM AZAD): (a) to (h). An aero-magnetic survey by the Standard Vacuum Oil Company of the West Bengal Alluvial covered tract of 25,000 sq. miles for exploration of hidden oil fields was completed on the 16th March, 1952. The data collected during the aero-magnetic survey indicates possibilities of favourable results, but this forms only the first part of an extended investigation and further ground survey work and boring for oil will be necessary before it can be said with authority that anything positive will ensue. The Standard Vacuum Oil Company have submitted proposals for carrying out this work. The matter is under Government's consideration.

LOANS TO STATE GOVERNMENTS

57. SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: Will the Minister for FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether loans to State Governments for industrial housing schemes are granted free of interest;

(b) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, the rate of interest charged on them;

(c) whether there are other categories of loans granted by the Central Government to (i) State Governments and (ii) others, which do not carry any interest; and

(d) if the reply to part (c) above be in the affirmative, the particulars

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of such loans and the purposes for which they were granted?

THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE (SHRI C. D. DESHMUKH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The rate of interest varies from 3 per cent, to 4 per cent.

(c) Loans granted for Grow More Food Campaign, Rehabilitation and also to some educational institutions have in certain cases been given free of interest.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

PRIVY PURSE OF EX-RULERS OF INDIAN STATES

58. SHRI D. NARAYAN: Will the Minister for STATES be pleased to state:

(a) how many ex-rulers of Indian States and their relatives are receiving privy purses; and

(b) what amount has been spent on these privy purses since 1949 annually?

THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND STATES (SHRI K. N. KATJU): (a) The number of Rulers who are in receipt of Privy Purse is 311. The relatives of the Rulers who were getting allowances before integration continue to get allowances for their life-time. A statement of allowances paid in Part 'C' States was placed on the Table of Parliament on the 4th March 1952. In Part 'A' and Part 'B' States these allowances are paid out of the revenues of the State.

	Rs.
(b) 1950-51	5,63,56,551
1951-52	5,50,28,568
1952-53	5,36,37,000 (Revised Estimates).

Before 1st April 1950, Privy Purses were paid by State Governments. Information for 1949-50 is being obtained and will be placed on the Table of the House in due course.