

13. As an outcome of the fourth Trans-border Consultative Group Meeting held in New Delhi, a joint resolution has been signed with Nepal for biodiversity/tiger conservation.
14. Regional Offices of the National Tiger Conservation Authority sanctioned at Nagpur, Bengaluru and Guwahati.

Suggestions of Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee

*108. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a High Power Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee has been constituted to look into the corrupt practices of medical companies;
- (b) if so, the details of suggestions made by the Committee; and
- (c) the action being taken to protect the poor patients in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) A High Powered Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee has been constituted by the Department of Pharmaceuticals in the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers to look into the quality and pricing of medicines. However, there is no such committee to look into corrupt practices of medical companies.

(b) The recommendations submitted by the two Working Groups constituted by the High Powered Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee are under consideration of the Department of Pharmaceuticals.

(c) Recognizing the importance of Health in the process of economic and social development, the Government of India launched the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in 2005 to improve the availability of and access to quality health care by people, especially for those residing in rural areas, the poor, women and children. Under NRHM, funds are provided to States for strengthening the health system for better delivery of health care to the people.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals has launched the Jan Aushadhi Scheme, under which 113 Jan Aushadhi Stores have already been set up in various States to sell generic medicines. Doctors working in hospitals under the Central Government have been directed to prescribe generic medicines, while the State Governments have been advised to promote generic prescription in Public Health Facilities.

Impact of hike in interest rate on inflation

† *109. SHRI NARESH CHANDRA AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) the number of times the interest rates on bank loans have been increased during this financial year;

(b) the percentage of decrease in inflation rate as a result of such hikes in interest rates alongwith the existing rate of inflation;

(c) whether it is a fact that the inflation rate has increased further as a result of the increase in the interest rates; and

(d) if so, the plan to reduce the interest rates and control inflation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Reserve Bank of India has raised the Repo and Reverse Repo rates five times during the current financial year. Taking cue from the Reserve Bank of India public sector banks have raised their Benchmark Prime Lending Rates (BPLR) and Base Rates in the current financial year as per the Table below:

Table : BPLR and Base Rates of Scheduled Commercial Banks (per cent)

Quarter Ended	Public Sector Banks	
	Minimum	Maximum
(A) BPLR		
March-11	13.0	14.5
June-11	13.5	15.0
September-11	13.85	15.75
October-11	14.25	15.75
(B) Base Rates		
March-11	8.25	9.5
June-11	9.25	10.0
September-11	10.0	10.75

(b) Monetary policy rate hikes seek to affect the macro economy through a compression in aggregate demand and are aimed at not only controlling inflationary pressures; but also inflation expectations. There is, as such, no direct one-to-one correspondence between the quantum of increase in interest rates and reduction in the levels of inflation.

(c) As interest rate hikes push up costs of borrowing and thereby cost of products and services in general, a part of the costs is likely to be passed on to end-consumers and a part absorbed by the producers/service providers depending upon the pricing power and market

conditions. Higher end-product prices or end-service prices would help lower aggregate demand and arrest inflationary pressures emanating there from.

(d) To lessen the burden of rising interest rates on the vulnerable sections of the society, the Government has been giving selective interest subvention in some areas. Besides, the Government is also addressing supply side constraints through a slew of measures.

Quality of PMGSY roads in Bihar

† *110. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the length of roads for which sanction for construction has been granted in Bihar recently under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), district-wise;

(b) whether Government is getting complaints about the quality of roads constructed by the Central agencies, such as these roads are breaking down within one year of their construction; and

(c) if so, what action Government is taking against guilty persons and the details of agencies and contractors against whom action has been taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Recently, the projects for construction of 1,900 kilometers of roads have been sanctioned for the State of Bihar based on Empowered Committee meeting held on 30th September, 2011. The districts benefitted are Aurangabad, Gaya, Jahanabad (including Arwal), Jamui, Rohtas and Nawada.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As per the Tri-partite agreement between the Central Agencies, State Government and Central Government, the Central Agencies are responsible for constructing the roads and ensuring the quality for roads sanctioned to them. Also, all the roads are to be maintained for five years, after completion, by the same contractor who has constructed these roads. In addition, the Ministry also deposes National Quality Monitors (NQMs) to investigate the complaints and the Central Agencies are asked to take remedial actions as per reports.

Revision of MGNREGS wages

*111. PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the current rate of wages being paid under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is less than the minimum wages prescribed under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.