

(c) whether it is a fact that more than 90 per cent of films released have not even covered up their production costs;

(d) whether the imposed tax constitutes almost 40 per cent of the total income earned by artists; and

(e) whether Government is aware that more than 80 per cent of the fraternity lives from hand to mouth existence and if so, would it consider abolishing the imposed tax and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Madam, Yes. Service tax of 12.36 per cent has been imposed on the taxable services provided by the Film Artists.

(b) As a preparation for the introduction of a nationwide comprehensive Goods and Service Tax (GST), comprehensive approach to taxation of services has been brought into effect from the 1st day of July, 2012. Under the new approach, service tax is levied on all taxable services, which meet the definition of 'service', provided in section 65b (44) of the Finance Act, 1994, other than those services described in the negative list and exempt list. Service tax is levied on an activity whereas income tax is levied on the cumulative income earned by a person during a specific period. Service tax being a consumption tax, incidence is on the service receiver. The service provider, by default, is bound to collect the service tax from the service receiver in accordance with the law and pay the same to the Government.

(c) and (d) Comments are not offered, since this data is not maintained.

(e) A general exemption is available for low-value service providers, up to an aggregate value of ten lakh rupees in a financial year, to address such persons.

#### **Instances and reasons for pawning of gold**

1304. SHRI ARVIND KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the instances and reasons for pawning of gold by the Government with overseas institutions and central banks so far, year-wise;

(b) out of this, the details of quantum of gold received back after paying the debt and the quantum of gold sold off by Government;

(c) whether the Government had to resort to selling of gold in international markets/institutions from its reserves, so far; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, year-wise and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) There have been no instances of pawning of gold by Government of India in the last three years and current year.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

#### **Possibility of plastic notes**

1305. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to conduct field trials with one billion plastic/polymer bank notes to check the possibility of introducing plastic notes;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether circulation of these plastic currency will be area-specific due to varied geographical location and climatic conditions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof with the amount Government proposes to incur on these field trials of public notes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) It has been decided by the Government of India and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to introduce Rs. 10 notes in polymer/plastic on a field trial basis.

(c) and (d) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has informed that field trial is proposed to be conducted at five places *viz.* Jaipur, Shimla, Bhubaneswar, Mysore and Cochin, keeping in view the varied geographical locations and climatic conditions. The expenditure proposed to be incurred on the field trial would be finalized in accordance with extant guidelines.

#### **Service charges on actual bills**

1306. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: