

However, the Bank of Baroda's rural branch at Kanakakad, District Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh has been converted into satellite office during the Financial Year 2011-12 which is providing banking facilities to the village Kanakakad. In addition, 745, 927, and 1506 branches have been opened in rural areas in Financial Years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 respectively.

#### **Ban on the export of Monazite**

\*97. DR. CHANDAN MITRA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has imposed a ban on the export of Monazite from the country;
- (b) if so, the immediate steps taken by Government to check extraction and export of Monazite from the country by a large number of private companies; and
- (c) if not, the details of private companies involved in export of this mineral?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANSAMY): (a) No Sir. Export of Monazite has not been banned by the Government. Since Monazite is a prescribed substance, the export of Monazite is regulated under the provisions of Atomic Energy Act, 1962 and the rules framed thereunder.

(b) Since Monazite is a 'Prescribed Substance', no Company or entity can extract, process, export or otherwise handle monazite without obtaining licence from the Department of Atomic Energy.

(c) For export of monazite, which is a prescribed substance, licence from the Department of Atomic Energy under the Atomic Energy Act is required. Indian Rare Earths Ltd. (IREL), a Public Sector Undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy is the only entity which has been authorised for export of monazite.

#### **Creation of National Investment Board**

\*98. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering a proposal to create a National Investment Board (NIB) with extra ordinary authority to supercede individual ministries and decide the fate of expensive infrastructure projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that different ministries including the Ministry of Environment and Forests have opposed this idea as this step will seriously erode the powers and autonomy of individual ministries; and

(d) if so, the details and Governments reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) A proposal is under consideration for constitution of a Cabinet Committee with Prime Minister as the Chairman to expedite decisions on approvals/clearances for implementation of projects. The proposed Cabinet Committee would monitor and review the implementation of major projects to ensure accelerated and time-bound grant of various licenses, permissions and approvals. The Cabinet Committee would also prescribe different time limits, in consultation with the Ministries concerned, for taking decisions on different types of approvals and clearances for each sector under that Ministry/Department. The Ministry/Department would be expected to take a decision after due diligence on the application within the stipulated time period. In case the decision is not taken within the stipulated time period, the Cabinet Committee would look into the reasons for delays and facilitate decision-making on critical issues to de-bottleneck key impediments by fast-tracking the required approvals/clearances.

It was felt that the delays in various approvals/clearances had an adverse impact on growth, employment generation and time/cost over-runs in the individual projects. Therefore, a draft Cabinet Note was circulated earlier for inter-ministerial consultations. Comments of various Ministries/Departments are under consideration. It is expected that the Government would take an early decision on the proposal.

**Guidelines for transportation of bodies of labourers working in gulf countries**

\*99. SHRI ANIL DESAI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are some instances when bodies of some labourers working in gulf countries could not be transported back weeks together due to poverty of their relatives;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the body of one Luxminarayan Sharma, working in Saudi Arabia was lying in Saudi Arabia for nineteen days and his poor widow had to approach NHRC for help;