

action as per RBI Master Circular No. DBS.FrMC.BC.No. 1/23.001/2013-14 dated July 01, 2013 on frauds. As per master circular, banks conduct enquiry to fix up staff accountability and impose minor or major penalties depending on merit of each case. In the period from April 2011- December 2014 as per the information provided by Twenty five major Public Sector Banks (PSBs), after conducting enquiries into the staff lapses in NPA cases, 677 employees were dismissed, and major and minor penalties were imposed on 6711 and 7498 employees respectively.

Inclusion of big land lords under Wealth Tax

2169. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any proposal to include big land holders in the rural areas under the provision of Wealth Tax;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) No Sir. The Finance Bill, 2015 proposes to provide that wealth tax shall not be applicable from the assessment year beginning on 1st April, 2016.

- (b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.
- (c) For reasons mentioned at (a) above.

Opening of banks in Uttarakhand

†2170. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of norms on the basis of which the branches of banks are opened;
- (b) whether requests have been received with regard to opening of the branches of banks at Patal Bhuvaneshwar and Reetha Rauteli of district Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand;
- (c) whether these places do not conform to the prescribed norms; and
- (d) if not, the reasons for delay in opening the branches of the banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) In order to extend the banking network in unbanked areas, general permission has been granted by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to domestic.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Scheduled Commercial Banks (other than Regional Rural Banks) to open branches, mobile branches, Administrative Offices, CPCs (Service Branches), (i) in Tier 2 to Tier 6 centres (with population upto 99,999) and (ii) in rural, semi urban and urban centres of the North-Eastern States and Sikkim subject to reporting. RBI has advised banks that while preparing their Annual Branch Expansion Plan (ABEP), the banks should allocate at least 25 per cent of the total number of branches proposed to be opened during a year in unbanked rural (Tier 5 and Tier 6) centres. In light of these directions, Banks examine the population to be covered, economic viability of the branch to be opened and infrastructure available at locations for opening of branches.

(b) State Bank of India (SBI) which is the Convenor Bank for State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) of Uttarakhand has informed that no such request for opening of bank branch at Patal Bhuvaneshwar and Reetha Rauteli of district Pithoragarh of Uttarakhand has been received during the last three years.

(c) and (d) State Bank of India, the convenor of SLBC, Uttarakhand has informed that in both the villages opening of new bank branch is not economically viable as there is a population of 680 in Patal Bhuvaneshwar and 426 in Reetha Rauteli. Banking facilities are being provided through Business Correspondents.

Helping hands of banks to distressed sectors

2171. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently held a discussion with the banks on the role they would play in helping distressed sectors such as power, textiles and even telecom;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has asked those banks whose lending to the minority community has been below the stipulated norm, to make special efforts in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the names of such banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JAYANT SINHA): (a) and (b) Ministry of Power has informed that discussions with banks and financial institutions were held on 23rd June, 2014 on various issues relating to power sector which *inter-alia* included proposal for setting up of an Equity Fund/Asset Reconstruction Company for the stressed power projects in June, 2014.