

Formulation of policy on cryptocurrency trading

716. SHRI JOSE K. MANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the three-month window, by RBI's direction for banks to stop dealing with all crypto-currency trading platforms, is ending mid-July 2018;

(b) whether Government appointed Committee headed by the Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs is expected to submit its report on formulation of Government's policy on bitcoin and other crypto-currencies soon; and

(c) whether with the Honourable Supreme Court expected to have cryptocurrency related petitions soon, Government has to formalise its policy on crypto-currency trading and decide upon a regulatory body as it falls outside RBI's jurisdiction on currency or legal tender?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN P.): (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI), *vide* circular DBR.No.BP.BC.104/ 08.13.102/2017-18 dated April 6, 2018, has mandated all its regulated entities not to deal in Virtual Currencies (VCs) or provide services for facilitating any person or entity in dealing with or settling VCs. As per the circular, the entities, which already provide such services shall exit the relationship within three months from the date of the captioned circular, which ended on July 5, 2018.

(b) and (c) The inter-ministerial Committee headed by the Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs to study the issues related to Crypto Currencies and propose specific action to be taken in this matter has met twice. Pros and cons of regulating Crypto Currencies are being discussed in detail and it may take some time before its report is submitted.

One market place for Public Sector Bank loans

717. DR. BANDA PRAKASH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether State-run banks are mulling a common portal where they could offer competitive and instant personal, housing and other retail loans based on the creditworthiness of the borrower;

(b) whether Government also wants PSBs to use new-financial technologies to make business transactions quicker and hassle-free;

(c) whether Government unveiled a reform agenda for PSBs, termed EASE-Enhanced Access and Service Excellence; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA): (a) to (d) A reforms agenda based on recommendations made by Whole-Time Directors and senior management of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) has been referred by the Government to PSBs for action as per approval by the bank's Board. This reforms agenda aimed at Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE), encapsulates a synergistic approach to ensuring prudential and clean lending, better customer service, enhanced credit availability, focus on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and better governance.

Reforms in the agenda *inter alia* include enhanced ease of financing for MSMEs through financial technologies (FinTech), automated processing of MSME proposals through www.udyamimitra.in, online application facility and automated decision for all micro enterprise loans, banking from home and mobile for enhanced customer comfort, promoting digital banking etc.

In furtherance of EASE, PSBs assess technology solutions including FinTech based solutions on an ongoing basis.

Banks officers guilty of helping Nirav Modi

†718. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the banks whose senior officers have been found guilty of helping Nirav Modi;

(b) the action being taken against them; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA): (a) to (c) Punjab National Bank has informed that Central Bureau of Investigation has filed a chargesheet on 14.05.2018 in RC No RC BSM 2018 E 0001 dated 31.01.2018 in respect of the Nirav Modi LOU fraud case. 12 serving and retired Bank officials/ Executives have been named in the chargesheet. 22 officials of PNB were suspended in relation to the LOU fraud.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.