

As per the report for the period ending March, 2018 both the number of Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) accounts and the deposits in these accounts have increased. Furthermore, the branch authorisation policy recognises BCs which provide banking services for a minimum of four hours per day and for at least five days a week as banking outlets. This propelled a sizable increase in the number of accounts opened through BCs who are also generating robust growth in ICT-based banking services.

(d) With a view to increase banking penetration and promote financial inclusion, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) was launched on 28th August, 2014 to provide affordable financial services to all citizens within a reasonable distance. As on 23.01.2019, a total of 34.03 crore accounts have been opened under PMJDY with deposit balance of ₹ 88,566.92 crore. While 53% of the Jan Dhan account holders are women, 59% accounts are in rural and semi-urban areas. To facilitate banking transactions, 27.17 crore RuPay Debit cards with an in-built accident insurance coverage have been issued to beneficiaries under PMJDY. Also, an overdraft (OD) facility of ₹ 5,000 (since revised to ₹ 10,000) is available to provide hassle free credit to the beneficiaries under PMJDY for meeting their exigencies, without insistence on security and end-use. PMJDY account holders are also eligible for loans under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) and other loan products offered by different banks. To give impetus to financial inclusion initiatives of the Government, the PMJDY programme has been extended beyond 14.8.2018 with the focus on opening of accounts shifting from "every household" to "every unbanked adult" and making the scheme more attractive with following modifications:—

- (i) Existing OD limit revised from ₹ 5,000 to ₹ 10,000.
- (ii) No conditions attached for active PMJDY accounts availing OD upto ₹ 2,000.
- (iii) Age limit for availing OD facility revised from 18-60 years to 18-65 years.
- (iv) Accident insurance cover for new RuPay card holders raised from existing ₹ 1 lakh to ₹ 2 lakh for new PMJDY accounts opened after 28.8.2018.

Ban on use of Indian currency notes

956. DR. BANDA PRAKASH:
SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI ANIL DESAI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Nepal's Central Bank had banned the use of Indian currency notes

of denominations ₹2000, ₹500 and ₹200 after Indian Government resorted to demonetisation of ₹1000 and ₹500 currency notes;

(b) whether this move has hit countries such as Nepal and Bhutan where Indian currency is widely used;

(c) whether this move could affect Indian tourists visiting the Himalayan nation where Indian currency is widely used; and

(d) the steps Government is taking to sort out the issue with the concerned countries for smooth flow of tourists and trading between the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN P.): (a) to (d) With a view to mitigate the hardship of individuals visiting from India to Nepal, the Reserve Bank of India issued a circular in 2015 allowing individuals travelling from India to Nepal to carry Indian currency notes of ₹ 500/- and ₹ 1000/- denominations ('Specified Bank Notes') upto a limit of ₹ 25,000/- per person. The Nepal Rastra Bank issued a similar circular to that effect. However, following Government of India's decision in November, 2016 to demonetize Indian currency notes of ₹ 500/- and ₹ 1,000/- denominations, the Nepal Rastra Bank had disallowed the usage of all such demonetized notes in Nepal. Further, the Government of Nepal had decided to publish a public notice in December, 2018 not to use, carry and keep Indian currency notes of denominations higher than ₹ 100. The Indian tourists hence can move out to Nepal with banknotes upto ₹ 100/- and thereby escape any adverse impact. The issue regarding denominations higher than ₹ 100/- is under consideration of the Government of India, in consultation with Reserve Bank of India.

Nationwide GST training programme

957. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government along with the Institute of Cost Accountants of India, is all set to launch a nationwide GST training programme to train one lakh accountants in the country to enable them to deliver GST compliance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the initiative will help especially small and medium enterprises that are struggling with compliance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?