

Trade Agreements

1086. SHRI K.M.MATHEW : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the countries who have shown interest to boost trade with India during the last six months;

(b) whether any trade agreement has been signed between India and these foreign countries during the above period;

(c) if so, the details of areas identified therefor; separately, country-wise; and

(d) the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). A large number of countries including U.K., Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, Ireland, Norway, Finland, Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Europe, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan of the SAARC countries, Bahrain, Vietnam Thailand etc., have shown interest in boosting trade with India during the last six months. The operationalisation of the SAARC Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) in December, 1995 has opened up new vistas for trade and economic cooperation with our immediate South Asian neighbouring countries. Formal trade agreements were also signed with Burkina Faso and Namibia in November, 1995.

(c) and (d). Government is acting as a promotor, facilitator and coordinator through its various institutional mechanism like Joint Commissions, Joint Trade Committees, etc. for boosting trade and ironing out hurdles in trade also *inter alia* providing and developing direct business level contacts. Trade promotion is a continuous effort and steps are taken to promote and diversify exports through country-specific measures. As a result, India's Exports have shown an increase of 22% in dollar terms during April 1995-January 1996 compared with the corresponding period in the preceding year.

[Translation]

High Airfare in Himachal Sector

1087. PROF. PREM DHUMAL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether air fares in New Delhi-Kangra (Gagal) and New Delhi-Kullu (Bhuntar) sectors are the maximum in India for corresponding distances;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is likely to have an adverse effect on Tourism in Himachal Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b). Air Transport Operators are free to charge any fare in their best commercial judgement.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Child Labour

1088. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the International Labour Organisation Conventions regarding child labour adopted in our country;

(b) the number of the conventions which have not yet been accepted in our country ; and

(c) the reasons therefor and the time by which these are likely to be adopted?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) : (a) India has ratified six International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions concerning Employment of Children and Young Persons. These Conventions are Conventions No. 5 concerning Minimum Age (Industry), Convention No. 6 concerning Night Work of Young Persons (Industry), Convention No. 15 concerning Minimum Age (Trimmers & Stocks), convention No. 16 concerning Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea), Convention No. 90 concerning Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) (Revised) and Convention No. 123 concerning Minimum Age (Underground Work).

(b) and (c). India has yet to ratify Convention Nos. 10, 33, 59, 60 & 138 concerning Minimum age for Employment. There is no omnibus provision stipulation minimum age for employment in Indian Labour Laws. The socio-economic conditions obtaining in the country at this stage, do not make it practicable for enactment and implementation of such a provision.