

allowed. Regarding the question of the hon. Member about various types of trees, I will inform him separately.

SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, many districts in Madhya Pradesh like Baster, Jhabua, Shahdol, Betul and Dhar come under reserve forests. Has the hon. Minister received any complaint from the people of the area to the effect that the State Minister of Forests is involved in illegal felling of trees. I would like to know from the hon. Minister if the State Government is involved, then what steps has the Centre taken to protect the forests?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, some complaints have been received. Only after completion of the on going enquiry action will be taken.

[English]

SHRIMATI RITA VERMA: First the Minister says that the felling of the trees has been banned; then he says that the State Government has recommended to ban felling of the trees and only Gujarat has done it. I cannot understand what he actually means by saying so? Can he try to explain it further?

MR. SPEAKER: You are to ask a question. You just put a question. What is the question?

SHRIMATI RITA VERMA: First he says that the felling of trees has been banned; then again he says the State Government has recommended to ban felling of the trees. What is the actual position?

MR. SPEAKER: He did not say that; he said about the total banning and all that.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: I will clarify it for the hon. Member. (Interruptions) What I said was auction of plots is banned. It was done in a conventional manner was some plots of land were auctioned. That was banned some years ago. I have said that we have recommended and desired that it should be banned, specially around the plots of one thousand

square metres.

Expansion of Cochin Airport

*65. **SHRI P.C. THOMAS:**
SHRI PALA K.M. MATHEW:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the land for expansion of the Cochin Airport has been acquired;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received any memorandum in this regard;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) whether such a proposal had been received by the Government earlier also and if so, when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e). Based on earlier requests and a fresh memorandum received in this matter, feasibility of extending either primary or secondary runway, is being re-examined and revised cost estimates for these options are being worked out.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, when you are re-examining the possibility of extending either primary or secondary runway, there is a place which is about 10 to 15 km. away from the present airport, which is called Edackattuvayal. This was once proposed to be a very good place for the extending the airport or putting up the airport there. Some memoranda have also been submitted in this connection. Will the Government kindly consider this place, about ten kilometres away, for extending the airport or for construction of a new airport at Cochin, consid-

aring the feasibility of the land at present available there?

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK: The present proposal is for expansion of the secondary runway by slightly changing the orientation. Therefore, this itself costs as per the estimated figures of 1986, about Rs. 43 crores. At present it costs about Rs. 65 crores and so there is no possibility of extending a new site for the airport, rather than for expanding the present one only.

SHRI P.C.THOMAS: Kashmir, our tourist treasure is almost becoming inaccessible for many of the tourists who would like to go there. But Kerala which is almost like Kashmir all through, has so many tourist centres which greatly attract the tourists. They have to be developed by the Tourist Department. Now, will the Government make this Cochin Airport which is in the centre of Kerala, an International Airport for attracting tourists and thereby earning foreign exchange?

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK: For the time being there is no such proposal.

SHRI PALAI K.M. MATHEW: This Cochin Airport is controlled by the Navy and since the island has some physical limitations, would the Government consider constructing a new airport as already suggested, because it is impossible to extend the area because of the Physical limitations of the Cochin Airport and Cochin, as everybody knows, is one of the most important cities in the country and tourism as well as all other kinds of activities are fast developing in that area? So, an international airport of the biggest size is quite indispensable there. Therefore, will the Government reconsider the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): All the various options are being considered and as far as the new airport is concerned, it would entail a very high cost. But, certainly, the proposal cannot be considered until the land is identified, and it takes time. Sometime in October the District

Collector, Cochin, was asked to examine this to find out if any land is available for such a proposal to be considered. Until the land is identified, nothing can be done.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that keeping in view the fact that power plants are located at Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh and Sonbhadra in Uttar Pradesh and NTPC and NCL are operating in the area, will the Government develop Singrauli and Myorpur as tourist spots and construct airports there (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: No, please sit down. You have not gone through the main question before putting supplementary. This is not proper. Supplementary is not concerned with the main question.

[*English*]

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: Sir, last month the hon. Minister was kind enough to convene a meeting of the Officers of the Civil Aviation Ministry, representatives of the Government of Kerala and myself for studying the expansion of the Cochin Airport. In that meeting it was decided that either the primary of the secondary runway should be expanded and if that is not possible, a new airport should be constructed. For that, the District Collector of Ernakulam was entrusted to identify the places and intimate to the Government. The District Collector of Ernakulam has identified five places and it has been intimated to the Government of India through the Kerala Government. Once the Government of India gets this intimation, I would like to know whether these places will be examined and if found suitable, whether actions will be taken for the construction of a new airport at Cochin.

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK: As I have already said, let the proposal come, then we will be able to consider it.