

(b) whether a written complaint has been made to the Air-India management in India about the preferential treatment to atleast three London based correspondents of some Indian national newspapers in the issue of free tickets for themselves and their families as mentioned in the news item appearing in the 'Business Standard' Calcutta Issue dated 11 February, 1985; and

(c) if so, whether the matter has been investigated and its outcome ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) :

(a) Free tickets can be given to foreign/Indian journalists by an airline in terms of a contract signed between the airline and news-papers/magazines, in lieu of the advertisements in such news papers and magazines. Free tickets can also be provided under a similar contract signed between Air-India and an individual journalist in lieu of articles published in national news-papers. In these cases the Corporation in return for free tickets receives the benefit of advertisement and publicity. In certain cases facility of casual credit is provided to the journalists to enable them to visit India to obtain a proper perspective of Indian National/International events while reporting on such events and also to counter adverse publicity on such events in the foreign press.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It was felt necessary by Air India that the adverse publicity in the foreign press relating to conditions in India, which tended to discourage foreigners from visiting India, should be countered in the interest of promoting traffic to India and for this purpose tickets against casual credit were issued to certain journalists so that on their return from India their reporting of the conditions in India in the foreign press would be in the proper perspective. The facts being known, Air-India did not consider it necessary to make any investigation.

Conservation of Wild Life

1282 PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether many rare species of wild life are facing threat of extinction in India;

(b) if so, whether effective conservative measures are not being implemented; and

(c) the details of the steps being contemplated by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BIR SEN) : (a) Of the many identified species of wild life in India some are rare and some are endangered. None of the identified species are facing extinction.

(b) and (c). Does not arise.

Negotiations with Akali Leaders on Punjab Problem

1283. SHRI S.M. BHATTAM : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government intend to resume negotiating with the Akali Leaders on the Punjab problem ;

(b) whether the high powered committee formed to study the various aspects of the problem for finding a peaceful solution has made any recommendations; and

(c) whether Government intend to release the remaining Akali Leaders who are now in prison ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA) :

(a) Government have throughout been keeping the door open for negotiated