

**Opening of New Bank Branch at Menur Instead of Dongli Village, by Syndicate Bank Management**

3677. SHRI T. BALAGAUD : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether Syndicate Bank got licence/clearance from Reserve Bank of India for opening a new branch at Dongli village, Madhnoor Block, Nizamabad district of Andhra Pradesh ;

(b) whether subsequently Syndicate Bank Management changed its original plans to open the bank's branch at Dongli and instead opened the branch at Menur in the same District ;

(c) if so, under what circumstances and how RBI agreed for the change of location of bank's branch from Dongli to Menur ; and

(d) the reasons for Syndicate Bank Management's decision to change its original plan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) to (d) Reserve Bank of India has set up a Task Force consisting of representatives of Reserve Bank of India, NABARD and the concerned State Government at each of its Regional Offices. The Task Force has *inter-alia* been entrusted with the work of considering requests for substitution of the centres allotted to banks where they could not open offices due to non-availability of infrastructural facilities, potential etc., by other suitable centres. Syndicate Bank's proposal for substitution of the centre Dongli by another unbanked centre Menur was approved by the Task Force set up at Reserve Bank of India's Hyderabad Regional Office. The bank has opened its office at Menur on 29.3.85.

**Seizure of Gold from Air India Employees at Delhi Airport**

3678 : SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Customs Enforcement Staff at Delhi Airport apprehended two Air India employees on the night of 14th July, 1985 and seized from them 3 kgs. of gold ;

(b) if so, the particulars of the Air India employees apprehended ; and

(c) the action taken against them and other employees involved in smuggling contraband items ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE. (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b) On 14th/15th July, 1985 the Customs authorities at Delhi Airport intercepted one Shri Daya Ram, an Air India employee who had attended Flight No. AI-301, which arrived from Hongkong/Bangkok, for cleaning. On suspicion when his personal check was conducted, 16 gold biscuits totally weighing about 1866 grammes valued at Rs. 3.92 lakhs (market value) recovered and seized under the Customs Act. Investigations revealed that the gold involved was handed over to Shri Daya Ram by one Shri Ram Das Chauhan, also an Air India employee, who had arrived from Bangkok by Flight No. AI-301.

(c) S/Shri Daya Ram and Ram Das Chauhan were arrested under the Customs Act and prosecution has been launched against them in the Court of Law. Besides initiating departmental proceedings for confiscation of smuggled gold and imposition of personal penalty on the persons involved in smuggling activities, in appropriate cases, preventive detention under the COFEPOSA Act is also resorted to.

**Exploitation of coal, lead and zinc in Darjeeling, West Bengal**

3679. SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES and COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received proposals for exploiting the coal reserves and extracting lead and zinc in Darjeeling district of West Bengal ;