

(a) whether the Union Government have received any request from the Chief Ministers of certain States for converting a Conference of all Chief Ministers for considering the GATT agreement; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) While Govt. is willing to discuss and clarify issues concerning the proposed Uruguay Round Agreement for the benefit of interested Chief Ministers, no decision has yet been taken to convene a conference of all Chief Ministers for the purpose.

[English]

Appointment of Chairman

2526. DR. Y.S. RAJASEKHAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the four public sector units, namely the Air India, the Indian Airlines, the National Airports Authority of India and the International Airports Authority of India are functioning without any full-fledged Chairman;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to fill up these vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c). Only the posts of Chariman, National Airports Authority (NAA) and International Airports Authority of India (IAAI) are at present vacant consequent upon the superannuation of

the previous incumbent. Joint Secretary in the Ministry who is a member on the Boards of these two Authorities is discharging the functions of the Chariman, NAA and IAAI, in addition to his own duties.

Action has already been initiated to fill up the above posts.

Hijacking of IA Aircraft

2527. SHRI D. VENKATESWARA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether an attempt to hijack the Indian Airlines Flight IC-955 from Madras to Calicut recently was foiled by the security staff;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted to ascertain as to how the hijacker entered into the aircraft; and

(d) if so, the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b). An unsuccessful attempt was made on 13.1.94 to hijack Indian Airlines Flight IC-995 (Madras-Calicut) by one Shri M. Anantha Kumar. He posed to be in possession of a plastic bomb under his belt which proved to be a hoax and he surrendered himself peacefully.

(c) and (d). The hijacker had travelled as a bonafide passenger.

Renewal of Customs Passes

2528. SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: