

Air link with Kandla Airport

6457. DR. MAHIPATRAY M. MEHTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kandla Port is delinked by air-service since last war with Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether Government are thinking to re-start it; and

(c) if not, reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) Air service to Kandla was discontinued at the end of 1973.

(b) No. Sir.

(c) The present composition of jet and turbo-prop aircraft fleet being fully committed, Indian Airlines has no plans to start an air service to Kandla. Moreover, due to close proximity of Bhuj which is connected to Bombay via Jamnagar by a daily Boeing 737 service, it is felt that Bhuj can serve as the aerial gateway point for people travelling to and from Kandla. However, air service to Kandla may be considered in the context of the Third Level Air Services, a proposal on which is under consideration of the Government.

Writing off of Loans given to Agriculturists in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu

6458. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE:

SHRI RAM KRISHNA MORE:

SHRI NITYANANDA MISRA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the Reserve Bank of India has expressed its unwillingness to endorse the decision of the Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu Governments to write off the loans given to agriculturists;

(b) if so, what are the implications of this decision; and

(c) the attitude of the Government of India to this situation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) The Reserve Bank of India has expressed reservations regarding the decisions of the Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu Governments to write off the cooperative, short-term loans given to agriculturists. The matter has been under discussion between the Reserve Bank and the Government of Maharashtra.

(b) The decision of the Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu Governments has far-reaching implications of all-India character, such as their impact on the general atmosphere regarding repayment of loans by farmers to the financing institutions, the health of the financing institutions and their ability to recycle money lent by them to the farming sector and the ability of the State Governments to provide such reliefs from their own resources.

(c) The Government of India and the Reserve Bank are fully conscious of the need for debt relief to farmers affected by adverse weather conditions, especially recurrent droughts. The Government of India would like to carefully consider the wider implications of the decisions of the Governments of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Payment of Bonus/Ex-Gratia to Employees of Air India and Indian Airlines

6459. SHRI MOHANLAL PATEL:

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

(a) whether Government have paid bonus or made ex-gratia payment to any category of employees of Air India and/or Indian Airlines;

(b) if so, when and how much and the details thereof;

(c) whether Government intend to give bonus or ex-gratia payment or any mode of payment to such of the employees in 1980, 1981 or in the near future;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons thereof;

(e) whether Government have received letters representations or demands of such types of payment from the representatives, Unions, and Associations of the employees, during the last five years and between 1st February, 1980 to 15th July, 1980; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CHANDU LAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) With the approval of the Government, the employees in Air India eligible under the Payment of Bonus Act are paid Productivity linked Bonus and the employees in Indian Airlines drawing salary upto Rs. 1600/- p.m. are paid Productivity linked Bonus as ex-gratia by the Corporation concerned.

(b) to (d) The payment of Bonus in Air India and Bonus as ex-gratia in Indian Airlines is made in terms of settlements signed with the recognised unions and associations for the period 1978-79 to 1980-81 and 1977-78 to 1980-81 respectively, in pursuance of this Air India has made payment of Bonus for the year 1978-79 at the rate of 20 per cent of wages and Indian Airlines has made payments for the financial years 1977-78 and 1978-79 at the rate of 18 per cent and 19.5 per cent respectively.

(e) and (f) There have been demands from the Unions/Associations and groups of employees that Productivity linked Bonus be also paid to employees drawing salary/wages above Rs. 1600/- per month. This demand was not acceded to as the Government policy is to pay Bonus to employees drawing salary upto Rs. 1600/- per month only. There has also been a demand from the Indian Airlines Unions for payment of Bonus as ex-gratia for the financial year 1976-77 on the same terms

as the Productivity linked Bonus approved by the Government for the period 1977-78 to 1980-81. This was not agreed to by the Government.

Gold and Silver Smuggling

6460. SHRI RAMJIBHAI B. MAVANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how much gold and silver was smuggled into the country during the last five years and that from 1st February, 1980 to 15th July, 1980;

(b) what is the estimated value thereof;

(c) the total quantity and value of gold and silver seized during the above period and the amount realised by Government through auction or by sale thereof;

(d) whether smuggling of these items has increased or decreased with the repeal of the Emergency and relaxation of MISA, COFEPOSA and such other rules, regulations and Acts; and

(e) whether Government are aware that a large quantity of smuggling business is going on in silver, gold and other goods around the coastal routes of Saurashtra-Kutch and Gujarat; if so, the steps taken by Government to stop it?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) (b) and (d) There is no authoritative estimate of the quantity and value of gold and silver smuggled into or out of the country. Government have also no information whether the smuggling of gold and silver has increased or decreased consequent to the revocation of the Emergency and relaxation of the MISA and COFEPOSA Acts.

(c) The total quantity and value of gold and silver seized by the Cus-