

year period, to meet the modernisation requirements of textile mills. A part of the fund was earmarked to provide special loans to weak but viable units as a major part (upto 80%) of their promoter's contribution to enable them to avail of the modernisation assistance. The special loans carry interest at the rate of 6% per annum and are repayable over a period of 12 years, including a moratorium of 6 years.

Multinational Investment Guarantee Agency

1437. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the government propose to join the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), the World Bank affiliate; and

(b) if so, the advantages likely to accrue from joining the MIGA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The question of Government of India joining the MIGA is under consideration

(b) MIGA has been established to offer investment guarantees to investors against non commercial risks in member countries and to give promotional and advisory services - with a view to promoting the flow of investment resources for productive purposes to developing countries.

Irregularities at Sahar International Airport

1438. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the government

has been drawn to the news item captioned "Sahar Gangport" appearing in the Bombay weekly "BLTZ" dated October 5, 1991;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken by the government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) and (c). As far as Customs are concerned, no involvement of Customs officials in any such activity as alleged in the news item been found. Besides surprise checks by senior Customs Officers, Central Intelligence Unit of the Custom House also makes discreet visits to Airport to check any malpractices. Entry of persons not connected with airport operations is controlled.

As far as allegations against police and other agencies are concerned, the facts are being ascertained from the Ministry of Home affairs and other concerned organisations and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Steps to check smuggling

1439. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:-

(a) whether any fresh steps have been taken to check smuggling and apprehend smugglers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). The Customs authorities remain vigilant against smuggling activities. The field formations have been equipped with vessels, vehicles, fire-arms and telecommunication network.