

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

(b) It is at a preliminary stage of discussion and no commitments have yet been made.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir.

(e) Decision will be taken at the annual aid India Consortium meetings of 1992 & 1993.

Indo-French Cooperation in Defence Field

2977. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY:
SHRI RABI RAY:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and France have agreed in principle to cooperate each other in defence field;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by what time a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) to (c). Cooperation in the Defence field between India and France has been continuing for the past several years. It is Not in the national interest to furnish the details thereof.

Seizure of Gold at Bombay International Airport

2978. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether gold bars worth crores of rupees were seized by the Customs authorities from a cargo consignment at Bombay International airport in January, 1992;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the quantity and value of gold seized; and

(c) the details of persons prosecuted in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). On 13/01/1992, the officers of Sahar Airport Customs, Bombay, acting on information intercepted one circular wheel like iron structure weighing 575 kgs. which has arrived from Sharjah by Gulf Air and was described as forged carbon blind steel flange in the Airway Bill for delivery to a party in Bangalore. Preliminary inquiries indicate that the import was under a fictitious name and address and have not thrown any light about the persons involved. The steel flange was cut and this resulted in recovery and seizure of 1832 gold bars weighing 213.72 kgs. approximately and valued at Rs. 10.58 crores approximately.

Assistance to Small and Medium Newspapers

2979. SHRIGEORGE FERNANDES:
SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines to Scheduled Commercial Banks to the effect that advances made to small and medium Newspapers may be treated as priority sector advances;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether facilities provided to the small-scale industries are also proposed to be extended to small and medium newspapers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (d). Yes, Sir. All the commercial banks are under instructions of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to treat the advances granted to small and medium newspaper units which satisfy the investment criteria laid down for the small scale industrial units as priority sector advances. The banks are required to extend to such units the concessions in the rate of interest margin etc., as are normally available to other small scale industrial units.

Agreement between Bombay Dock Labour Board and B.P.T.

2980. SHRIGEORGE FERNANDES:
SHRI RABI RAY:

Will the Minister of State of the Ministry of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have signed a tripartite agreement with the Bombay Dock Labour Board, the Labour Unions and The Bombay Port Trust to solve labour problems;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) whether the Government are considering to have agreements on the similar lines in other major ports in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir. The Management of the Bombay Dock Labour Board, Representatives of the Bombay Stevedores Association and the Labour Unions have signed a tripartite agreement for solving the financial crisis of the Bombay Dock Labour Board.

(b) The salient features of the agreement are given in the attached Statement.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

STATEMENT

Salient features of the agreement signed between the Management of the Bombay Dock Labour Board, representatives of the Bombay Stevedores Association and the Labour Unions to solve the Financial Crisis of the Bombay Dock Labour Board

1. The entry of casual workers into the Bombay Port docks will be prohibited. All schemes operated by the Dock Labour Board except the chipping and painting workers schemes will be merged into one single scheme. There will be complete interchangeability between workers belonging to different schemes.
2. The chipping & painting workers will be absorbed by the Bombay Port Trust.
3. The surplus labour, if any, will be suitably redeployed after training given to them.
4. The workers agree to maintain certain output levels depending upon the performance during the last 3 years and if that performance level is not maintained, an appropriate wage cut would be enforced.
5. A voluntary retirement scheme will be introduced for reducing the surplus manpower.
6. After the scheme becomes financially viable, the Dock Labour Board