

the requirements of Boeing-737 operations are under preparation. The work will be expedited.

As an interim measure, a temporary shed is being provided to accommodate the security cleared passengers.

**News-item regarding Distribution Plan**

952. SHRI P. M. SAYEED: Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government plan for public distribution scheme formulated under the guidance of Ministry has been stalled by powerful vested interests as appeared in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 28th September, 1978;

(b) if not, whether the Ministry had completed all the formalities and was ready for implementation; and

(c) if not, what is the reason for delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) to (c). A statement is placed on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—2851/78]

**Checking by Customs officials at Airports**

953. SHRI P. M. SAYED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been brought to the notice of Government that customs officials at the airports in India are not checking the luggage of each and every person who visits India or who leaves for foreign countries; and

(b) which are the categories whose luggage is not searched at the airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAIISH AGRAWAL): (a) and (b). Bonafied baggage of passengers travelling by air is examined only selectively and on the basis of such of factors as information received against them, the place from where the passenger arrives, the number and type of the baggage brought by him, etc.

The baggage of the following dignitaries is not subject to Customs examination:—

President of India;

Vice-President of India;

Governors of States;

Heads of the Foreign and Commonwealth States;

Diplomatic Officers of the Foreign and Commonwealth;

Diplomatic Missions accredited to India and Foreign;

Consular Officers de-carrier posted in India;

**Abolition of Central Sales Tax**

954. SHRI AINTHU SAHOO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government are going to abolish the Central Sales Tax in view of the mandate given by the people to Janata Government in the last election; and

(b) if so, from which date?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) and (b). The Central sales tax levied on inter-State sales of goods is complementary to the levy of local sales tax by States and revenues accruing therefrom have also been assigned to the States under the Constitution. It is considered that not much purpose will be served by abolishing Central sales tax in isolation. Discussions on the pro-

posal to replace sales tax (both State and Central) by excise duty have been held with the State Governments. The State Governments generally are reluctant to accept the proposal. It is proposed to have further discussions with the States and to persevere in our efforts.

#### Export of Iron Ore and Manganese

955. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR N. PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Mineral and Metal Trading Corporation is looking for new markets for iron ore in the face of competition and falling world demand;

(b) if so, furnish details of the contracts finalised so far for export of iron ore and manganese ore for current year and phasing for the next 3 years with traditional buyer and new buyers;

(c) whether it is a fact that because of the keen competition in the international market for manganese and iron ore an export of these items is likely to witness a substantial fall during the current year effecting the mining activities; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BEG): (a) Yes, Sir. Efforts are being made to enter new markets and also increase shipments to existing markets.

(b) A beginning has been made by exporting iron ore to China, United Arab Emirates and Abu-Dhabi and high grade manganese ore to Taiwan and medium grade manganese ore to West Europe. Also additional tonnages of iron ore have been negotiated with South Korea, Yugoslavia, G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia and manganese ore with North Korea, South Korea and Czechoslovakia. It will not be in com-

mercial interest to give details of contracts.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### Quick Air Reservation Scheme

956. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR N. PATIL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Air India and Indian Airlines are jointly planning to introduce a system called quick reservation schemes early next year;

(b) if so, furnish details of the schemes, proposed time phasing for its execution the order of expenditure proposed and rationale thereof; and

(c) what is the reaction of the employees to the schemes?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK): (a) and (b). Air-India and Indian Airlines are jointly planning to introduce the Computer System for quick reservations. At present, Air-India is participating in the British Airways Computer System for providing computerised reservations facilities to Air-India stations in UK, Europe and USA. This computerised reservations facility is proposed to be extended to Indian stations of Air-India. Subsequently, the reservations system for all stations of Air-India including those in UK, Europe and USA will be transferred to the Computer System to be installed in India for serving the need of both Air-India and Indian Airlines, severing links from British Airways. The Corporations have proposed capital investment for the Air-India's part at Rs. 3.50 crores approximately and Indian Airlines' part at Rs. 4.80 crores.

(c) The Air Corporations Employees Union have taken up the issue of introduction of Real Time Computer