

Transport, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Science and Technology, Permanent Missions of India in Geneva and New York.

(d) The Commerce Minister made a specific proposal for a fresh round of tariff negotiations among developing countries on the basis of upto 50 per cent tariff concessions and this set the tone for greater cooperation among developing countries. To give further thrust to definitive action in the area of economic cooperation among developing countries, Commerce Minister had detailed discussions with President Marcos of the Philippines, the host country, and leaders of other developing countries at Manila. This initiative taken by Philippines, India and other countries was well-received and largely in pursuance of these talks, the developing countries decided at Manila to set up a Committee of 18 to work out the modalities of multilateral economic cooperation among themselves and to monitor the implementation of the programme. India has been nominated as a member of this Committee. New awareness amongst the developing countries for mutual economic cooperation and self-reliance and the constitution of the committee for their implementation could be considered as a major achievement of UNCTAD-V.

The Indian delegation also participated actively in the negotiations on the various items of the UNCTAD-V agenda and made substantial contribution to the negotiations.

#### Grounding of Air Buses by I.A.C.

925. PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that I.A.C. recently ordered grounding of one or more Air Buses for thorough and careful check ;

(b) if so, facts thereof and reasons therefor ; and

(c) whether any major defects or deficiencies were detected in the said aircrafts and if so, what were they and how were they rectified?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURSHOTTAM KAUSHIK) : (a) to (c). Although no inspection whatsoever was required on the Airbus aircraft as per the Manufacturers, Indian Airlines, on their own, as a measure of abundant caution, called for certain checks, to be done on the Airbus aircraft in their fleet in consultation with M/s. Airbus Industries and

the D.G.C.A. (Indian Airworthiness Authorities). The Airbus aircraft were not grounded specifically for this inspection but the checks were to be done in a phased manner during major inspections.

#### Foreign Travel Tax

926. PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR : Will the DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state ;

(a) whether it is a fact that new regulations regarding foreign travel ticket taxes have recently come into operation ;

(b) if so, full facts thereof ;

(c) reasons for making the changes in this regard; and

(d) the estimated revenue accruing from the new rates of taxes, for the period ending March 31, 1979?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL) : (a) Yes, Sir. The new Scheme of foreign travel tax as incorporated in Chapter V of Finance Act, 1979 (21 of 1979) has come into force with effect from 15 June, 1979.

(b) Under the new scheme, every passenger embarking on an international journey from India by air or by ship will have to pay a tax of Rs. 50 if the journey is to a neighbouring country, i.e., Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and of Rs. 100 if the journey is to other countries. The tax will be collected by carriers and deposited with the Government. Passengers travelling by sea from Rameswaram in India to Talaimanar in Sri Lanka have however, been exempted from the tax. Diplomats and transit passengers are also exempt.

(c) The new scheme of Foreign Travel Tax is designed to eliminate evasion or avoidance of tax and is also very much simpler to administer.

(d) The new scheme has come into force with effect from 15 June, 1979 and was not applicable during the period ending 31st March, 1979. However, the estimated revenue realisation for a whole year under the new scheme would be about Rs. 10 crores.