

(b) whether it is also a fact that the amount of foreign exchange involved is more than Rs. 5 crores; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA): (a) to (c). As per information available with the Government, the Oriental Bank of Commerce has not concluded any sales and purchases contract involving foreign exchange on behalf of the Thapers. The C.B.I. however, is investigating a case involving foreign exchange transactions relating to this bank. It will not be in public interest to divulge further details at this stage.

Heavy Expenditure on Air India Employees posted Abroad

349. SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India spent half of its wage bill i.e. Rs. 23 crores in 1979-80 for keeping 2190 employees abroad as against Rs. 27 crores for keeping 13160 employees at home; and

(b) if so, what is the justification of keeping huge contingent of 2190 employees abroad?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) During the year 1979-80, the wage bill for 2,190 employees rosted abroad and 13,160 employees in India amounted to Rs. 23.89 crores and Rs. 26.94 crores respectively.

(b) Air India has 40 on-line and 61 off-line offices abroad. Out of 2,190 staff abroad 1,538 work in traffic and sales departments. The Corporation earns 75 per cent of its traffic revenue abroad and the average salary in terms of employees at foreign station works out approximately five times the salary of the staff employed in India. However, in view of high per

employee cost abroad, all efforts are made by Air India to resort to mechanisation, wherever, possible and reduce staff. The present staff strength is after detailed scrutiny of man-power requirements of each station though efforts are constantly made to reduce such staff wherever found possible without affecting efficiency.

Setting up a National Civil Supplies Corporation

650. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of Government's policy of strengthening public distribution system all over the country Government have a proposal under consideration to set up a National Civil Supplies Corporation for ensuring supply of essential articles to States at reasonable prices; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय विमान सेवा आरम्भ करने का प्रस्ताव

651. श्री कूल चन्द वर्मा : क्या पर्यटन और नागर विमानन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय विमानन सेवा आरम्भ करने के बारे में विभिन्न राज्यों द्वारा भेजे गए प्रस्ताव सरकार के विचाराधीन हैं ;

(ख) क्या यात्रियों की संख्या में वृद्धि और राज्य में अधिक सुविधाओं की आवश्यकता को देखते हुए, मध्य प्रदेश सरकार ने इस तरह की विमान सेवा आरम्भ करने के बारे में लगभग दो वर्ष पहले एक प्रस्ताव भेजा था ; और