

ment propose to augment tourist facilities at Amritsar so that it may help the country to earn better foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) Effective from 3rd January, 1982 Air-India introduced twice weekly flights via Amritsar to Birmingham. Passenger uplift on nine flights which operated in the month of January, 1982 is as follows:—

Birmingham—Amritsar— 243

Amritsar—Birmingham— 362

(b) At present twice weekly operation is adequate to cater to the traffic potential. If additional flights are warranted by growth in traffic potential, the position will be reviewed.

(c) The present traffic between Birmingham and Amritsar is mostly ethnic. At present in Amritsar there are four hotels on the approved list of the Department of Tourism with 123 rooms. Two hotel projects have been approved which when completed will add 284 rooms to the existing capacity.

Wholesale Price Index

212. SHRI R. L. BHATIA:

SHRI G. NARSIMHA
REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during last six months there has been a steady fall in the wholesale price index in the country;

(b) if so, the commodities where the price level has remained steady or has fallen during this period;

(c) whether the fall in wholesale prices has recorded a reciprocal fall in the retail price level of commodities and if not, whether Government have tried to find out how this is being cornered by the middlemen and if so, their findings in this regard; and

(d) whether Government propose considering to take over the wholesale trade of foodgrains so that the common man gets the benefit of fall in wholesale prices and if so, by what time a decision in this regard will be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE
(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):

(a) and (b). The Wholesale Price Index (1970-71—100) declined by 2.5 per cent in the last six months i.e. between July, 1981 and January, 1982. A statement showing percentage variations in various groups/sub-groups and commodities is attached.

(c) The Wholesale Price Index and the All India consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (which is used for measuring changes in retail consumer prices) have different composition and are based on different weighting patterns. Thus, the two series cannot move in absolutely identical fashion. The divergent movements in the two series do not establish *ipso facto* that middlemen have cornered the commodities.

(d) There is no proposal, as of now, under the consideration of Government to take over the wholesale trade of foodgrains. It may be mentioned in this connection, that Government protects the interests of the consumer by catering to their basic minimum requirements of foodgrains, at fixed prices, through the public distribution system. Government is also adequately equipped with powers to deal with anti-social elements indulging in black-marketeering, hoarding and profiteering.

Statement

Index Numbers of Wholesale Prices

(Base : 1970-71=100)

	January 1982	July 1981	Percentage Variations Jan. 1982 over July, 1981
<i>All Commodities</i>	278.7	285.7	-2.5
I. Primary Articles	265.3	269.8	-1.7
(i) Food Articles	236.7	240.7	-1.7
Foodgrains	273.3	238.8	-06
Cereals	219.4	216.7	+1.2
Pulses	325.8	347.7	-6.3
Fruits & vegetables	237.9	229.2	+3.8
Milk & milk products	213.6	207.1	+3.1
Eggs, Fish & meat	336.8	295.4	+14.0
Condiments & spices	191.4	158.8	+20.5
(ii) Non-food articles	239.6	245.2	-2.3
Fibres	216.9	219.0	-1.0
Oilseeds	248.9	270.7	-8.1
(iii) Minerals	1165.7	1175.4	-0.8
II. Fuel, Power, Light & Lubricants	437.5	427.0	+2.5
III. Manufactured Products	262.9	275.0	-4.4
(i) Food Products of which :	268.0	327.2	-18.1
Sugar, Khandsari & gur	281.1	382.0	-26.4
Edible oils	257.2	271.8	-5.4
oilcakes	245.9	260.6	-5.6
(ii) Beverages, tobacco and tabacco products	219.1	218.4	+0.3
(iii) Textiles	223.4	223.8	-0.2
(iv) Paper & Paper products	289.7	270.8	+7.0
(v) Leather & Leather products	360.9	374.8	-3.7
(vi) Rubber and rubber products	290.8	277.7	+4.7
(vii) Chemicals & chemical products	263.9	255.0	+3.5
(viii) Non-metallic mineral products	315.3	296.1	+6.5
(ix) Basic metals, alloys & metal products	314.4	305.6	+2.9
(x) Machinery & Transport Equipment	266.2	261.8	+1.7