

over to coal-fired boilers and the availability and transport of additional coal supplies are presently being examined by the C.M.A. and the Railways.

Project for converting Civil Aerodrome at Ahmedabad into an International Airport

9098. SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have suspended or dropped the project of converting the civil aerodrome at Ahmedabad into an international airport;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the progress made so far in the direction of making the Ahmedabad airport serviceable and useful for international air traffic?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) to (c): Government have no proposal at present to have a regular international airport at Ahmedabad. However, Ahmedabad is Customs Airport with limited health and immigration facilities, to serve as an alternate for Bombay. Terminal facilities have also been improved and expanded. In the Fifth Plan it is proposed to construct a new terminal building together with associated apron and taxi track.

Increase in interest rate by Reserve Bank on deposits

9099. SHRI D. D. DESAI:

SHRI P. GANGADEB:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank has increased the interest rates on deposits; and

(b) if so, the quantum of increase?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir. The Reserve Bank of India has, by a directive to the scheduled commercial banks, raised from 1st April, 1974, the rate of interest payable on public deposits. While the increase in interest rates in respect of savings bank accounts is one per cent, the rates of increase for term deposits of different maturities vary from one quarter of one per cent to one per cent.

Seizure of contraband goods from a vessel near South Gujarat

9100. SHRI P. GANGADEB: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether smuggled goods valued at more than Rs. 20 lakhs were recovered from a big foreign vessel in South Gujarat on the 7th December, 1973;

(b) whether 15 boats and a crew of 50 persons were captured; and

(c) if so, the facts of this incident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) to (c). On 7th December, 1973, Customs officers of the Marine Squad of Central Excise Collectorate, Bulsar, intercepted an Arab Dhow by name M.S.V. Marwan and seized contraband goods like Menthol, Nicotamide powder, Fabrics, Radio, Copying machines etc., in all valued about Rs. 20.6 lakhs 9 crew members were arrested in this connection. After interception of the said Arab Dhow, three medium sized mechanised fishing vessels with about 25 to 30 persons on board came and surrounded the dhow and tried to dash against it with a view to attack the Customs Officers and to loot the goods. The Customs Officers foiled their attempts by resorting to firing. The three vessels and the inmates could not however be apprehended.