

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: Government have not taken any decision in this matter.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Sir, between Delhi and Calcutta there are two direct flights by Airbus. Recently, one Airbus has been replaced by a Boeing and as a result there have been several waiting lists, long lists. One had to wait for a long time.

(Interruptions)

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: The Airbus was coming empty!

(Interruptions)

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: There was a long list of waiting passengers; this is my experience. It was scheduled to start at 7-30 but it started after 12. That also has happened. Whether all these irregularities will be removed and the passenger load will be fully taken up and whether more services will be operated from Delhi to Calcutta.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Had you to wait yourself? Mr. Ghosh?

(Interruptions)

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: The question of my hon. friend Mr. Ghosh has already been answered by Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu. So far as the replacement of the Airbus by the Boeing is concerned, it has been done only because we were not getting enough traffic. We are always on the job. As soon as the traffic permits, we will certainly replace the Boeing by an Airbus, so that the waiting lists are cleared.

(Interruptions)

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: I want to know from the hon. Minister as, I think, he had stated on an earlier occasion that he would introduce a direct flight from Delhi to Trivandrum in view of the passenger capacity whether he is going to introduce it and also a categorical assurance as to when that assurance—which was

given during the last session—is going to be fulfilled.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You don't believe that?

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: He assured.
(Interruptions)

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: When the question was raised here earlier, the position was that our hon. friend had to wait for a long time both at Madras and at Bombay and now the position has been rectified and as a matter of fact, there is direct service now, in the sense that only they have to stop at Bombay, the normal stoppage. If he means the same aircraft direct from here to Trivandrum, that depends on the traffic position.

MR. SPEAKER: Next Question. Mr. Kurien, please put your Question 277.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: I am more particular about this question.

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: My reply is very clear. My hon. friends had complained at that time that they had to wait for a long time at Bombay and Madras. Not only that, perhaps they had to change their aircraft also. That position has been rectified. Now they are directly going to Trivandrum from Delhi, with only a stoppage at Bombay.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Next question.

Trade agreement with Bangladesh

*277. **PROF. P. J. KURIEN:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the trade agreements entered into by India with Bangladesh have never been fully implemented;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) the details of the balance of payments as stands on date;

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to improve the trade relations with Bangladesh; and

(e) whether Government have decided to continue the favoured treatment to Bangladesh for coal exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). India's Trade Agreement with Bangladesh is of the general "most-favoured nation" type. It does not specify the commodities to be exchanged between the two countries, and the question of its non-implementation does not arise. There is normal flow of trade between India and Bangladesh.

(c) A statement indicating the Indo-Bangladesh trade figures over the last four years is placed on the Table of the House.

(d) Government keep under constant review Indo-Bangladesh trade relations and take appropriate steps, whenever considered necessary, to foster bilateral economic and commercial cooperation.

(e) India has traditionally been exporting coal to some neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh. For the period December 1980—November, 1981 MMTC has negotiated a contract for the export of 1,20,000 M.T. of coal to Bangladesh.

Statement

(Value in Rs. Crores)

| Year | Exports to Bangladesh | Imports from Bangladesh | Balance of Trade |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1976-77 | 54.57 | 6.07 | +48.50 |
| 1977-78 | 51.61 | 1.16 | +50.45 |
| 1978-79 | 52.57 | 1.77 | +50.80 |
| 1979-80 (April-Sept.) | 32.66 | 1.65 | +31.01 |

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: In reply of part (a) he has said that there is no specific commodity agreement between India and Bangladesh. But in the last part of the answer he has stated that there MMTC has negotiated a contract of 1,20,000 MT of coal to Bangladesh. I think the two replies are contradictory. May I know whether there is any other such agreement for any other commodities with Bangladesh and whether any such agreements have not been implemented? Secondly, may I know whether the balance of trade is in favour of India or of Bangladesh?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: There is no contradiction. It is the normal general pattern. Whichever

commodities they want, if we are in a position to supply them, then we enter into an agreement in respect of that particular commodity for that particular period. Therefore, between the last part and first part, there is no contradiction. Last part is the reply to the question which the hon. member wanted to know, i.e. about coal. That is why I have given that reply. In regard to balance of trade, I have given a statement where it is clearly indicated. If only he takes the trouble of reading the statement, he will find in whose favour the balance of trade is.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: I find from the statement that the balance of trade is in our favour. I would like to

know whether we intend to expand the trade between the two countries. Because the balance of trade is in our favour, we would be able to export more commodities to that country and get better and favourable protection. May I know in what respect, in regard to which commodities we would like to expand the trade with Bangladesh?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: We export to Bangladesh engineering goods, and textiles, apart from coal, and a number of other consumer items. It depends on the requirements of that particular country. So far as import is concerned, we are mainly importing newsprint. For import of fertilisers, negotiation is going on. In regard to expansion of trade, again from the statement the hon. member will get an idea as to how it is expanding. For instance, in 1976-77, our total exports to Bangladesh were Rs. 54 crores. In the first six months of the current year, it is nearly Rs. 33 crores. That means, it is going to be almost Rs. 12 to 13 crores more.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: In order to reduce as far as possible the imbalance in the trade, I am sure our Government is trying to explore the possibilities of importing from Bangladesh such items which they are in a position to supply and which we require. In this connection, reports had appeared in the Press that we were interested in purchasing from them something which they have got in plenty and surplus also, i.e. natural gas for commercial or domestic purposes. May I know whether anything has been done in that respect so that we can import that easily from Bangladesh to the eastern part of our country?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: In fact, when I was there, I had a discussion with the Bangladesh Ministers as to what are the commodities they are in a position to supply to us which we require, in order to improve their exports to India. One such item I have

already mentioned. For instance urea. They are expanding their fertiliser plant and we are importing urea from different places. If they are in a position to give urea, we would be prepared to accept it. In regard to gas, particularly we did not mention this subject, because as the hon. member himself is aware, Bangladesh took two positions, just on the eve of my departure. That is why it was thought that perhaps it is not a very appropriate time to raise the issue. But we are interested in it and if they are in a position to give it to us, we will be accepting it.

Pelletisation technology to be used in Kudremukh

*278. **SHRI CHITTA BASU:** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision regarding pelletisation technology to be used in Kudremukh; and

(b) if so, full facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). No, Sir. The public undertaking concerned, viz., Kudremukh Iron Ore Co. Ltd., has invited tenders for setting up a pelletisation plant at Mangalore based on iron ore concentrates processed at Kudremukh. The last date for the receipt of tenders is 15th December, 1980. A decision on the technology to be used for pelletisation will be taken after the evaluation of various tenders.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Kudremukh project was built with Iranian collaboration, but due to the political turmoil in Iran, the iron ores which were to be lifted by the Government of Iran could not be lifted. Thereby, there has been some piling up of iron ores at Kudremukh. In view of this, what are the Government's proposals