

Foreign Airlines duped Country

*510. SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA:
Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country has been duped to the tune of Rs. 50 crores by the foreign airlines as per news-item appearing in "Current" Weekly of August 22, 1981;

(b) if so, full facts thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been ordered by the Government; and

(d) if not, what other action has been taken against the defaulting foreign airlines?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) and (b). No Sir. However, some foreign airlines are reported to be indulging in unethical practices in order to attract passengers by offering sizable discounts. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is aware of the same and intends to conduct a market survey shortly in an attempt to eradicate such practices.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Government will decide on the course of action on the basis of the results of IATA Market Survey.

Kudremukh Iron ore Project

*511. SHRI S. M. KRISHNA:
SHRI KUSUMA KRISHNA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether one year after its completion, the Kudremukh Iron Ore Project in Karnataka is still facing uncertainties;

(b) whether all efforts to sort out outstanding issues with Iran have failed;

(c) what efforts have been made to find other buyers for the concentrates made at Kudremukh; and

(d) what steps are being taken to sustain this Rs. 650 crores project from languishing?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Kudremukh Iron Ore Project cannot be said to have been completed yet as only one out of the four production lines of the project has been commissioned so far. The project is not facing any uncertainty so far as its completion and operation is concerned. Only in regard to the sale of its product alternate arrangements have yet to be finalised.

(b) No, Sir. The negotiations are expected to be resumed shortly.

(c) Vigorous efforts have been made to find alternative markets. Romania has agreed to buy approximately 3.5 million tonnes of the concentrate over a period of 3 years starting from 1981-82 as part of the contract to set up a pellet plant. It is expected that other orders would materialise as a result of the efforts being made.

(d) A part from sale of concentrate to other parties, it is expected that Iran may ultimately take about 4.5 million tonnes a year after its plants are set up. A pellet plant is also being set up at Mangalore to convert 3 million tonnes of concentrate into pellets for exports.

Use of Imported machine by M/s. Southern Bottlers (P) Limited

*512. SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA:
Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 672 on 3rd April 1981 regarding licence to M/s. Southern Bottlers (Private) Limited and state:

(a) whether M/s. Southern Bottlers (Private) Limited are using the imported machine;

(b) whether they have taken permission from Government to sell the imported machine or allow anyone else to use it;

(c) who is using the machine at present and when did they get it from Southern Bottlers; and

(d) what filling machine Southern Bottlers are using at present and where they have got it from?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (c). According to the information received from the Company, the machine, in question is, at present in their custody at New Delhi and is not being used in their factory at Madras due to some technical defects. The matter is being examined further by the DGTD from technical angle.

(b) No, Sir. There is also no information with Government that the machine in question has been sold or is being used by any one else.

(d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Foreign Demand For Indian Watches

*513. SHRI GHULAM MOHAMMAD KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Watches are in great demand in several countries in the world;

(b) whether the (HMT) Hindustan Machine Tools Limited has explored markets in African countries in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the HMT has offered to set up a watch making unit in an African country as well in Indonesia, West-Asia and Hong-Kong; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Indian watches are being exported to a number of countries in the world including Iran, Kuwait, Afghanistan, UAE, Switzerland etc.

(b) Yes Sir. HMT have conducted a preliminary investigation on the market expectance of their watches in some African countries.

(c) and (d). Project profile for establishing assembling units for 2.5 lakh watch per year in Algeria and 1.0 lakh watch per year in Zambia have been submitted in August, 1981.

A feasibility Report for setting up an assembly unit for 2.5 lakh watches per year has been submitted to Tanzania in June 1981. A project profile for setting up an assembling unit for 1.0 lakh watches per year has been submitted to Bali (Indonesia) in July, 1981.

No proposals have been submitted to West Asian countries and Hong-Kong in this regard.

Seating arrangement Agartala Airport Lounge

*514. SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the seating arrangement at Agartala Airport Lounge is not upto the mark; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to make proper arrangement?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. with the introduction of Boeing service the facilities needed improvement. So to provide better passenger