

were of the order of Rs. 40 crores which increased to Rs. 74 crores in 1979-80? If it is so, against this background, may I know whether the Union Government's decision to have a price preference policy in regard to the products of the public sector enterprises by Government departments has acted as an incentive to cut down the losses of the public sector or whether as a disincentive for the efficiency of the public sector?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: It is true that during 1978-79 the losses were Rs. 40.09 crores and in 1979-80 they were Rs. 74.28 crores. So far as 1981-82 is concerned, I am able to give a cheerful information. The production has improved very well in the first quarter of 1981-82. The production of saleable steel has increased from 0.946 million tonnes to 1.25 million tonnes, the production of coal has increased from 22.85 million to 24.5 million tonnes. In fertilisers there has been an increase from 200,000 tonnes to 352,000 tonnes. In cement there has been an increase from 175,000 tonnes to 287,000 tonnes. In petroleum we have made very good progress; from 1.1 million tonnes in to 1.7 million tonnes. I have prepared a rough account for the first quarter. It shows that gross profit of the public sector in relation to capital employed will show a return of about 8 per cent. If this tendency persists, I hope to come to the House at the time of the budget with an excellent result for the public sector. So far as price preference is concerned, it is working satisfactorily. There are a number of orders being obtained. Even last year, I would not say that the public sector suffered on account of lack of orders, it suffered mostly on account of lack of production due to infra-structural failure like lack of power, lack of coal and other constraints, which reduced the efficacy of the public sector.

SHRI BHIKU RAM JAIN: In view of the information provided that 17

posts are held by ex-Armed Forces men and some posts are held by IAS officers, will Government consider appointing for top positions professional managers who are qualified to manage large industrial undertakings?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Preference is given to professional managers in the selection by the Public Enterprises Selection Board. A number of officers are taken because of their professional qualifications. In the defence department, there are a number of people who have handled defence production units and have proved their ability as production managers. That is why they are taken. So far as the others are concerned, the Selection Board always looks out for professionally competent and trained managers. If he puts a separate question, I will give a list of them.

Development and utilisation of Calcutta Airport

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*184. PROF. RUP CHAND PAL:

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn by the West Bengal Chief Minister about development and utilisation of the Calcutta Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) details of action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CHANDU LAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) and (b). The letter from the Chief Minister of West Bengal referred to the development of Calcutta Airport and also to the fact that many foreign airlines, which were previously operating from Calcutta Airport have suspended

operations; it was requested in the letter that in order to promote tourist traffic to Eastern India, foreign airlines should be persuaded to touch Calcutta Airport as in the past.

(c) In regard to utilisation of the facilities by foreign airlines, at present, seven foreign airlines are operating through Calcutta. At the time of negotiating or reviewing the bilateral air services agreements, Calcutta is invariably offered as a point of call to foreign airlines. The final choice, however, rests with the foreign airlines.

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL: You may agree with me that Calcutta Airport is one of the premier international airports in our country. According to the International Airport Authority of India and also the International Pilots Federation it is one of the best airports in the world. But since 1967 as many as 10 foreign airlines were allowed to discontinue their Calcutta services. They include Air France, Lufthansa, Swiss Air, Japan Airlines and KLM. May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that several international airlines which discontinued Calcutta services several years ago, are now reported to be keenly interested in touching Dum Dum Airport again? Is it not a fact that KLM, Korean Airlines, Pan American Airways and Air Canada have already approached the Government of India in this regard but the Government has not given permission to them till now?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): It is not a fact that the airlines, the names of which my friend has just now mentioned, have approached us for having landing rights at Calcutta and we have not agreed to that. As a matter of fact, as it has already been stated in the main answer to the question, whenever negotiations take place with various countries for giving them air landing rights we offer them Calcutta. But unfortunately, none of them has

agreed to that. In this respect I would like to tell my hon. friend that we will be too happy if any airline likes to operate from Calcutta.

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL: Is it not a fact that during the previous two years Air India's revenue earnings from its Eastern India offices were over Rs. 7 crores and Rs. 8 crores respectively?

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: I do not have the exact figures with me. But if the hon. Member wants to know that I can give the figures.

So far as revenue earning by Air India is concerned, there is no doubt that it has increased.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: Just like Calcutta, Trivandrum is also an international airport....

MR. SPEAKER: Irrelevant.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: The Minister has just now said that whenever they negotiate with foreign companies they always refer to Calcutta to be included as a landing ground but the foreign companies do not agree to that. May I know from the hon. Minister the reasons for their not expressing a desire to have landing facilities in Calcutta?

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: We do not ask the reasons from those airlines. They are free to choose their own place of landing. I also make it clear that we cannot compel them to choose a particular place because in that case, they will also compel us to choose a particular place in their country for landing purposes, which may not be suitable to us.

Gem Stones Found in Tamil Nadu

*185. **SHRI MANPHOOL SINGH CHAUDHARY:** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that gemstones are found in Tamil Nadu and