

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN

The fares are fixed in each sector in consultation with IATA and the concerned Governments. Therefore, unless all the Governments agree to that fare it would not be possible for Air India to reduce this fare. This the position which I have explained again and again. I am sorry to say that unless all the Governments and all the airlines concerned are agreeable, it would not be possible to do anything in this regard.

SHRI A. K. BALAN: Has the Central Government received a memorandum from Kerala Government regarding reducing the fare: if so what is the reaction of the Government on that?

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN

We have received the memorandum and we have explained the case accordingly as I have mentioned before the hon. House.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: The passengers who go the Gulf obviously contribute a major part of the revenue of Air India. They are among these who contribute most and suffer most at the hands of Air India. These illiterate people go through a terrible harassment at Bombay Airport in getting their connecting airflight, in Customs and different other places. I would like to know from the hon. Minister in case he cannot reduce the fare, are the Air India and the Ministry considering the demand for a direct flight for these people, who suffer so much in intermediate airports like Bombay, from Goa to the Gulf countries? We contribute so much in terms of workers and in terms of revenue.

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN : We have provided direct services from Trivandrum where the largest number of Gulf passengers emanate and terminate. From Goa there are adequate services available and every effort is made to ensure that the passengers are not inconvenienced. There is some little difficulty at the moment relating to confirmation of tickets on the Indian Airlines. But the computer system will soon be in

operation and this problem will be over. If there is any other problem which the Gulf passengers face, I would request the hon. Member to let me know and we will certainly look into the matter and try to remove the problem.

**Effect of Waiving of Duty on Fasteners
by U.S.A.**

***394 SHRI K. OBUL REDDY:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the United States of America have waived duty on fasteners, as reported in the 'Business' Standard' of 6 January, 1984;

(b) if so, whether a new agreement between India and the United States has been signed;

(c) if so, details thereof and the extent to which India will be beneficiary and who are the signatories to the agreement, their names and status; and

(d) the extent of financial implications which will be favourable to India as a result of waiving of the duty by the United States of America?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPLY (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) to (d) The US Government had imposed countervailing duty on certain industrial fasteners viz. bolts, nuts and screws in July, 1980. As a result of discussions held with the US Government for waiving countervailing duty on these items, they revoked the duty on bolts and nuts. The duty was reduced from 18% to zero. In respect of screws, the US Government is yet to make a final determination. No agreement between India and the United States has been signed in this regard.

SHRI K. OBUL REDDY : Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Minister will purchase the

matter with the United States Government as they have not yet taken a final decision on waiver of Duty on screws ?

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH : We are pursuing the matter and in January last year a U. S. team had come and their apprehension was that they were giving subsidies or the cash assistance that they are giving is in the nature of subsidies but when they came here they were convinced. They saw that these are not subsidies but the cash assistance is for neutralisation of indirect taxes and I suppose that while the final decision has not come but this realisation on their part will help to solve the problem of screws.

SHRI K. OBUL REDDY : May I know whether the Minister will consider abolition of export duty on items which the Indian exporters feel difficult to export as they have to face lot of competition with other countries and as a result of fall in international market ?

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH : Sir, this is relating to abolition of export duty. Presently I think I will not be able to prophesy on this issue.

Transfer of Gold Deposits from Portugal.

*395. **SHRIMATI SANYOGITA RANE :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a team of officials of the State Bank of India had visited Lisbon to receive gold deposits which were transferred to Portugal on the eve of the liberation of Goa ;

(b) the number of account holders, the quantity and details of gold, ornaments and other valuables ; and

(c) when the transfer is likely to be completed ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) :

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Prior to liberation of the Portuguese territories of Goa, Daman and Diu, Goa branches of Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU), With Head Office in Lisbon had advanced several loans to local citizens against the security of gold ornaments pledged to the bank. These gold ornaments and other safe custody articles were removed to Lisbon a few days before the liberation of Goa, along with important records and documents including original documents executed by the borrowers etc. Precise data about the loans, value of ornaments, net weight in Gold is not available. According to the available information, the book value of the pledged ornaments was estimated at the time of liberation at Rs. 16.33 lakh, while the loans advanced against these ornaments amounted of Rs. 9.85 lakh in 6531 accounts. This information is subject to verification with the original documents and records which are in the possession of BNU, Lisbon.

After establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Portugal, efforts were made to secure the return of gold ornaments and safe custody articles from BNU, Lisbon. A delegation including representative of State Bank of India visited Portugal for discussion in the regard. In pursuance of the discussion held by the delegation with BNU, Lisbon, it has been decided to authorise State Bank of India to negotiate an inter-bank agreement with BNU Lisbon with regard to the return of gold ornaments and safe custody articles to India. The terms and conditions of the proposed agreement and other related matters have yet to be worked out between the two banks.

श्रीमती सयोगिता राणे : अध्यक्ष जी, गोवा के स्वतंत्र होने से पहले, गोवा के नागरिकों ने अपना सोना, खौने के, जेवर आदि बी.एन.यू. बैंक में रख कर कर्जा लिया था