

ment costing Rs. 1 crore and not to have the service will amount to an anomalous situation.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What about Air India?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I have already replied about Air India. They will certainly operate 747 as soon as the volume of traffic emanating towards East and from East of Calcutta justifies it.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Shri Raj Bahadur has given a very confusing reply when he says that, because in future this Boeing 747 may go to Calcutta, in their scale of priorities, they have begun constructing a hotel. I do not know how much the hotel is costing them; he should tell us. He has said that the equipment would cost Rs. 1 crore and he does not want that equipment to lie idle if no planes are coming, but he does not mind a hotel being built if no planes are coming. I do not know who is going to stay in that hotel when there is no 747 service. Is it meant for people who can afford to go and spend week-ends there? What kind of priority is this?

I would like to know whether, if any foreign airline today wishes to operate 747 from Calcutta, if they don't get the necessary landing facilities, they will not be further discouraged. What is the point of view of the Government in this regard.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: The Hon'ble Member is extremely intelligent and I am sure he can understand the answer given, which is not confusing at all. The hotel is not merely for 737's Services.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: But you said so.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I said that this can help—that it is one of the steps taken. But the hotel is serving and will be serving various international airlines—Air India (three services), BOAC (five services), SAS (one

service), Thai International (five services), RNNC (two services), Bangladesh (two services) and Burma Airlines Corporation (two services). There is no dearth of services to Calcutta. In fact the traffic has also increased from 75,000 in 1971 to 206,000 in 1973. We have taken all possible steps to increase the traffic. To begin a 747 Service, there has to be enough traffic for it and it should not be said later that there is surplus capacity which is being left unutilised.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: How much do you spend on the hotel?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I have already answered that. I do not have the figures with me at the moment.

Civil Aerodrome, Ahmedabad

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

(a) whether Government are aware that the runway at Ahmedabad civil aerodrome is not fully satisfactory and/or safe for aircraft, particularly the bigger ones, to land and take off smoothly and efficiently;

(b) whether the said runway needs to be strengthened and resurfaced properly and promptly; and

(c) if so, when will Government take up this work in hand and how will it be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) The main runway at civil aerodrome, Ahmedabad is considered safe and satisfactory for the present aircraft operations.

(b) and (c). No further strengthening of the main runway for the present aircraft operations is required. However, the need for improving its riding qualities is under consideration in the Civil Aviation Department.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, to say the least, I must say that the answer given is very interesting but far from satisfactory—and from truth. I want to know who considers this runway as safe and satisfactory—the Minister or the Department—because my information is that quite a few pilots who are running the air craft have made complaints that they sometimes find landing operations, particularly, hazardous and difficult. Surely, the Minister does not want the passengers travelling by the air-craft and alighting at Ahmedabad, to land there?

Therefore, my question is whether it is a fact that the pilots have complained that the runway at Ahmedabad is unsatisfactory, that it gives a lot of bumps—particularly at the time of landing—that the surface is rough and therefore it requires prompt and urgent attention in terms of strengthening it and re-servicing it.

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: In the last portion of my reply to (b) and (c), I had said that the need for improving its riding qualities is under consideration. It is a fact that reports have come in that the surface has certain undulations and bumps. On a previous occasion I had tried to explain to the Hon'ble Member that the Civil Aviation Department was seized of the problem and attending to it, and I think this defect will be removed very soon. But it is a fact that the runway is quite safe for operations.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: My second question is this. While replying to my first supplementary, he referred to what he told me at a Committee meeting; but the answer given today—after a week—is that the matter is under consideration. If it was decided to do certain things, you have only to implement them and not consider them again. Therefore, my second supplementary would be, when will this

consideration stop and when will implementation begin—particularly, in regard to the improvement of riding qualities.

I would also like to know whether, since in both the replies (b) and (c) he has used the words “for the present aircraft operations”, he is considering an alternate air-port for bigger aircraft. Surely, it is not the Government's intention to keep Ahmedabad permanently an alternate airport. It has to be converted into a full-fledged international airport, specially in view of the fact that many aircraft cannot land in Bombay because of monsoon and other difficulties and they have to be diverted to Ahmedabad. In view of the fact that there is a lot of international traffic from Ahmedabad, from Gujarat, to places in Africa, to London, etc., and also in view of the fact that it has to be converted into a full-fledged international airport, why should the Government not take up the question of strengthening and lengthening the runway at this stage?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: The existing facilities at Ahmedabad are quite adequate for all types of aircraft operating there at present. It is an alternate airport to Bombay only for 707 and not for 747. For all the planes which are now in the fleet of the Indian Airlines, the present runway and the airport facilities are adequate.

As far as the other question about surface of the runway is concerned, I have already said that it is being examined by the DGCA, the estimates are being prepared and we are hopeful that this defect will be removed as early as possible.

SHRI SOMCHAND SOLANKI: Several times the former Minister, Dr. Karan Singh, has promised to reconstruct and remodel the whole building of Ahmedabad aerodrome. If you see it, Sir, you will find that it is just like a godown and not an aerodrome building. The present Minister has also said that it will be remodelled and

reconstructed. I have seen in the Consultative Committee that the present Minister just talks and makes only promises, but he is not taking any action. I want to know from the hon. Minister what was the estimated cost of the building and how much amount has already been consumed and utilised for the building and whether they are going to remodel the whole building or only the extended portion is sufficient for them

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: We have already informed him that it is proposed to take up during the Fifth Plan period the construction of a new terminal complex with associated apron and taxi-track at a new site at an estimated cost of Rs. 35 lakhs, and subject to the availability of resources. We would certainly like to start the work on it as soon as possible. But since that may take some time, we have already spent a sum of Rs. 6.5 lakhs for the improvement of the present airport, including the extension of the areas available. The areas available for various purposes, arrival concourse, departure concourse, baggage delivery, departure holding, reserved lounge, restaurant, etc., have been increased from 4,031 sq. ft. to 13,655 sq. ft. We have done every thing possible for the interim period. I fail to see how can I satisfy the hon. Member. We have taken, practically, all the steps, in consultation with them in some cases

(b) the names and addresses of the parties from whom and to whom these REP licences were transferred; and

(c) value of each such licence?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) to (c). The information asked for is not readily available. Also, the time and labour involved in collection of this information may not be commensurate with the results sought to be achieved

श्री भारत सिंह चौहान : प्रधान मंत्री, मेरा क्वेश्चन बहुत स्पष्ट था और इसका नोटिस भी मेरे समय के अनुसार दिया था। अगर मंत्री महोदय यह जानकारी नहीं देते हैं, तो यह सन्दिह्य होना स्वाभाविक है कि दास में कुछ काला है। कम से कम वह उन एक्सपोर्ट हाउसिंग के नाम तो बतायें, जिनको लाइसेंस दिये गये हैं। यदि नाम बताने में भी यह कहते हैं कि इन्फार्मेशन कलेक्ट करने में टाइम लगेगा तो यह तो एक बड़े आश्चर्य की बात है। ये कुछ अपनी बातों को छिपाना चाहते हैं। मैं एक्सपोर्ट हाउसिंग के नाम जानना चाहता हूँ। उनके नाम आप बतलाइये। हमें बिल्कुल शंका है इस बारे में।

Replenishment Export Permit Licences transferred to Export Houses

*966. **SHRI BHARAT SINGH CHOWHAN:**
SHRI LAJLI BHAI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Replenishment Export Permit licences transferred to eligible export Houses during the period 28th March to 31st March, 1974;

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH: Sir, so far as the names of the export houses are concerned, it is not difficult to give; there are about 164 export houses which have been given eligibility certificates in 1974-75. That information could be passed on to the hon. Member. But the question asked is, how many replenishment export permit licences have been transferred to the eligible export houses. Various licensing authorities transfer these licences and the number is quite large. For the specified period for which this is asked, end of the year, it becomes specially large because everybody tries to clear and get those