

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) to (c). No instance of this nature has come to the notice of Indian Airlines.

Opium Racket in Madras

*1186. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether opium racket was smashed in Madras on 12th April, 1979; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. According to reports received by Government, on 12-4-79, Customs officers at Madras seized a total quantity of about 23 Kgs. of opium which was being attempted to be smuggled out of the country. Four persons were arrested for their involvement in this case. Two more persons allegedly involved in this case have not been apprehended so far as they are reported to be staying outside the country.

Calcutta Airport Running into Losses

*1187. SHRI BAGUN SUMBRUI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Calcutta airport is running into heavy losses due to imbalance in the distribution of flights;

(b) if so, the reasons for the imbalance;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is concentration of flights in Bombay thereby causing hardship to passengers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK): (a) to (d). I lay a statement on the Table of the Sabha giving the requisite information.

Statement

(a) and (b). Calcutta Airport has suffered losses amounting to Rs. 27.35 lakhs during 1977-78 due to low volume of traffic, particularly international traffic. Imbalance in the distribution of flights is a common feature throughout the world where more than one international airport exist. Airlines prefer to operate services through specified airports where it is commercially profitable to them and the area offers enough traffic. Many foreign airlines have got traffic rights to operate services to/through Calcutta in addition to traffic rights at other points in India. Some of these airlines, however, do not operate to/through Calcutta in their commercial judgement. In so far as Government is concerned, all efforts are being made to increase such flights and thereby promote traffic through Calcutta. Calcutta is invariably offered as a point of call to foreign airlines when route schedules to Bilateral Air Services Agreements are negotiated. A substantial amount has been spent in providing a new terminal building, an operational block, a modern hotel, and approach roads, and in modernising radio navigational aids besides extending and strengthening runways and installation of sophisticated radar equipment at Calcutta airport.

Furthermore, a decision has been taken not to permit, as far as possible, additional flights through Bombay airport, thereby encouraging foreign airlines to divert their flights *inter-alia* to Calcutta airport. Government would welcome and encourage operation of scheduled air services by foreign airlines to/through

Calcutta within their traffic entitlements.

(c) and (d). Bombay airport is congested specially at night as most of the international flights take off or land between 10.00 p.m. and 06.00 a.m. For removing congestion at Bombay airport, the Airports Authority has taken in hand the construction of a new international passenger and cargo terminal. The first phase of this project is likely to be completed in 1980.

Financial Assistance Sanctioned by Public Financial Institutions to Industry and Export

*1188. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) whether it is a fact that the financial assistance sanctioned by the public financial institutions to industry and for export in 9 States has fallen in 1977-78 as compared to previous years;

(b) the extent of fall and the names of nine States which have suffered this fall in States assistance; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to keep the States on equal footing in the matter of assistance from public financial institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ZULFIKARULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As compared with 1976-77, the financial assistance sanctioned in 1977-78 by All-India financial institutions has fallen by Rs. 48.89 crores in the nine States of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, M.P., Maharashtra, J & K, Punjab and A.P.

(c) The ability of the financial institutions to sanction assistance to different States depends upon the number of viable proposals received from such States. While sanctioning assistance, the financial institutions show special considerations to

the disposal of applications from industrially backward States. Further, the institutions have sponsored technical consultancy organisations in different States, particularly in backward States so as to provide consultancy service to new and small entrepreneurs involving project identification/formulation, besides providing technical and management advice.

Changes in Excise Exemption Scheme

*1189. DR. BIJOY MONDAL:
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India have decided to make changes in the excise exemption scheme particularly in General Scheme for exemption for small scale sector;

(b) if so, what are the details of the changes; and

(c) whether these changes will give some relief to small scale sector and result in increase in production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Government have made some changes both in the general exemption scheme introduced in the 1978 Budget for the benefit of small manufacturers of 69 specified items and in the exemption scheme applicable to small scale units manufacturing goods falling under item No. 68 of the Central Excise Tariff.

(b) The changes made in the general exemption scheme are as follows:

(i) A condition has been prescribed in the relevant exemption notification which provides that