

ment have decided to bring all items at par, if so, by when; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA): (a) Yes, Sir. Under a general small scale exemption scheme, the Government have exempted 72 specified commodities from payment of excise duty upto a clearance of Rs. 7.5 lakhs in a financial year. In regard to these commodities, partial exemption is also available by way of 25 per cent duty reduction for clearances between Rs. 7.5 lakhs and Rs. 15 lakhs in a financial year. Under a separate scheme, which is applicable to non-specified goods falling under Item No. 68 of the Central Excise Tariff, the Government have granted full exemption of central excise duty to goods valued at Rs. 30 lakhs cleared in a financial year. A higher limit of Rs. 30 lakhs has been fixed in regard to goods falling under Item No. 68 of C.E.T. keeping in view the fact that the duty rate on these goods is comparatively lower and that the said Item covers a large variety of all sorts of goods.

(b) and (c) The question of bringing at par the two exemption schemes, referred at part (a) has been raised and is under consideration of the Government.

Setting up Hotels in every State Capital

255. SHRI M. R. APPAROW: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether India Tourism Development Corporation proposes to set up hotels in every State Capital to meet the expected tourists traffic needs of 3.5 million foreign tourists by 1990; and

(b) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to build economy class hotels and dor-

mitories alongwith Five Star Hotels to enable low income group—domestic tourists to see the country and enjoy the holidays?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN): (a) Presently ITDC has hotels in the State Capitals of Bihar, Karnataka, Orissa, Rajasthan and West Bengal. It also operates a hotel and beach cottages at Kovalam beach resort, 14 Kms. from Trivandrum. In addition the Corporation is managing Hotel Pinewood Ashok at Shillong on behalf of the Government of Meghalaya, as also Hotel Karnavati, a private sector hotel at Ahmedabad, 26 Kms. from Gandhinagar. During the Sixth Plan (1980-85) joint venture hotel projects in collaboration with the respective State Governments/State Tourism Development Corporations/other public sector Corporations etc. are proposed at Gauhati, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Puri, Konark and Goa. Similar projects are under consideration at Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Madras, Srinagar and Ahmedabad.

(b) ITDC is at present constructing a 527 room (1200 beds) Ashok Yatri Niwas at New Delhi at an estimated cost of Rs. 430 lakhs which will cater to the needs of budget tourists. The project is nearing completion and is likely to be commissioned by August, 1982. This is a pilot project. Construction of other economy class hotels and dormitories in other towns and cities in various States/Union Territories will be considered only after the operational results over the first 2-3 years of the Ashok Yatri Niwas project at New Delhi have been evaluated and the project is successful. ITDC has, however, formulated a scheme to construct medium-priced hotels in collaboration with the State Governments/State Tourism Development Corporations to begin with at Puri, Itanagar, Ranchi, etc. No funds, however, have yet been allocated for these projects. In addition, reasonably priced accommodation is also available in the 12 Travellers Lodges

operated by ITDC at Kushinagar, Sanchi, Bodhgaya, Tiruchirapalli, Thanjavur, Konarak, Kancheepuram, Kulu-Manali, Mandu, Bijapur and Ajanta.

Export of iron ore from Vishakhapatnam Harbour

256. SHRI M. R. APPAROW: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantity of iron ore exported by M.M.T.C. during the months of December 1981 and January 1982;

(b) how much of it was exported through Vishakhapatnam Outer-harbour;

(c) whether there is any proposal to export more iron ore fines from Vishakhapatnam harbour; and

(d) what is the total amount earned from the export of iron ore fines during the last three years?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) During December, 1981 and January, 1982, 9.46 and 16.76 lakhs tonnes of iron ore respectively were exported by MMTC from various ports.

(b) The export of iron ore from Vizag port during December, 1981 and January, 1982 was 2.08 and 6.17 lakh tonnes respectively.

(c) The M.M.T.C. is trying to increase export of iron ore from Vishakhapatnam harbour subject to orders and availability thereof.

(d) An amount of Rs. 287.58 crores was earned on the export of iron ore fines by India during the last three financial years.

Vayudoot air service to Jalpaiguri, West Dinajpur and Malda

257. SHRI PRASENJIT BARMAN:
SHRI SUDHAKAR PANDEY:

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

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the Government of West Bengal for introduction of Vayudoot air service in the district headquarters of Jalpaiguri, West Dinajpur and Malda besides Cooch Behar;

(b) whether Government have agreed to send a study-team to visit these places to examine the feasibility of introduction of this air service at these places; and

(c) if so, whether this study team has been sent, and if not, by when this team is likely to be sent?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As some time would be required for making the airstrips at these stations suitable for F-27 operations, these stations cannot be considered for airlinking in the immediate expansion programme of Vayudoot services. The question therefore of sending a study team at present does not arise.

Reserve Bank of India Branch at Siliguri

258. SHRI PRASENJIT BARMAN:
SHRI SUDHAKAR PANDEY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under Government's consideration to set up a branch of the Reserve Bank of India at Siliguri in North Bengal; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.