

†[THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) The total number of branches of Regional Rural Banks opened till the end of March, 1978 was 1281.

(b) and (c) Out of the 48 Regional Rural Banks, 21 banks incurred loss in their transactions during the year ending December, 1977. Most of these banks being at the initial stage of their expansion, have to incur higher organisational and establishment costs. At the same time, the increase in business is gradual, and therefore, the return on their advances sometimes falls short of the operational cost.]

Trade delegation from Kenya

93. SHRI GHOUSE MOHIUDDIN SHEIKH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a trade delegation from Kenya visited India to explore the possibility of industrial Cooperation with India;

(b) if so, what was the nature of discussions held with the delegation; and

(c) what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BEG): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The delegation held discussions with Ministers, officials, and various organisations on matters of mutual trade, economic and industrial cooperation. It is hoped that the visit would lead to greater understanding, cooperation, trade and collaboration between the two countries.

Indo-Seychelles Air Pact

94. SHRI GHOUSE MOHIUDDIN SHEIKH: Will the Minister of

†[] English translation.

TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Indo-Seychelles Air Pact has been signed in October 1978; and

(b) if so, what are the main features of the agreement?

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

(b) Under the agreement, the designated airlines of both India and Seychelles are entitled to operate a maximum of two services a week with Boeing 707 aircraft, or with aircraft of similar or smaller capacity, but excluding supersonic aircraft. Air India can operate on the route India to Seychelles (Mahe) via two intermediate points, and to two points beyond, to be selected by India. Similarly, the airline designated by Seychelles can operate on the route Seychelles to India (Bombay) via two intermediate points, and two points beyond, to be selected by Seychelles.

Liberalisation in the grant of loans to Big Firms

95. SHRI T. ANJIAH:
SHRI KALP NATH RAI:
SHRIMATI SAROJ
KHAPARDE:
SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to liberalise the scheme for grant of loans by banks to big firms with a view to give a boost to their production; and

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

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) and (b) Given the limited resources of the banks, the credit policy of the Reserve