

(ii) increased demand due to marriage season;

(iii) recent increase in the exports of gold ornaments;

(iv) speculation regarding liberalisation of gold control regulations; and

(v) firmness in the price of standard gold in the international market.

(c) Spot average prices of standard gold in the Bombay market during the last three years were:

(Rs. per 10 grams)

April—March	Average (Annual)
1974-75	519.24
1975-76	545.17
1976-77	549.81

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Extension of Commercial bank facilities to community blocks in the Northern Region

*428. SHRI R. NARASIMHA REDDY:

SHRI BHAIRAB CHANDRA MAHANTI:

SHRI NARASINGHA PRASAD NANDA:

SHRI NRIPATI RANJAN CHOUDHURY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to extend commercial bank facilities to all the Community Blocks in the Northern Region; and

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

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI H. M. PATIL): (a) and (b) In pursuance of the overall objective of provid-

ing banking facilities in the hither to unbanked areas, banks have been advised to ensure that latest by June 1978, each Community Development Block in the country is provided with at least one commercial bank branch. According to available information, there were 29 Community Development Blocks in the Northern Region as at the end of September 1977 which did not have a commercial bank branch. Of these 6 were in Himachal Pradesh, 12 in Jammu and Kashmir and 11 in Rajasthan.

Agriexpo—77

†*429. SHRI SUJAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of expenditure likely to be incurred on the exhibition 'AGRIEXPO-77' currently being held in Delhi;

(b) to what extent the small and marginal farmers will be benefited by the exhibition; and

(c) whether Government have made any arrangements for the night stay of farmers coming from far off places for visiting the exhibition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BAIG): (a) The amount of likely expenditure and income of the Agri-Expo is expected to be of the order of Rs. 80 lakhs as per revised estimates.

(b) The small and marginal farmers will be benefited with the latest information available in the 'AGRI-EXPO-77' on the modern techniques in the field of agriculture and allied fields, namely, the new high yielding varieties of seeds for various crops of wheat, maize, paddy, pulses etc., and use of different types of fertilizers,

†Previously Starred Question 309 transferred from the 30th November, 1977.

new breeds of cattle and poultry, storage facilities, soil conservation, improved agriculture implements and irrigation etc.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Trade Fair Authority of India has made arrangements for stay of farmers who have been sponsored by the State Governments to visit 'AGRIEXPO-77' Fair.

Bombay-Calcutta Flight halt at Nagpur

*430. SHRI S. W. DHABE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representations for re-scheduling the Bombay-Calcutta flights so as to provide a stop over at Nagpur; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken in this regard?

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

(b) In the Indian Airlines' Winter Schedule proposed to be effective towards the end of December, 1977, the service IC-175/176 (Bombay-Calcutta-Bombay) will operate daily, providing a stop-over at Nagpur.

Discontinuance of Delhi-Kulu flights

*431. SHRI M. KADERSHAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the air service to Kulu from Delhi has been discontinued due to the shortage of aircraft;

(b) if so, what was the average passenger traffic on this flight during the last three years and what is the amount of financial loss suffered by the Indian Airlines as a result of the withdrawal of the service;

(c) whether the discontinuance of the service has affected tourist traffic to Kulu; if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK): (a) The air services to Kulu were discontinued because:—

(i) all the Turbo-prop aircraft Indian Airlines are fully committed to operations on the existing schedule; and

(ii) Kulu has runway limitation on account of which operations with the Turbo-prop aircraft available in the fleet of Indian Airlines are not economically viable.

(b) The average passenger traffic between Delhi-Kulu and Chandigarh-Kulu during 1975 when the service last operated was 10 and 7 respectively. Withdrawal of service has not resulted in any financial loss to Indian Airlines.

(c) No separate statistics are compiled either State-wise or place-wise. As such, it is not possible to indicate any effect on the tourist traffic to Kulu due to the discontinuance of air service to that station.

Air India flight of Moscow carrying the Prime Minister

*432. SHRI F. M. KHAN:
SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI:
SHRI DEVENDRA NATH
DWIVEDI:
SHRI VENIGALLA SATYA-
NARAYANA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Air India flight on which the Prime Minister travelled to Moscow recently, was a scheduled flight;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as a result of rerouting and rescheduling the flight, only the Prime Minister and his party travelled by it and no other passengers could avail of the flight resulting in a loss of over Rs. 4 lakhs to Air India; and

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