

their views on the controversy regarding the Malacca straits; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to protect our interests in view of the strategic importance of the Malacca straits?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) and (b) Government have the general subject of straits under their examination. This examination will cover all aspects of the question including their strategic importance and freedom of navigation. Government will also be participating in the Law of the Sea Conference to be held in 1973 which will, *inter alia*, discuss the item of international straits with a view to settling general principles.

#### RECOGNITION TO ISRAEL

199. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR :  
SHRI O. P. TYAGI :  
SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government are reconsidering their stand on extending full diplomatic recognition to Israel, and

(b) if so, when such a decision is likely to be taken?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) The Government of India extended *de jure* recognition to Israel in September 1952. No other proposal is under Government's consideration in this regard.

(b) Does not arise.

#### PRIVATE AIRCRAFT OWNED BY CERTAIN EMBASSIES

200. SHRI M. K. MOHIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that certain embassies in India are having their own private aircraft for use in the country ;

(b) if so, the name of these embassies ; and

(c) the conditions for the use of aircraft by them ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) to (c) Government have decided not to permit foreign embassies to station aircraft in India any longer, and have conveyed this decision to the two Embassies concerned, those of France and the U. S. A. No other Mission maintains aircraft in India.

#### RELATIONS WITH EGYPT

201. DR. R. K. CHAKRABARTI :  
SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE :  
SARDAR AMJAD ALI :  
SHRI K. B. CHETTRI :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that Shri D. P. Dhar, Chairman, India's Foreign Policy Planning Committee in an interview to Cairo Daily "Al Gomhouria" urged for better relation between Egypt and India ;

(b) if so, what has been the reaction of Government of Egypt to that call ; and

(c) whether any other steps have since been taken to improve the relations between the two countries ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Our relations with Egypt are close and friendly. Both Governments keep in continuous touch with each other on international issues of common concern and seek to promote their bilateral relations in political, economic and cultural fields. These exchanges are developing satisfactorily in the economic, cultural and political fields. Our trade turnover for the past year exceeded Rs. 80 crores. Agreements exist and are being implemented for cooperation in science and technology, culture, atomic energy and technical training. The Government of India have found a ready response from the Government of Egypt in further developing and intensifying these mutually beneficial exchanges.