

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The State Government was requested to await the enactment of Central legislation on the subject or in the alternative, modify the Bill so as to bring it in conformity with the existing policy and practice without prejudice to such changes as may become necessary in the light of decisions eventually taken on the Report of the National Commission on Labour.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The views of the State Labour Minister have been noted.

REFUSAL OF SEATS TO BONAFIDE AIRLINE PASSENGERS

429. SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS :

SHRI K. C. PANDA :

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

(a) whether it is a fact that in the last week of May, 1970, 15 airline passengers who had booked their seats at Srinagar were not allowed to occupy their seats and were also harassed by the I.A.C. officials;

(b) if so, whether Government have investigated into the incident; and

(c) the findings thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH) : (a) On the evening of 29th May, 1970, at the time of carrying out pre-flight checks, the Srinagar office of Indian Airlines noticed that they had a long waiting list for the Caravelle service IC-424 (Srinagar/Delhi) of 30th May, whereas 29 passengers already confirmed by that flight had not contacted them for reconfirmation. In the past, the Srinagar office had repeatedly been faced with situations where fairly large groups of passengers having confirmed bookings had not turned up at all. Based on such experience, and with a view to avoid the flight going with empty seats when there were so many passengers

on the waiting list, the staff unfortunately deleted the names of 29 passengers from the list and took 19 passengers from the waiting list in their place. Late that evening, 14 of the deleted passengers reconfirmed their seats and 2 reported at the airport on the next day. The remaining 13 never turned up at all. When the Srinagar office discovered that there was an overload on the Caravelle flight, they had necessarily to off-load passengers beginning from the last confirmation given. It was for this reason that some of the wait-listed passengers, who were holding confirmed seats on the Caravelle, had to be told that firm seats could no longer be offered to them. However, 10 passengers were accommodated on the Caravelle flight while the remaining 6 were accommodated on the Viscount flight of the same day which left Srinagar less than an hour later.

(b) and (c) The incident was investigated by Indian Airlines and the conclusion reached was that the developments could not normally have been anticipated. Indian Airlines have now introduced a procedure whereby all passengers not only from Kashmir, but other hill stations, will be required to reconfirm their bookings 24 hours in advance of the intended date of their return journey in order to avoid recurrence of such a situation.

REVIVAL OF INDIA'S CULTURAL TIES WITH SOUTH EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES

430. DR. (MRS.) MANGLADEVI TALWAR : Will the Minister of EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to revive India's old cultural ties with the countries of South East Asia and to lay emphasis on strengthening them further; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES (SHRI A. K. KISKU) : (a) and (b) Government have continued their cultural contacts with the countries in South East Asia and are proposing to expand the Cultural Activities Programme.