

Taxes along with the recommendations of the Zonal Committee. The propriety or otherwise of writing off tax arrears in such cases is decided by the Central Board of Direct Taxes. The approval of the Minister of Revenue and Banking is sought by the Board in cases involving arrear demand of Rs. 50 lakhs and above.

Abolition of free trade zones at Kandla and Santacruz

45. SHRI GOVINDRAO RAMCHANDRA MHAISEKAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to shelve the expansion of free trade zones in the country; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to abolish free trade zones at Kandla and Santacruz also ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : (a) and (b) A decision has been taken that the establishment of new Free Trade Zone will not be encouraged. However, this will not affect the working of the existing Free Trade Zones at Kandla and Santa cruz.

Export trade

46. SHRI GANESH LAL MALI: SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU: SHRI LEONARD SOLOMAN SARING : SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the names of the goods the export of which has increased or declined during the first six months of the current calendar year ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : During the first three months of the current calendar year, the latest period for which data is available, the principal items export of which increased as compared to the same period last year, were leather and leather-manufactures, cotton apparel, jute manufactures, cotton piece goods (mill made), iron and steel, sugar, fish, silver and spices. On the other hand, principal items export of which declined during this period as compared with corresponding period of last year were cashew kernels, I

tobacco unmanufactured, tea and chemicals and allied products.

Air India earnings

47. SHRI GANESH LAL MALI : SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU : SHRI LEONARD SOLOMAN SARINGS : SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN :

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

(a) what are the total earnings of Air India during the last six months from passenger traffic within the country and abroad;

(b) what are the new routes operated by Air India during the current year; and

(c) what are the routes especially in South East Asia and West Asia, which are proposed to be operated during the next five years ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR) : (a) During the period December 1975 to May 1976 the operating revenue earned by Air-India from passenger traffic on scheduled services and open market charters was Rs. 6450.12 lakhs.

(b) Effective 6th April 1976, Baghdad was introduced as a new on line station on the Gulf route and an additional frequency to Gulf on the sector Bombay/Dubai/Bombay was introduced with Boeing 747 aircraft from August 1976. Seychelles also became another on line station on the India Mauritius route effective 26th June, 1976. Twice weekly Boeing 747 service to Australia was introduced from April 1976 and additional frequencies to UK were provided.

(c) Air-India have no plans for the present to add any new routes on the South East Asia Region. However, the Corporation are examining the possibility of extending their services to places such as Montreal and Toronto in Canada and Nigeria and Ghana in West Africa. Market Surveys are also being planned to assess the traffic potential of various countries West Asia namely, Turkey and Greece.