

Government have come out with the report regarding the merger of AAI with IAAI; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the manner in which the seniority is going to be counted between AAI and IAAI employees ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN) : (a) and (b) The Government had not appointed any Committee. However Airports Authority of India (AAI) had set up an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Justice J.D. Jain (Retd.). This Committee has submitted its report which broadly deals with the principles of integration of cadres, scales of pay, conditions of service and inter-seniority amongst the employees of National Airports Division and International Airports Division of Airports Authority of India (AAI). The report is under examination of AAI.

#### Task Force for North East Sector

2984. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the task force on development of tourism in North East has called for removal restrictions on the tourists;

(b) if so, whether this task force was constituted by the Department of Tourism to recommend the improvement in the North Eastern sector;

(c) the steps are being taken to improve the tourism in the North Eastern States;

(d) whether these States have been lying as isolated region;

(e) whether any concrete programme in this regard has been worked out; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) to (f) The Task Force set up by the Department of Tourism has recommended to consider removal of entry restrictions on the tourists. The other recommendations include emphasis on Infrastructure and Human Resource Development and wide publicity of Tourist. Attractions of the region. The Task Force has identified a number of projects including construction of tourist complexes, wayside

amenities etc. for the development of tourism of the region and a number of them have been prioritised for Central Financial Assistance during 1997-98.

#### Replacment of Indian Artefacts

2985. SHRI L. RAMANA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem appearing in the Asian Age dated July 2, 1997 entitled "British Museum told to replace Indian Artefacts"; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of British Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An exhibition entitled 'Enduring Image' from British Museum will have a wide range of art-objects belonging to various ancient world civilizations on view in the National Museum from 13th October, 1997 onwards for about two months. While examining the list of exhibits proposed to be displayed, it was felt that the Indian Section was rather under-represented, not truly commensurate with the great civilization that it is. Accordingly, suggestions were made to the British Museum to enhance the Indian Section by changing some of the exhibits and adding new ones more representative of our civilization. The suggestion has been received favourably, some changes have already been made and some are likely to be made before the final list of exhibits is agreed.

#### Daily Flight for Metro Cities

2986. SHRI RAJENDRASINH RANA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cities connected with the metro cities by daily flight services;

(b) whether the Government propose to connect the cities with daily flights to metrol cities which are not having this facility at present; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN) : (a) Twenty four cities are connected with daily flights to/from metro cities.

(b) and (c) In view of resource constraint of the Indian

Airlines, Private operators are being encouraged to add more stations in their networks, subject to viability.

**Extension of Calcutta-Chennai National Highway**

2987. SHRI N.K. PREM-CHANDRAN :  
SHRI N.N. KRISHNA-DAS :  
SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to extend the Calcutta-Chennai National Highway upto Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Kerala will be included in the corridor formed with an intention to develop the National Highways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) Thiruvananthapuram is already connected with Chennai through National Highway Nos. 45, 7 and 47.

(c) and (d) Though the main thrust for development of National Highways during the 9th Plan will be for four high density corridors linking Delhi-Calcutta, Chennai & Mumbai, the other National Highways including these passing through Kerala will also be developed during the 9th Plan keeping in view the traffic intensity, overall priority of work and the availability of funds.

**Helicopter shot down by Militants in Assam**

2988. SHRI N. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the name of the militant group that shot down the helicopter carrying Major General Kashev Singh near Kohima in Assam;

(b) whether some rocket was used to shot down the helicopter; and

(c) the sources of rockets and other arms that have come in the possession of the militants in Assam ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) and (b) According to the information received from Army HQs the helicopter

crashed due to inclement weather and not on account of shooting down by any militant group.

(c) The militants in Assam are reported to be getting arms from various sources, including other militant groups operating in the region.

**Tourist From Australia**

2989. SHRI CHANDRABHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has got its office at Sydney headed by a Director;

(b) the total monthly expenditure incurred by the Ministry to run the said office at Sydney; and

(c) the total number of tourists visited India from Australia during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA):

(a) The Central Department of Tourism has its Regional Office for Australasia Region at Sydney. It is headed by a Regional Director.

(b) The monthly expenditure incurred on running of the office at Sydney for the year 1996-97 is as follows :

Month	(Rs. in lakhs)
Apr 96	6.94
May 96	7.43
June 96	5.06
July 96	7.46
Aug 96	7.96
Sept 96	7.30
Oct 96	7.00
Nov 96	7.33
Dec 96	7.23
Jan 97	5.86
Feb 97	6.14
Mar 97	8.56

(c) Tourist arrivals from Australia during the last three years are as under :

year	Tourist Arrival from Australia
1994	33,142
1995	36,150
1996	48,755