

time, the Government has proved its determination, and ability, to resist the Akali demand under the most extreme pressure. This should reassure those who are convinced that the Suba will be harmful to wider national interests and should be a warning to the Akalis which is not likely to go unheeded.

Master Tara Singh is reported to have been assured by the Prime Minister that the proposed commission will be appointed before the end of this month. The Akalis, it is to be expected, will now concentrate on preparing their case to be presented to the commission to substantiate their allegations of discrimination which have hitherto been couched in the vaguest terms. Incidentally, there appears to be some uncertainty about the scope of the proposed commission's enquiry. The Home Ministry's *communiqué* states that the commission "may go into the general question of discrimination and examine any charges of alleged differential treatment of grievances of the Sikhs". This has been construed to mean that the commission will be competent to decide whether the Government's refusal to accede to the Akalis' demand for a Punjabi Suba amounts to discrimination against the Sikhs. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the terms of reference of the commission will be defined precisely enough to preclude any judgment by it, directly or indirectly, on the Punjabi Suba issue.

### **Air-India's First Jet Year**

THE report of the working of Air-India International during the financial year 1960-61 is of unusual interest, because this was a year of very big changes in the operations of Air-India. It was the first year of the operation of Boeing jet planes; the first year of the working of the Tripartite Pool between Air-India, BOAC and Qantas; and also the first year of the extension of the Air-India service to New York.

The advent of Boeing jets revolutionised Air-India's operations. The three Boeings which it put into service during the year together had a larger carrying capacity than its entire fleet of nine super-comtella. A fourth Boeing was delivered to the Corporation in April this year. Two more are on order. They are scheduled to be delivered by March of April next year.

With the strictest restrictions on foreign exchange "for travel — restrictions which have been stiffened rather than relaxed — Air-India, nevertheless, has been doing pretty well. That, along with the other world air lines, Air-India has also started and maintained a scheme for foreign travel on payment by instalments goes to show that its business has not been affected at all by the foreign exchange difficulties which everyone going out of India on his own has inevitably to face. The Boeing jets came into operation in April 1960 and the Air-India entered the highly competitive Atlantic route by extending its service from London to New York two months later. It is the Pool arrangement which enabled Air-India to extend its services to New York so soon after the introduction of Boeing jets on its existing routes. The report is candid on this point: if it had continued to operate on its own. Air-India would not have attempted two such important tasks at the same time, and the New York flight would have been postponed by a year. The Pool arrangements enabled the three air lines to complement one another's operations instead of competing with one another. The three air lines are able to give much better service because the prospective travellers have a greater choice. The air lines also have a better chance of improving their traffic and effecting certain economies. It is no longer important on which partner's lines the traffic is carried, since revenues collected by all the three are pooled and shared,

Because the two came together almost simultaneously, it is not possible to separate the effects of the Pool arrangement from those of the introduction of the jet planes. The economics of the Atlantic service, however, can be partially dissociated from that of the other operations. The Corporation operated at a satisfactory load factor during its first summer season on the Atlantic, but not in the ensuing off-season. In fact, to stabilise its services on this most competitive of all air routes. Air-India needs a daily service across the Atlantic as against its present five weekly flights. Perhaps, it may need two flights a day. For all passengers from New York may not care to fly by night

### **Development of Ports**

DR SUBBARAYAN made the announcement at the recent meeting of the National Harbour Board that designing of Mangalore and Tuticorin as major ports would start as soon as the necessary data was collected. While Southern hearts will gladden at this announcement, the decision is not new. The programme to develop the two ports is included in the Plan which also allocates a sum of Rs 10 crores for the purpose.

The only other point of any significance made by the Minister was that the Government was considering introducing legislation in the next session of Parliament for constituting port trusts at Cochin, Kandla and Visakhapatnam ports which are now centrally administered. In the case of Visakhapatnam and Cochin this is long overdue and commercial and trade interests have been pressing the Government for the transfer of the administration of the ports to port trusts. In fact as long-established major ports, there is no particular reason why the Centre should continue to saddle itself with the responsibility for administering these ports.

The decision to develop Mangalore and Tuticorin as major ports is in keeping with the recommendations of the Intermediate Ports Development Committee which reported in May last year. The Committee, it will be recalled, had recommended the development of four existing intermediate ports as all-weather ports with modern facilities. The development of Tuticorin and Mangalore, in Madras and Mysore respectively, was recommended as first-priority works and that of Paradip and Porbandar, in Orissa and Gujarat respectively, as second-priority works.

The development of an all-weather port at Tuticorin is considered necessary in order to enable the port to handle the existing traffic efficiently and to provide capacity for increases in traffic which is expected to develop to one million tons annually by 1964-65. The development of Mangalore is linked with the export of iron ore. According to the Third Plan, Mangalore is proposed to be developed primarily to handle about 2 million tons of iron ore expected to be exported from Chitaldrug and other mining areas in the vicinity of the port, Years ago, Rumania