

III and Class IV staff in the matter of grant of post-retirement passes; and

(b) if so, from when will it be enforced?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) and (b). The matter is still under examination.

#### Private Air Services

\*472. Shri Basumatari: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that by forcing the Private Operator to fly on the All India route via Bagdogra they are put to an additional cost of about Rs. 1,000/- per trip;

(b) whether this amount is very largely of Foreign Exchange and waste of imported aviation fuel and spare parts and equipment; and

(c) whether tariff rates of the private operator are comparable to I.A.C.?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Humayun Kabir): (a) and (b). Non-scheduled flights to Assam have to be operated via Bagdogra, as otherwise it would involve flying over East Pakistan. The regulations of Pakistan, in common with those of most other countries including India, do not permit foreign aircraft on non-scheduled flights to over-fly its territory without making a landing. Such flights have necessarily to make a detour which adds to the cost of operation. As the operational costs of different non-scheduled operators are not submitted to Government, it is not possible to say what is the exact additional cost of such routing.

(c) Since there are no fixed tariff rates for non-scheduled operations, it is not possible to make a comparison with the rates charged by the Indian Airlines Corporation.

#### Accidents due to Defective Handling of Steel Cargo

\*474. Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of accidents, some of them fatal, have been lately reported from various ports on account of defective handling of steel cargo; and

(b) what steps have been taken to prevent such accidents?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Humayun Kabir): (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 71.]

(b) The steps taken to prevent accidents to workers engaged in handling iron and steel cargoes are (1) the use of mechanical handling gear (2) instructions of workers by Labour Supervisors in the correct and safe handling of cargo and (3) the strict observance of safety regulations.

#### Shore Labour in Madras Port

\*475. Shri Tangamani: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the entire shore-labour in Madras Port is directly under the Madras Port Trust;

(b) whether the part of shore labour is still under the contract basis; and

(c) the action Government propose to take for uniform wage-rate for Dock workers?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Humayun Kabir): (a) and (b). The Madras Port Trust directly employs shore labour only for the handling of import cargo other than Coal, bulk Phosphates and bulk Sulphur. All other labour is engaged by the Importer or Exporter concerned through contractors.