

(a) whether the Government have decided to strengthen the naval ties between India and South Africa;

(b) if so, the details thereby;

(c) whether efforts have also been made to promote such ties with other countries of the world; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) to (d). Yes, Sir. The Government is pursuing a policy of establishing and enhancing cooperation in the defence sector, with various friendly countries including South Africa. Steps are being taken to give effect to this policy in a phased manner and to the extent necessitated by, and consistent with national interest. Naval cooperation with other countries including South Africa, potentially encompasses reciprocal visits and representations, joint exercises training of personnel and goodwill visits of naval ships and hydrographic surveys.

[English]

Kapurthala Coach Factory

778. SHRI ANNA JOSHI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a steady rise in employing private agencies in the Kapurthala Coach Factory for the manufacturing process of coaches;

(b) whether this is part of the liberalisation/privatisation policy of the Government;

(c) the details of the private agencies employed and the respective jobs being handled by them;

(d) whether this has affected the working production of Madras Coach Factory; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI) : (a) and (b). No, Sir.

(c) There is no private agency employed in Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala presently.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Railway Line

779. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the time by which the construction of Tamluk-Digha Railway line is likely to be completed; and

(b) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI) : (a) and (b). The work is being progressed as per the availability of resources and its completion is subject to the availability of funds in the next few years.

Higher Education

780. SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Punnayya Committee on Higher Education has submitted their Report;

(b) if so, the recommendations implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). According to the information furnished by UGC, the report of the Punnayya Committee, together with the views of UGC thereon, has been sent to Vice-Chancellors of the Central, State and deemed Universities as also to the State Governments/Union Territories Administrations for implementation of recommendations relevant to them.