

(c) The Director General, Tourism went abroad to attend international conventions on travel and tourism as it is felt that international travel and tourist conferences afford the best opportunities for promoting international travel resulting in advantages to all member countries and of making contacts with important members of the travel world in the interest of promoting tourism to India. At the annual meetings of the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO), American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), etc. besides the officials of Government Tourist Departments of member countries, representatives of large number of international non-official and commercial bodies are also present. At these meeting D.G. Tourism has the opportunity of meeting important travel agents, tour-promoters, representatives of airline companies, travel writers and photographers etc. to make known India's tourist attractions.

Taking advantage of his visits abroad to attend international conferences on Tourism, D.G. Tourism, visited certain countries in South America which have a good tourist potential but which had not been visited by an Indian tourist official in connection with promoting tourism to India. To illustrate this, it is stated that the tourist arrivals from the South American countries more than doubled after D.G.'s visit to South America in 1960. In 1959, 783 tourists came to India from South America whereas in 1961, the number was 1,833. The tourist arrivals from the four countries visited by D.G., namely, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and Uruguay increased by more than 3 times.

D.G. Tourism also took these opportunities to inspect the Government of India Tourist Offices overseas and to co-ordinate their promotional activities without incurring much additional foreign exchange.

Joint Steamer Companies

823. Shri Indrajit Gupta: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to refer to the replies given to Starred Question No. 104 on the 8th August, 1961 and Unstarred Question No. 824 on the 29th November, 1961 and state:

(a) whether the entire conservancy expenditure of the Joint Steamer Companies is being met by Government grants and loans;

(b) whether such grants and loans are to be continued even after the 5 per cent increase in freight rates granted to the companies; and

(c) whether the companies are reluctant to spend their reserve funds for rehabilitation of their fleets?

The Minister of Shipping in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) No. Grants were paid during the years 1958-59, 1959-60 and 1960-61 in order to meet a part of the expenditure incurred by the Joint Steamer Companies on conservancy work. No loans have been given for this purpose.

(b) It has been decided to continue these grants for another period of two years. The question of continuance of loans for conservancy work does not arise. In recommending 5 per cent increase in freight rates the Freight Rates Enquiry Committee assumed that the grants paid to the Companies for river conservancy works would continue to be paid on the same basis.

(c) The question of utilising the encashable reserves for the rehabilitation of their fleet is under consideration of the Companies.

Railway Institutes and Reading Rooms in Railway Colonies

824. Shri Nambiar: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Institutes and Reading Rooms in Railway colonies are made to pay electric charges

and water charges from the membership fees collected from members who are railway employees;

(b) whether the repair charges of the buildings and maintenance of gardens are also borne by the members; and

(c) what contribution is made from the funds of the Railway for encouraging reading habits among the employees?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) Electric and water charges are paid from Institute Fund. Income of the Institute is from membership fee and grant from Staff Benefit Fund.

(b) The cost of repairs of the Institute building is met from the Railway Revenues. The expenditure on maintenance of gardens, playgrounds, grass cutting etc., other than engineering repairs, is borne by the Institute Fund.

(c) Grant is given from the Staff Benefit Fund, the quantum being at the discretion of the staff Benefit Fund Committee.

Dairy Farm in Bikaner City

825. Shri Karni Singh: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to State:

(a) whether any scheme for the improvement of milch-cattle breed and setting up of Dairy Farm to the North-West of Bikaner City (Rajasthan) has been approved; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): (a) and (b). A scheme for the development of the Rathi, Tharparkar and Sanchole (Kankrej) breeds of cattle in Rajasthan has been approved by the Planning Commission at an estimated cost of Rs. 37.75 lakhs. The area of operation of the scheme includes the area North-west of Bikaner. The

scheme is awaiting the approval of the Expenditure Finance Committee.

The scheme provides for (i) the rehabilitation of 500 families of nomadic cattle breeders in the Rathi tract, (ii) construction/renovation of wells and kunds for improving water supplies in the three breeding tracts, (iii) distribution of 100 breeding bulls in each of the tracts (iv) subsidised rearing of male and female calves (v) development of marketing facilities for milk, ghee and other livestock products and (vi) organisation of cattle shows and fairs for providing a market for cattle.

There is no proposal to set up any Dairy Farm at Bikaner under the Third Plan. The Delhi Milk Scheme is, however, already obtaining supplies of cow milk from villages around Bikaner.

Overbridge at Belghoria and Sodepur Railway Stations

826. Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the West Bengal Government have put forward any proposals for building of an over-bridge at Belghoria and Sodepur over the railway lines on the Eastern Railway;

(b) whether it is a fact that the railway lines cut across heavy traffic and bus services carrying a large number of suburban daily passengers into the city of Calcutta and suburbs;

(c) whether traffic is held up at frequent intervals; and

(d) whether in view of heavy overcrowding in suburban trains the construction of these over-bridges will be considered at top priority to make bus services easy and frequent?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Road traffic at these level crossings is heavy.