

press between Madras and New Delhi (5 days a week), twin-coach dining cars having larger seating capacity have been provided. It is proposed to increase the frequency of dining car service on the Janata Expresses between Madras-Bombay and Madras-Delhi, as soon as additional dining cars are available. Dining car facility is provided on the Holiday (Summer) specials also, to the extent feasible.

For the facility of passengers travelling by trains on which dining cars are not provided, well-equipped refreshment rooms have been provided at important stations en route. These arrangements are reviewed by the Railways from time to time and such augmentation thereof as is found necessary is carried out to meet the requirements of passengers satisfactorily.

Regarding the provision of lights and fans in the trains, it is pointed out that adequate number of lights and fans are provided in all passenger coaches. But there are some cases of failures of these facilities on the trains due to the large scale pilferage of and interference to the electrical equipments by anti-social elements. Measures are being taken to tackle these problems effectively to maintain the basic amenities provided.

Regarding provision of water in the trains, there are arrangements at the terminal stations for refilling of water in carriage tanks before the trains leave. Maintenance staff have instructions also to wash and clean the coaches, check compartments to ensure that fittings are in good working order. Water taps and flushing cocks in lavatories are also checked to prevent leakage of water.

Further, arrangements exist for refilling of water tanks during train halts at specified carriage watering stations en-route. Maintenance staff are also posted at these specified stations to attend to passenger complaints, if any.

Railway line between Ernakulam and Madurai

619. Shri P. P. Esthose: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open a new railway line between Ernakulam and Madurai touching the high ranges such as Devicolum considering the necessity or export facilities for the Mill producers; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) No such proposal is under consideration at present.

(b) Construction of this line across the Western Ghats is not a practicable proposition except at very prohibitive cost. As the funds likely to be made available for construction of new lines during the Fourth Plan are very limited, such proposals which are costly and unremunerative cannot be taken up.

Railway line from Ernakulam to Cape Comorin

620. Shri P. P. Esthose: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open a new railway line through the coastal route of Kerala from Ernakulam to Cape Comorin; and

(b) if not the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) There is no proposal to open a new Railway line through the coastal route from Ernakulam to Quilon. However, a survey has been conducted for a line from Trivandrum to Cape Comorin and the survey reports are under examination.

(b) The present Ernakulam-Quilon line serves the hinterland and construction of another line via the coast will be unremunerative.