

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Introduction of computerisation of Passenger Reservation in Delhi Area is likely to cost approximately Rs. 11.8 crores and that for Freight Management about Rs. 520 crores of which Rs. 170 crores would be for the computer segment and Rs. 350 crores for communication segment.

(c) The computerisation of Passenger Reservation and Freight Management would bring about substantial improvement in the quality of service offered by Railways to its users. The freight management system would in addition improve the utilisation of rolling stock assets.

Recommendations of the Committee for International Cooperation in Higher Education

4304. SHRI RAM SWAROOP RAM : Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state :

(a) the terms and modalities worked out by the visiting team from Britain representing the Committee for International Cooperation in Higher Education with the University Grants Commission in the matter of providing facilities to research students and teachers of Indian Universities; and

(b) the further links envisaged between the institutions in Britain and India for growth of inter-university culture of the two countries ?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) and (b). According to the information made available by the University Grants Commission, four-member British team representing the Committee for International Cooperation in Higher Education recently visited India to familiarise itself with the various aspects of Indian Higher Education at first hand and to discuss with the University Grants Commission and the University Departments the progress of the Academic Link Interchange Scheme (ALIS) as also the steps to be taken to further develop this programme. The report of the Team is awaited by the Commission.

[Translation]

Allotment of Coal wagons to Madhya Pradesh

4305. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Madhya Pradesh is being allotted only 30.9 per cent of its total requirement of coal wagons by Government of India and whether the Superintendent, Movement Railway (Traffic) Coal and Divisional Superintendent, Bilaspur impose further 50 per cent cut on this allotment and thus only 15 per cent wagons are being allotted to the actual user units;

(b) whether the Ministry are aware of the fact that the imposition of this cut on the allotment is adversely affecting the production and business of the actual user units; and

(c) the action being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Conversion of Jabalpur-Gondia Rail Line

4306. SHRI M. L. JHIKRAM : SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Uneconomic Branch Line Committee had included Jabalpur-Gondia narrow gauge line on South Eastern Railway in their report submitted in 1969 ;

(b) when the survey work for conversion of the said line into broad gauge line was completed;

(c) the action taken by the Ministry in this regard; and

(d) whether construction of this rail line

is likely to be taken up during the Seventh Five Year Plan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In 1980.

(c) Since the project was not found financially viable, it was not pursued further

(d) No, Sir.

[English]

Representation from Railway Pensioners

4307. SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received representation from railway pensioners for :

- (i) the issue of two sets of free passes to class IV employee every year;
- (ii) providing class IV jobs to sons and daughters of Railway pensioners of Palghat Railway Division;
- (iii) providing medical allowance to those who live far away places from Railway Hospitals; and
- (iv) relief of Dearness Allowance due after 1 November, 1984; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on their representation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Group 'D' (class IV) railway employees retiring after completion of 25 years of service are presently eligible to one set of free railway pass once in two years for self and wife only. The matter has been considered time and again and it has not been found possible to liberalise this scale.

It is not possible to give any preferential treatment to the wards of railway pensioners

in the matter of employment as this will be against the principle of equality of opportunity.

Railway employees, after retirement from service, have an option to join the Retired Railway Employees Contributory Health Scheme on payment of very nominal charge. Under this scheme, retired railway employees are entitled to out-door treatment, supply of medicines ordinarily stocked and routine investigations free of cost. Such employees are also entitled to indoor treatment and special investigations at concessional charges in Railway Hospitals. However, under the rules, medical allowance is not admissible to the retired employees.

Grant of relief to pensioners after November '84 concerns all Central Government employees and no unilateral action is possible in respect of railway pensioners alone.

Opening of unmanned gate near Balasamudram

4308. SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal for opening of an unmanned gate near Balasamudram in Kadin of Anantapur district Andhra Pradesh in order to facilitate traffic for going to "Thammisettyvaripalli" village and other villages; and

(b) whether Government propose to expedite the proposal and open the unmanned railway gate at an early date ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) and (b). As per extant rules, request for provision of new level crossings is to be sponsored by the State Government/Local Authority with an undertaking to bear the initial and recurring expenditure. On receipt of request for the new level crossing near Balasamudram, the Local Authority have been informed to deposit charges for conducting survey and preparing plan and estimates and convey acceptance to bear the initial and recurring cost. The reply from Local Authority is still awaited.