

(c) the stage to which this project has reached?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No. The project included in the Railway Budget is conversion into broad gauge of Sabarmati-Mehsana-Delhi route. Conversion of Viramgam-Mehsana section into broad gauge was surveyed in 1972-73 and at the then prevailing rates the cost was estimated as Rs. 5.24 crores. Viramgam and Ahmedabad are already connected by BG and therefore conversion of Meh-sana-Viramgam Section was not considered.

(b) The cost of Sabarmati-Mehsana-Delhi conversion is about Rs. 250 crores at the present day rates.

(c) Sabarmati-Mehsana-Delhi gauge conversion project is yet to be cleared by the Planning Commission.

Demonstration by Ministerial Staff

2774. **SHRI A. K. ROY:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Ministerial Staff demonstrated before Divisional Workshop authorities all over Indian Railways and submitted any Memorandum on 27th March, 1980;

(b) if so, what were their demands and what action has so far been taken thereon;

(c) whether there is any proposal to grant further 15 per cent upgradation benefit to certain section of Ministerial Staff and if so, the reasons for discrimination between the staff of executive section and other sections while the nature of job and responsibilities are same;

(d) whether the Chief Engineer (Construction), Eastern Railway, Calcutta has received any representation from the Divisional Secretary, All India Railways Ministerial Staff Association, Dhanbad for fixing up com-

bined seniority of Material Clerks with the office clerks Grade II working under him as has been done in open line and work-shops as per extent rules; and

(e) if so, what action has been taken on that representation and if no action has been taken, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes.

(b) The main demands put forward by the Association are as follows:—

(1) Total withdrawal of ban on recruitment, creation and augmentation of ministerial posts according to the increased work load.

(2) Re-structuring of grades of ministerial staff.

(3) Removal of disparity in working hours between the ministerial staff of administrative offices, sheds, shops and depots.

In accordance with Government's policy staff representations received from any source are given due consideration and action as considered necessary is taken. Demands made by the Railway Ministerial Staff Association have been dealt with within the framework of this policy.

(c) There is a proposal to introduce direct recruitment to the grade of senior Clerks (scale Rs. 330—560) in the Personnel Deptt. Since such direct recruitment will affect the promotional opportunities of junior Clerks in scale Rs. 260—400, the question of upgrading 15 per cent of the posts of these junior Clerks to the grade of senior Clerks was placed before the Cadre Re-structuring Committee. No conclusions have, however, been reached in this regard. In view of this the question of any discrimination does not arise.

(d) Yes.

(e) The question of determination of seniority of Material Clerks is sub judice in the Calcutta High Court and a decision will be taken after the court case is finalised.

Aid plan to reduce Child Labour

2775. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH:
SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOW-
DHARY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government called "Aid plan to reduce child labour" in the country;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware that the West Bengal Government has decided to introduce a scheme of financial assistance for non-institutional care of destitute children to reduce the number of child labour in the country; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJIAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The recommendations made by the Committee on Child Labour are under consideration by the Empowered Committee recently appointed by the Government.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Scheme is being studied.

Indo-Asean Cooperation in Trade, Industry and Technical Fields

2776. SHRI P. M. SAYEED:
SHRI GHULAM RASOOL
KOCHACK:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Association of South-Eastern Nations have agreed

to take several steps to enhance co-operation in trade, industrial and technical fields;

(b) if so, whether talks in this regard were held in Kuala Lumpur in the month of May, 1980;

(c) what was the outcome of the talks held between Indian and ASEAN officials during the meeting meeting is laid on the Table of the House at present, State-wise?

(d) what are the other steps likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) A copy of the Joint Press Statement issued at the conclusion of the meeting is laid on the table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-994/80].

(d) Proposals under consideration will be discussed with the appropriate ASEAN authorities regarding their further implementation.

Unemployed Persons, State-Wise

2777. PROF. RUP CHAND PAL:
Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state the number of registered unemployed persons in the country at present, state-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJIAH): The available information, which relates to the number of job-seekers (all of whom are not necessarily unemployed) who were on the Live Register of Employment Exchanges in each State/Union Territory as on 30-4-1980, is given in the statement attached.