

assessment of railway land lying unused/encroached upon for a long period of time in the Asansol Division;

(b) if so, the details thereof, railway station-wise; and

(c) the manner in which the Government propose to utilise and recover such land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The break-up of railway land under encroachment station-wise is as under :

Station	Area (Ha)
Durgapi	0.095
Andal	0.528
Raniganj	0.129
Asansol	0.445
Panagarh	0.069
Suri	0.026
Others	0.641
Total	1.933

(c) Action to remove the encroachment is taken under the provisions of Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.

[Translation]

Parcel Office of New Delhi Railway Station

3100. SHRI SUKHLAL KUSHWAHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Officers and employees involved in corruption cases in the Parcel Department of New Delhi Railway Station during the last four years;

(b) whether some corrupt Officers and employees have retained their posts in the same department;

(c) if so, whether the Government will punish the guilty by conducting a high level inquiry in this matter; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) 151 parcel staff were found involved in corruption and other irregularities at New Delhi Railway Station during the last four years.

(b) The cadre of parcel staff is separate on Delhi Division of Northern Railway and as such, once a staff is posted in parcel office, he continues to work in Parcel Department but are liable to transfer to other parcel depot of the Division, if found guilty *prima facie* on a charge of corruption.

(c) They have been taken up under Railway (D and A) Rules.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Arsenic Poisoning

3101. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that more than two lakh population along the Ganges are exposed to arsenic poisoning through the drinking water;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to save the population from poisoning hazard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) and (c). As per information received from the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment (Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission), as on April, 1996 there are 984 habitations spread over 8 districts of West Bengal reported to have arsenic content in the ground water with more than the permissible limit (0.05 mg/litre). The Government of West Bengal has prepared a perspective plan at a total cost of Rs. 750 crores indicating long term and short term measures to tackle arsenic contamination. The replacement of tubewells by deeper ones, construction of new piped water supply schemes and construction of Sanitary Protected Wells and Rain Harvesting Structures for immediate relief and establishment of surface water based piped water Supply schemes, tubewells based new Piped Water Supply schemes, establishing new spot sources for solving features of the Perspective Plan.

National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority

3102. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH :
DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA :
DR. BALIRAM :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) and (b). In the Modification in Drug Policy, 1986 announced in September, 1994, there is a provision to set up an independent body of experts called the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) to do the work of price fixation. This body would be entrusted with the task of updating the list of drugs under price

control. It would also monitor the prices of decontrolled drugs and formulations and oversee the implementation of the provisions of the DPCO. Necessary steps have already been initiated to set up the NPPA.

Speed of Trains

3103. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government propose to increase the speed of the trains running between Patan-Ahmedabad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Due to operational exigencies and speed restrictions.

Electrification on Rail Routes

3104. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce electrification on Ghaziabad-Meerut and Ghaziabad-Saharanpur rail routes;

(b) if so, the time by which electrification on the said routes would be done; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). There is no proposal to electrify Ghaziabad-Meerut section over which the traffic density is low at present and does not qualify for electrification. The portion Meerut to Saharanpur has been included in the Budget for 1996-97 as a new work as part of electrification of Khurja-Hapur-Meerut-Saharanpur section.

Infiltration into Rann of Kutch

3105. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the fact that Sir Greek in little Rann of Kutch is having abundant potentiality for oil and fishing industry apart from the other mineral deposits;

(b) whether there has been a constant threat from Pakistan side to control the area and it is prone to frequent infiltration from other side of the border; and

(c) if so, the efforts made so far and being made to protect this area from infiltration and ensure security of the border?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. It is a known fact that Exclusion Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Western Coast has an abundant potential for Oil and other Maritime assets on which Pakistan may like to have a control. To check the situation, however, the following steps have been taken:

(i) The Creek area has been kept under surveillance by physical domination in Sawalpir area.

(ii) Patrolling/Nakas has been increased/intensified.

(iii) Binoculars, Twin Telescopes, Night Vision Devices, PNV binoculars and hand held search lights have been provided for enhanced vigilance on the border.

(iv) Boats/motor boats have been provided for patrolling Creek area.

(v) The Co-ordination meetings are held at various levels between State Government of Gujarat, Navy, Army, Coastal Guard, Custom and BSF authorities for effectively controlling the transborder crimes in Creek area.

(vi) Water Crafts have been deployed for patrolling in the Creek area.

(vii) Tractors have also been deployed in Kutch for patrolling purposes.

(viii) Intelligence set up of the BSF has been geared up for keeping close surveillance on the border.

Smuggling of Arms and Currency

3106. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to newsitem captioned "Pak dumping arms and fake currency", appearing in the *Hindustan Times* dated May 25, 1996;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the preventive measures taken to check recurrence of such activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Recently there have been instances wherein arms, ammunition and explosives were smuggled into the country. Similarly, instances of circulation of counterfeit currency in some parts of the country, particularly North-East, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab have also come to notice. Government is alive to the situation and are taking appropriate steps