

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c). The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established in September, 1985 by an Act of Parliament for the introduction and promotion of the Open University and Distance Education systems in the educational pattern of the country and for the coordination and determination of standards in such systems. The University has established an extensive delivery system through its Regional and Study Centres situated in different parts of the country. Study Centres of IGNOU have been provided with accommodation by existing educational institutions. They generally function in the evenings and on holidays.

The Study Centre at Kavaratti in Lashadweep was established in October, 1989 and is located in the Jawaharlal Nehru College. It caters to about 100 students who are enrolled in IGNOU's Bachelor Degree Programme and the Certificate Course in Food and Nutrition. According to IGNOU the Study Centre at Kavaratti is functioning satisfactorily.

Deforestation in Assam

1887 SHRIDWARAKA NATH DAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that deforestation is going on unabated in Karimganj and Hailakandi districts of Assam; and

(b) the steps being taken to check this deforestation and arrange for speedy afforestation in that area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOR-

ESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a). The State Government reports that no deforestation has taken place in the reserved forests of Karimganj and Hailakandi districts in Assam, except for some sporadic incidents of encroachments;

(b) Appropriate action has been taken to stop encroachments and felling of trees in the reserved forest area. Moreover, massive afforestation under 20-point programme has been taken up in the degraded forests.

Clearing of Baggages at Airports

1888. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the procedures for clearing baggages at the airports have been revised;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether private contractors have been appointed to supply manpower to clear the baggage of passengers at the airports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Customs under Department of Revenue have made certain procedural changes for speedy clearance of baggages to ensure better passenger facilitation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Rail Link between Gadag-Harihar (Karnataka)

1889. SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal has been submitted to the Union Government for laying new railway line from Gadag-Harihar via Mundaragi Huvvinahadagalli in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the total estimated expenditure involved; and

(c) the time by which a final decision will be taken?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

C.G.H.S. Dispensary in Trans-Hindon Areas

1890. SHRI RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open a new C.G.H.S. dispensary in trans-Hindon areas covering Lajpat Nagar, Rajendra Nagar and Sahibabad;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be opened; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a). No, Sir.

(b) The question does not arise.

(c) Requests have been received for opening CGHS dispensary at Rajinder Nagar Sector II Sahibabad and Hindon Air Force Station. On examination, the proposal for opening of a CGHS dispensary at Rajinder

Nagar Sector II has been found justified and the same will be considered subject to availability of funds.

Booking Facilities for Remote Areas

1891. SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that people residing in remote areas have to travel considerable distance for booking of tickets as well as freight;

(b) if so, the action being taken to provide booking facilities for them of the areas not connected by rail, and

(c) whether the Government are considering to set up computer linked booking offices at district headquarters of each district in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALIKARJUN): (a) and (b). Depending on demand. Out Agencies are opened in areas which are not connected with rail heads and facilities of buying tickets and booking of Parcel & Goods traffic are provided.

(c) No, Sir.

Indian Squad to ATF Meet, Kuala-Lumpur

1892. SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of athletes in Indian Squad sent to Kuala-Lumpur for the Ninth Asian Track and Field (ATF) Meet;

(b) the total number of officials accompanied the squad;