

Central Assistance for Lift Irrigation Schemes of Maharashtra

152. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the allocations proposed by the Central Government for aiding the Government of Maharashtra for augmenting lift irrigation projects during the 7th plan period; and

(b) whether Centre has given any directive to State Governments to increase the area under irrigation, particularly under lift irrigation and if so, the increase suggested for Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b). Irrigation is a State subject and irrigation projects are planned, funded and implemented by the State Governments themselves. Central assistance is given in the form of block loans and block grants and is not tied to any particular scheme of sector of development. With a view to increase the area under irrigation, the State Governments have been urged to allocate increased financial outlays and also accord priority to completion of the ongoing projects in advanced stage, by allocating adequate funds to such projects.

Special Tourist Train—the 'Great Indian Rover'

153. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) total expenditure incurred on the nine-coach vestibuled air-conditioned broad-gauge luxury train the 'Great Indian Rover' meant to carry Buddhist pilgrim tourists, the earnings therefrom and the component of foreign exchange involved therein;

(b) whether the train is being withdrawn and introduced instead on the tourist circuit route from April 4; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and its likely traffic potential on its new run?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Total expenditure incurred on the 9 coach vestibuled A. C. Broad Gauge train 'Great Indian Rover' upto 31.1.85 is Rs. 1,56,53,701.00. The expenditure is inclusive of the cost of Mechanical/Electrical items and furnishing of the coaches. No foreign exchange was incurred. The total earnings from Nov. '83 to 21. 2. 85 for commercial runs of Buddhist pilgrims and others were Rs. 28.68 lakhs.

(b) and (c). Considering that the potential of traffic on the Buddhist Itinerary was somewhat limited, it has now been decided to revise the itinerary covering Delhi, Agra, Khajuraho, Varanasi and Delhi which is likely to be more popular with the tourists, as per indications given by the India Tourism Development Corporation market intelligence.

Improvement at Canning Station in Eastern Railway

154. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether suggestions have been received from M. Ps to provide some basic amenities and make improvements at Canning Station on the Eastern Railway, which is the gate way to the Sunderban Area, with a view to attract tourist traffic;

(b) if so, whether any action has been taken in the matter so far;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether the matter will be looked into for issue of necessary instructions to the Eastern Railway authorities?

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

(b) to (d). The suggestions made have been examined. Basic amenities such as platform, waiting hall, benches, suitable lighting arrangements, drinking water supply, latrines, etc. already provided at