

in Guyana have been brought to the notice of the Government of India by the Guyana Council of Indian organisations.

(b) The Government of India has been in touch with the Government of Guyana on this question.

Number of Stateless Indians in Burma and Sri Lanka

7780. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons of Indian origin settled in Sri Lanka and Burma who are at present stateless;

(b) the number of people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka and Burma who hold foreign registration certificate ;

(c) what efforts has Government made to give the stateless persons in Sri Lanka and Burma Statehood and other benefits and facilities as normal citizens of those countries;

(d) does Government plan Repatriation of those who wish to return back to India;

(e) whether it is a fact that many persons of Indian origin have already come back to India leaving back their assets and properties ; and

(f) if so, the value thereof and the efforts made by Government to recover the same ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU) : (a) According to our latest estimates, the number of persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka whose citizenship status has yet to be settled, is around 5,16,000 plus their "natural increase". A rough estimate of the number of people of Indian origin in Burma who are "documentless" (i.e., they hold no passports, Foreigners' Registration Certificates or National Registration Cards) would be around 2,30,000.

(b) It is estimated that around 40,000 persons of Indian origin in Burma hold Foreigners' Registration Certificates. The Sri Lanka Government does not issue such certificates.

(c) India and Sri Lanka concluded agreements in 1964 and 1974 respectively in terms of which, out of a total of the 9,75,000 persons of Indian origin, whose citizenship status was unsettled, 3,75,000 (and their natural increase) are to be given Sri Lanka citizenship and 6,00,000 (and their natural increase) to be repatriated to India. Upto February 1979, 1,75,818 of these persons were registered as Sri

Lanka citizens. In regard to Burma, the question of the status of persons of Indian origin has been discussed with the Burmese Government on a number of occasions and we have been assured that requests for Burmese citizenship would be considered sympathetically. The Burmese authorities recently advised all adult non-nationals residing in Burma continuously for the last five years to indicate whether or not they wish to acquire Burmese citizenship. It is hoped that persons of Indian origin who have been residing in Burma for generations will opt for Burmese citizenship.

(d) In terms of our agreement with Sri Lanka, 6,00,000 persons of Indian origin (and their natural increase) are to be repatriated to India. Of these, a 3,10,106 were repatriated upto February, 1979.

(e) & (f). The Government of Sri Lanka allows Indian nationals leaving Sri Lanka for good to repatriate a maximum sum of Sri Lanka Rs.75,000 after satisfying themselves that the amount to be transferred represents their actual life savings in Sri Lanka. Any amount beyond this ceiling automatically stands to be deposited in a non-resident blocked account. According to information furnished by Sri Lanka banking sources, the total amount of such blocked deposits amounts to Sri Lanka Rs. 10.2 million. In some cases where Government of India was approached by the concerned individuals, Government was able to secure permission of Sri Lanka authorities for partial or full remittances from blocked accounts on compassionate or humanitarian grounds. As regards Burma, in the wake of nationalisation measures adopted in 1963 and 1965, many Indians left behind assets and properties on their departure for India. No authentic estimate of the value of these assets and properties is available. In 1973, Government of Burma invited applications for compensation for nationalised assets. The question of compensation has been under negotiation between the Governments of Burma and India. During his recent visit to Burma, the Minister of State also raised this matter with the Burmese authorities. They promised to listen to the complaints and to extend their cooperation.

उत्तर प्रदेश में नैरो गेज लाइनों को बदलना

7781. श्री राजेन्द्र कुमार शर्मा : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या उत्तर प्रदेश की नैरो गेज लाइनों को सुनियोजित ढंग से ब्राड गेज में बदलने का कोई प्रस्ताव सरकार के विचाराधीन है,

क्योंकि उत्तर प्रदेश में अधिकतर लाइनों नैरो गेज हैं ; और

(ख) यदि हाँ, तो छठी पंचवर्षीय योजना में उन पर कितना व्यय होने की संभावना है ?

रेल मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री शिव नारायण) : (क) उत्तर प्रदेश में छोटी लाइनों नहीं हैं। किन्तु वहाँ 3252 कि० मी० लम्बी मीटर लाइनों का जाल बिछा है। उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य में 8759 कि० मी० रेलवे लाइनों में से, इस समय केवल 624 कि० मी० लम्बी मीटर लाइन का आमान-परिवर्तन करने का अनुमोदन कर दिया है, जिसमें से 326 कि० मी० पर यह कार्य पहले ही प्रगति पर है।

(ख) अस्थायी रूप में उत्तर प्रदेश में मीटर लाइन को बड़ी लाइन में बदलने के लिए छठी पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान 25 करोड़ रुपये खर्च करने का प्रस्ताव है। वशर्ते कि आमान परिवर्तन परियोजनाओं के लिए वित्तीय संसाधनों का पर्याप्त आवंटन किया जाय।

Burdwan Asansol a Suburban Section.

7782. SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to declare Burdwan to Asansol as a suburban section of Eastern Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN) : (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Representations have been recently received for introduction of E.M.U. services on Burdwan -Asansol section. This would require additional outlay in rolling stock and fixed installations and therefore, of necessity, has to wait in order of priority, in view of the constraint on resources.

Double decker train from Howrah to Asansol

7783. SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to introduce Double Decker Train from Howrah to Asansol; and

(b) if so, the approximate time by which this double decker train will be introduced ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN) : (a) & (b). Provision of 24 double decker coaches has been made in 1978-79. Rolling stock programme and these will be introduced on New Delhi-Meerut, Howrah-Asansol and Bombay-Surat sections in a phased manner.

Tree planted by and the house in which Mahatma Gandhi resided in Sri Lanka

7784. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the tree planted by Mahatma Gandhi in Sri Lanka when he visited that country is being preserved; and

(b) whether the house in which he resided then also preserved ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU) : (a) Yes, Sir. A horticulture expert from CPWD is being deputed to Sri Lanka under the ITEC Programme of Ministry of External Affairs to advise & assist the Sri Lanka authorities in preserving the tree.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Sri Lanka Government has acquired the property which is being converted into a Gandhi Memorial Museum and Library.

Payment of Provident Fund of Sick Mills

7785. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the Provident Fund to be paid in respect of sick mills taken over by N.T.C. and their departmental under takings till now; and

(b) the reason for not paying the Provident Fund ?