

"deep regret" to the High Commission of India over the incident on 9th February. It was further stated that the steps taken by the British Government would ensure that no such incident would occur again. The Ministry of External Affairs, which has been in touch with the British High Commission in New Delhi, has obtained assurances that this type of gynaecological test will not be resorted to in New Delhi.

Talks held with Sri Lanka Prime Minister

494. SHRI T. S. NEGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) is it a fact that the Prime Minister held official discussions with the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka on the 3rd February, 1979 at Kandy on domestic developments, and economic front; and

(b) if so, the conclusions reached therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): (a) and (b). During the Prime Ministers recent visit to Sri Lanka from February 3—6, he had a number of informal discussions with Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and other members of the Government. It was generally agreed that there was considerable scope for increasing cooperation between the two countries in a number of fields and that the two Governments would take such action as may be necessary by them to accelerate such cooperation.

Indian Workers laid off in Iran

495. SHRI S. R. DAMANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Indians who were employed by contractors in Iran were laid off; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government of India with regard to the payment of their dues and repatriation to homeland?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): (a) and (b). A number of Indian workers in the employment of various Iranian companies were laid off. In some cases the companies could not clear the outstanding amounts because of non-availability of funds. Some of these companies have prepared statements of outstanding amounts. Others are in the process of preparing statements of the outstanding dues for payment at a later date. The owners of some companies have left Iran. In all cases where payments to our workers have not been made, our Embassy will continue its efforts to seek satisfactory settlement of dues.

Our Mission took various steps to help Indian nationals in returning to India. The Embassy made arrangements with the Iranian Foreign Office and the Labour Ministry to get the Foreign Registration Bureau kept open even on holidays to procure exist permits for our workers. Extra flights were arranged through Air India. Arrangement was made to enable a number of workers to leave by road for Kabul and Kuwait. Such persons were given due assistance in obtaining visas and arranging onward flights by our respective Embassies. Wherever workers were in indigent circumstances, they were repatriated at government cost.

Training of Cadets by Shipping Corporation of India

496. SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Cadets who have completed the training in the Shipping Corporation of India in 1978; and

(b) how many of such cadets have left the Shipping Corporation of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHAND RAM): (a) 243.

(b) According to the records of the Shipping Corporation of India none of these Cadets have left the Corporation.

Konkan-Mangalore Railway

497. SHRI D. B. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Maharashtra have handed over the possession of the land required for the construction of Konkan-Mangalore Railway to the Union Government;

(b) what amount had been sanctioned in 1978-79 for the construction of Konkan-Mangalore Railway; and

(c) what amount has been spent by 31st January, 1979?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) Construction of only Apta-Roha line in Konkan area has so far been sanctioned. While the possession of land required between Apta and Pen has been taken, the land beyond Pen to Roha is likely to become available by March, 1979. The question of acquiring land beyond Roha does not arise at this stage.

(b) Outlay on Apta-Roha construction for the year 1978-79 is Rs. 1 crore.

(c) Approximately Rs. 20 lakhs.

Cooking of Non-Vegetarian Meals in Rajbhavan of Madras

498. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Tamil Nadu has forbidden cooking of non-vegetarian meals in Rajbhavan and foreign visitors are put in expensive hotels at considerable cost; and

(b) if so, the steps taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU):

(a) and (b). According to the information received from the Government of Tamil Nadu they have not issued any orders forbidding cooking of non-vegetarian meals at Raj Bhawan. (The Raj Bhawan Guest House is under the control of the Governor). So far as this Ministry is concerned as indicated in earlier Unstarred Question No. 1409 answered on 15th December, 1978 in Rajya Sabha, a convention has evolved on the basis of which we suggest to our Rajpals concerned that visiting VVIPs in particular such as Heads of State/Government on State/official visits may be accommodated in the respective Raj Bhawans. It may be added that a number of such foreign VVIPs have been thus accommodated and looked after in Raj Bhawan, Madras during the last two years.

Occasionally, however, bearing in mind the wishes or convenience of the VVIP visitor and the size of his party they have been accommodated in local hotels.

Wagons Held up in Various Zones

499. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of wagons are held-up in various Zones during the past six months causing bottleneck in supply of wagons for quick transport of goods; and

(b) if so, its nature and severity and details of immediate action taken and long term measures, operational, administrative, and legal proposed, if any, to remedy the "wagon hold-up"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) Yes.

(b) Due to unprecedented rains, floods and breaches during August, September and October 1978 in North-