

cially constituted for this purpose. Besides, the Central Government had appointed a Chief Engineer in 1965 to carry out the investigations and prepare a reliable estimate and a proper project report. Its examination and studies revealed that the project was technically feasible but the necessity and the justification for the project, which would have been the basis for an investment decision, could not be established. The subject has been considered afresh and it has been decided that the economics of the project made it unviable for implementation. The Tamil Nadu Government has been informed of the decision.

Communication with Bangladesh through Inland water transport

1384. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Bangladesh is ready to carry on dialogue with the Union Government to establish communication with India through Inland water transport system; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI BUTA SNGH):

(a) There is already a Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade signed by the Governments of India and Bangladesh under which river services are being operated between India and Bangladesh on the routes specified in the Protocol. This Ministry has not received any communication from the Government of Bangladesh for further dialogue in the matter.

(b) Does not arise.

Power supply affects coal loading

1385. SHRI K. PRADHANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that freight traffic movement in general and loading of coal in particular, continued to suffer in the eastern sector due to serious interruption in supply of power in that area;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that due to a sharp increase in supply of coal to thermal power stations, other industries are not getting their full supply; and

(c) if so, what efforts are being made by Railways to step up coal supply to the industries also with increased supply to power houses?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes,

(b) and (c) With the Increase in supply of coal to thermal power stations from earlier level of 2700-2800 wagons per day to 3200-3300 wagons per day there has been reduction in supply of coal to other Industries particularly from Bengal-Bihar fields. It is hoped that the position should improve with improvement in power supply position in the Eastern Sector.

Ordinance to ban strike by Hospital Employees

1386. KUMARI KAMLA KUMARI: Will the Minister of HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring legislation banning the hospital employees going on strikes; and

(b) if not, the details of steps to be taken to stop the strikes in hospitals for the protection of interests of the people?