

going to Dargah-Shariff could avail the railway facilities?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c). A survey was carried out in 1955 for constructing a railway line from Ajmer to Kota via Nasirabad and the report revealed that the project would not be a viable one. However, no survey has been undertaken to connect Nasirabad with Todarai Singh which is already linked to Jaipur by a metre gauge line.

Reservation of seats in K.K. Express

1413. SHRI T. R. SHAMANNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is considerable difficulty to get reservation of seats for passengers from Bangalore to Delhi and Bombay, particularly in the K. K. Express and Mahalakshmi Express; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to give relief to the travelling public?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, some difficulties are generally experienced.

(b) Number of coaches in 125/126 K.K. Express are proposed to be augmented by double-heading, sometime in early 1981, after improved couplings to locomotives and coaches have been developed and tested. The load of Broad gauge Mahalakshmi express has been augmented by one bogie from 1-11-80 between Kolhapur and Pune. Further augmentation of loads of both B.G. and M.G. trains will be considered when adequate resources become available.

New Restrictions by Kuwait Government

1414. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the new restrictions of the Kuwait Government not to permit any person earning with less than about Rs. 1,000 per month to keep his family at Kuwait;

(b) if so, the total number of families likely to be affected by this restriction; and

(c) the steps taken by the Indian Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) The Government of Kuwait, in April 1980, issued a regulation barring stay in Kuwait of immigrants' families with a monthly income of less than KD 400 (approximately Rs. 12,000/-). The regulation applies uniformly to all foreigners and is not directed against our particular nationality. One of the reasons which prompted the Kuwaiti authorities to take this step is the acute shortage of housing accommodation and consequent exorbitant rents. A worker earning less than KD 400 cannot afford proper accommodation for his family.

(b) This regulation is likely to affect a majority of the Indian community in Kuwait estimated at 80,000.

(c) While it is the sovereign right of any State to promulgate rules/regulations, the Indian Embassy in Kuwait have requested the Government of Kuwait that this regulation be made applicable to the families of those entering Kuwait after the promulgation of this regulation.

Memorandum from All India Railway Employees Confederation

1415. SHRI A.K. ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether All India Railway Employees' Confederation and Purba Railway Engineering Kamgarh Union (Cons.) Dhanbad have submitted several memorandum/representations regarding the long standing grievances of Construction staff to the Chief Engineer (Cons.) Eastern Railway Calcutta;

(b) if so, what are the grievances of these staff and the action taken by Railway Administration to resolve them; and

(c) the policy and programmes of Government for absorption of these Project labourers working since ten years or more in regular services?

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

(b) and (c). The grievances generally relate to improvements in service conditions of casual labour. Its Government's policy to mitigate the grievances. Further, casual labour is considered for absorption

against regular vacancies from time to time subject to the availability of the posts and rules governing such absorption.

Divisional Personnel Officers

1416. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the Divisions on the Northern Railway in which the posts of Divisional Personnel Officers have been upgraded to that of Senior Divisional Personnel Officers;

(b) the Divisions in which these incumbents have not so far been posted and the Divisional Personnel Officers who were not selected are continuing;

(c) the reasons for not posting the selected personnel against these posts of Senior Divisional Personnel Officers now that the initial Indian Railway Personnel Service has been constituted; and

(d) how long it will take to put in position the Senior Division Personnel Officers from the selected Lists in all the Divisions where such posts have been sanctioned?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) The posts of Divisional Personnel Officers have been upgraded to Senior Divisional Personnel Officers' grade in the following Divisions:

Allahabad, Delhi, Lucknow, Moradabad, Ferozepur, Bikaner and Jodhpur.

(b) Of these 7 upgraded posts, only two in Lucknow and Ferozepur Divisions are being operated in Senior Divisional Personnel Officers' Grade.

(c) Officers in the Indian Railways Personnel Service are not yet eligible for promotion in terms of Recruitment Rules framed in consultation with the UPSC.

(d) The next panel for this grade in the Indian Railway Personnel Service is expected to be formed in 1981.

Terrorism in Calcutta Port Area

1417. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the News item appearing

in Statesman dated the 20th August, 1980 that as a result of the terrorism of the Union Dadas, wagons are not loaded and rakes reach their destination half empty;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the gangsters freely loot the wagons to use the components as scrap and at present 3,500 wagons have been disabled by such 'Dadas' in the Calcutta Port area and the railways have refused to carry any more goods barring in a most essential case within port area;

(c) if so, what are the facts of the case and what loss is incurred by the Railways on this account every year; and

(d) what steps have been taken to put an end to this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). It is not a fact that 3,500 wagons have been disabled by the Union 'Dadas'. However, there have been spurt of thefts of wagons parts in the Port Trust Railway System, which is spread over a large area. As a result of this, the wagon balance in the port rose to 3,225 in July, 1980 including 1,625 damaged wagons. The high wagon balance was mainly to increase in the percentage of damaged wagons, inadequate supply of spares, limited capacity for repairing damaged wagons, pilferage of wagon parts from the port area etc. In view of the high wagon balance, Railways imposed partial restrictions on movement of wagons to Port. Due to the various remedial steps taken the position has since improved considerably and the balance of damaged wagons has also been reduced to 524. The total wagon balance has also reduced to about 1,900.

Loss incurred by the Railways on account of hold-up of wagons in the Port cannot be quantified.

(d) Several remedial steps including patrolling, deployment of additional contingent of armed constables etc. have been taken to avoid incidences of thefts in the Port area.

It has also been decided to hand-over the railway yards to the Central Industrial Security Force.

About 1000 sick wagons have been withdrawn by railways during the last 3½ months for servicing in the railway workshops and depots.