

The pillars and beams by the side of three windows were slightly damaged.

4. Coach No. 2806A.

There are no apparent signs of damage inside the coach.

Purulia-Kotshila line

445. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to convert Purulia-Kotshila narrow gauge line into broad gauge line;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c). The proposal for undertaking a preliminary engineering-cum-traffic survey for conversion of Purulia-Kotshila narrow gauge line into broad gauge in the next financial year is under active consideration.

Economic cooperation with Iran

446. SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI. Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what measures Government have taken in the recent months to improve economic relations with Iran, particularly in the wake of economic steps taken against Iran by some Western countries on the hostages issue; and

(b) what is the likely future of economic cooperation between India and Iran as release of hostages have taken place?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIV SHANKAR): (a) & (b). Efforts to strengthen bilateral economic relations between India and Iran are being made. The growth and develop-

ment of Indo-Iranian economic relations has nothing to do with any economic sanctions against Iran by anyone, or with the question of the now released hostages.

Commerce Minister of Iran visited India in June, 1980, and broad areas for economic cooperation between the two countries were then identified. Further exchange of delegation followed and recently Iran's Deputy Minister of Industry and Mines led a comprehensive and multi-sectoral Iranian economic and industrial delegation to the Engineering Trade Fair in New Delhi. There is better appreciation of the opportunities which exist for Indo-Iranian economic cooperation and the potential for its future development.

Increase in the incidents of Crimes in Trains

447. SHRI SUBHASH YADAV:
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:
SHRI HIRALAL R. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the incidents of railway accidents, derailments, looting in running trains; thefts in Railways have increased much;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) the total number of passengers killed and injured as a result of the above incidents during 1980-81 upto 31st January, 1981; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to check these incidents to save life and property of passengers and Government property and ensure safe rail travel?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There has been some increase in the incidence of robberies and dacoities in trains, but occurrences of thefts of passengers' luggage have shown a decrease.