

passenger loco and 2 freight locos were also ordered to act as bank of spares. Their haulage capacity is as below

Passenger Locomotives

26 coaches at 120Km/h: or

18 coaches at 160 Km/h

Freight Locomotives

4700 Tonne at 100 Km/h on level: or

4700 Tonne at 53 Km/h on 1:200 gradient

(d) The contract for the Transfer of Technology will spread over a period of ten years and would be completed by 2004. The indigenous manufacture of high horse power electric locomotives is planned at Indian Railways' Unit, Viz., Chittaranjan Locomotive Works as under :

1997-98	- 10 locomotives
1998-99	- 30 locomotives (Tentative)
1999-2000	- 50 locomotives (Tentative)

Welfare Scheme for Agricultural Labourers

*416. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the welfare schemes approved by the Union Government for agricultural labourers in Delhi and other States during each of the last three years, and the current financial year so far;

(b) the extent to which the agricultural labourers have been benefited by these schemes;

(c) the amount allocated for the purpose during the above period;

(d) whether the Government propose to take some more steps in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c). A statement is attached.

(d) and (e). The Government are considering enactment of a comprehensive legislation to regulate employment and conditions of service and to provide for welfare of agricultural workers.

STATEMENT

There are no welfare schemes approved by the Union Government only for the agricultural workers of Delhi as such. However, some of major schemes undertaken for the welfare of rural population below poverty line, including agricultural workers under special

employment and poverty alleviation programmes include :

(i) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided for acquiring income generating assets, comprising of a varying mix of subsidies and term credit at differential rates for small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans with special provision for SC/STs and women. Number of families assisted under the scheme upto October, 1996 is 615166. Total funds allocated during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 were 1098.22 crores, 1097.21 crores and 1097.21 crores respectively.

(ii) Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (JRY) -

This scheme aims at generation of additional gainful employment and creation of productive community assets. Employment generation under the scheme during 1996-97 (Upto October, 1996) was 1656-46 lakh mandays. Funds allocated during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 were Rs. 2800 crores, Rs. 3240 crores and 2236.79 crores respectively. This schemes has been intensified in 120 backward districts of the country where there is concentration of unemployment and underemployment.

(iii) Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) -

On 2nd October, 1993, a new scheme known as 'Employment Assurance Scheme' was launched in 1752 identified backward blocks throughout the country which seeks to provide assured wage employment of 100 days of unskilled manual work in lean agricultural season. The scheme mainly benefits agricultural workers. This scheme has since been extended to 3206 blocks. No targets are fixed under this scheme. Number of persons registered upto October, 1996 since beginning under this scheme is 22325379. Employment generated under this scheme upto October, 1996 is 1347.16 lakh mandays. Allocation of funds for the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 was Rs. 1200 crores, Rs. 1278.09 crores and Rs. 777.37 crores respectively.

(iv) Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) -

A scheme known as Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) was launched in 1982-83 for bringing about economic and social upliftment of rural women belonging to families below the poverty line using a group approach for taking up income generating activities suited to their skills and aptitude. The scheme operates in conjunction with IRDP and Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM).

(v) National Social Assistance Scheme (NSAS) -

The Government of India have announced a NSA Scheme for the poor. This contemplates old age pension

@ Rs. 75/- p.m. to destitute persons over 65 years of age, lump-sum family benefit of Rs. 5000/- and Rs. 10000/- respectively to the families for natural death and accidental death of the primary bread winner and maternity benefit of Rs. 300/- per pregnancy for two live births. The scheme is expected to benefit 5.3 million, 3.5 lakh beneficiaries and 4.5 lakh women workers respectively.

In addition to the above, the Central and the various State Governments have taken up several Insurance and Social Security Schemes like Rural Group Life Insurance Scheme, Group Insurance Scheme for Landless Agricultural Labourers in 1987 under the Social Security Fund of the LIC for providing insurance cover to all landless agricultural labourers in the age group of 18-60 years and the insurance schemes for IRDP beneficiaries in 1988. Besides, State Governments are running old age pension schemes with varying eligibility criteria and pension rates.

[Translation]

Necessity of English in Entrance Examination

*417. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the medium of entrance examination for courses in Railway Engineering and other trades organised by railways is English;

(b) if so, the names of training and educational institutions and examinations for jobs for which English as a subject is compulsory; and

(c) the hurdles is removing compulsion of English language in all training and educational institutions and entrance examinations for jobs held by his Ministry along with other places where it is compulsory?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PAWAN) : (a) to (c). No Sir, Indian Railways do not conduct entrance examination for such Courses. However, for recruitment to Group 'A' posts, examinations are conducted by Union Public Service Commission.

Question papers of examinations for jobs conducted through Railway Recruitment Boards for Group 'C' posts are set in bilingual form i.e. English and Hindi. Progressively, in a phased manner, the questions in General English are now asked with questions in Hindi of equivalent marks with option to attempt either of the two. This system has been introduced for 30 categories. The possibility of extending this scheme to another 35 categories is being explored. In the next phase other categories will be considered except in case of posts where knowledge of English is considered necessary e.g. English Teacher, English Stenographer etc.

For examinations for jobs in Railways, English as a subject is not compulsory in training and educational institutions.

[English]

Fibre Optic System

*418. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI :
PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal for linking all major cities along the coast with a submarine fibre optic system for high quality telecommunication network;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted to know the cost effectiveness of such project, vis-a-vis current long distance DOT network;

(d) whether such super information system will also be extended to cities of the Gangetic plains to achieve the objectives of the Indian Telecom Policy;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. A proposal was received from VSNL during 1994 for a project named "JALMALA" which was for providing connectivity to 26 Stations around the coast of peninsular India starting from Bhavnagar in Gujarat to Calcutta. The proposal was laying a submarine optic fibre cable for a total distance of 4800 kms with a 2+1 system of 2.5 Gbps having a channel capacity of 60000 circuits and with a total cost of Rs. 760 crores.

(c) The estimated cost per km in this project works out to approximately 3 times the cost of current long distance DOT optical fibre projects.

(d) to (f). There was no proposal from VSNL to extend this project to cities of gangetic plains. However, DOT has planned very high capacity optical fibre networks to link all the major cities proposed in the above project as well as the cities in the Gangetic plains. The details of the 10 projects planned by DOT are furnished in the enclosed Statement.

STATEMENT

*Details of 10 High Capacity Projects
Planned by DOT.*

1. ND-Ambala-Chandigarh-Ludhiana-Jalandhar-Bhatinda-ND STM-16 Ring
2. ND-Moradabad-Lucknow-Varanasi-Allahabad-Kanpur-Agra-ND STM-16 Ring
3. Cal-Patna-Varanasi-Ranchi-Calcutta-STM-16 Ring
4. ND-Agra-Bhopal-Indore-Jaipur-ND- STM-16 Ring
5. Mumbai-Indore-Ahmedabad-Mumbai STM-16 Ring