

AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) to (d). Information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Overage Locomotives

4328. SHRI M. MEGHACHANDRA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Kunzru Committee in 1963 drew attention to the extensive use of overage locomotives on some Railways ;

(b) whether the Wanchoo Committee also suggests that the position is virtually unchanged and that at the end of March, 1968 all locomotives on the Northeast Frontier Railway were overage; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to meet the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : (a) Yes.

(b) The Wanchoo Committee has observed that the number of overaged locomotives on the Broad Gauge and Metre Gauge has reduced, since the publication of the Kunzru Committee Report. The Committee has, however, observed that the number of overaged locomotives on the Narrow Gauge have increased on all Railways except Northern Railway. All the locomotives on the Narrow Gauge section of Northeast-Frontier Railway were overaged at the end of March, 1968.

(c) For assessing the replacement requirement, the age of steam locos is taken as 40 years. Actual withdrawal of overaged locomotives is however done on condition basis and only when the locomotive becomes uneconomical to maintain and inefficient to operate. The locomotives on the Narrow Gauge sections are not as intensively utilised as locomotives on the Broad Gauge and Metre Gauge sections. It is, therefore, possible to keep the Narrow Gauge locomotives in service for longer periods.

The future of most of the Narrow Gauge sections is uncertain. The replacement of

overaged stock on Narrow Gauge section is, therefore, being done on *ad hoc* basis and these replacements are mainly confined to those sections which have been decided to be retained as Narrow Gauge.

Railway Zones

4329. SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons why, when Railway Zones are bifurcated and a separate Zone is formed to meet the demands of one State, similar zones are not formed for other States;

(b) whether Railways have opened special offices at Bhopal like those at Ahmedabad; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : (a) New railway zones are formed on grounds of administrative and operational requirements and not on provincial considerations.

(b) There is an organisation at Bhopal headed by an Area Officer in the Senior Scale.

(c) Does not arise.

Claim Cases Pending on Railways

4330. SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of claim cases pending payment on Indian Railways, year-wise, for the last 3 years and for each Zone separately;

(b) whether the Railway Board issued any directive in 1968 regarding claim cases if so, its details;

(c) how far the above directive has been complied with;

(d) the reasons why claims are not settled and people go to court, get decrees

and Railway has to pay court costs and at times interest also; and

(c) action taken or proposed to be taken against officers responsible for the above ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : (a) A statement showing, Railway-wise, the number of claims cases awaiting settlement as on 31st March, 1966, 31st March 1967, and 31st March 1968, is given in the Statement Annexure "A". Laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-495/69].

(b) Directives regarding various aspects of claims settlement are issued from time to time. An account of the directives which were issued in 1968 and which appear relevant, looking to part (a) of the Question, is given in the statement Annexure "B" Laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-495/69].

(c) As would be noticed from the gist of these directives, as shown in the statement attached, one of them stressed the importance of claims prevention and two others called upon the Railways to ensure quick settlement of claims. It would be virtually impossible to quantify the action taken by the railway administrations and say to what extent these directives are being complied with.

The fourth directive required the Railways to make a survey with regard to possible collusion between railway staff and traders and the railways are progressing action.

(d) Claims for compensation are carefully examined in the light of the facts of the case and the Railways' liability under the law. Some cases are taken to the court either because the railway administration have for some reason, not been able to take a final decision within the period of limitation for filing of suits or the claimant is not satisfied with the decision taken. Some of those cases are decreed against the Railway. But cases going to the court are a small proportion of the total number of claims dealt with by the Railways and it is not as if every case taken to the court is

decided against the Railways. For instance, in 1967-68, the total number of claims settled on the Indian Railways was 7,21,090, the number of cases that went to court, 30,241 and the number of decreed against the Railways, 2,990.

(e) Cases decreed against the railway are required to be scrutinised at appropriate levels to see whether there was any lapse in dealing with them departmentally or in presenting them in court properly and where any individual responsibility can be determined action as warranted is taken.

Upgrading of Posts on Indian Railways

4331. **SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHRY :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the number of posts carrying salary above Rs. 700/- p. m. have been or are being upgraded on Indian Railways; and

(b) the reasons for this and excess annual expenditure that would be involved ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : (a) 254 Gazetted posts carrying salary of over Rs. 700/- per month have been upgraded.

(b) The upgradations have been made after taking into account the increase in the volume of work and responsibility shouldered by the officers. The extra annual expenditure will be about Rs. 12 lakhs.

Direct Trains between Lucknow and Bombay

4332. **SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal to run direct trains between Lucknow and Bombay was considered; and

(b) if so, when and with what results ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : (a) and (b). The proposal for introduction of a direct train