

(a) whether his Ministry had permitted Indian Airlines Corporation to operate on some of the Gulf routes some times back;

(b) If so, the details thereof and the reasons for allowing Indian Airlines to operate on these routes;

(c) whether the Air India has recently demanded return of the Gulf routes to it;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the decision taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) and (b) Prior to 1993, Indian Airlines were only operating services to Sharjah in the Gulf Region. In 1993 they were permitted to expand their operations to Gulf for the following reasons :-

(i) to commence direct operations from interior points of India for passenger convenience. Only Indian Airlines have the suitable aircraft type for these services.

(ii) to tide over the financial problems due to grounding of Airbus 320 and merger of Vayudoot with Indian Airlines.

(c) to (e) : Due to its deteriorating financial condition, Air India has been representing that the Gulf routes which are the most profitable routes in its network should remain entirely with it. A Sub-Committee of the Board of Air India has been set up to give its recommendations on route rationalisation between Air India and Indian Airlines.

Gauge Conversion

318. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the draft of the Ninth Five Year Plan document has proposed to convert the meter gauge lines into broad Gauge;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the meter gauge lines from Muthked to Nizamabad and Bollaram to Nizamabad have been included in the draft; and

(d) if not, reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) Railways will continue with the policy of unigauge during the 9th Plan.

(b) Out of about 20,790 kms of MG and NG network left at the end of the VIII Plan, about 6200 kms have been planned to converted to BG during 9th Plan.

(c) Conversion of MG lines from Nizamabad to

Mudkhed and from Bolaram to Nizambad are sanctioned works included in the Railway Budget.

(d) Does not arise.

Expansion and Modification of Calicut Airport

319. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the proposals for the expansion/modification of Calicut Airport;

(b) the details of survey work completed for the extension of Calicut Airport; and

(c) the allocations made so far for the extension of runway and for other expansion schemes during 1997-98 ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) AAI has commissioned a separate international terminal block having all modern facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 6 crores to cater to the needs of 200 incoming and 200 outgoing international passengers. The old terminal building has been modified to serve as a temporary cargo complex at the cost of Rs. 80.68 lakhs.

(b) AAI has taken up the work of strengthening and extension of existing runway towards the eastern side at an estimated cost of Rs. 102.80 crores for operation of AB-300 type of aircraft. The work is expected to be completed by January, 2000.

(c) Rs. 12 crores.

[Translation]

Introduction of Trains

320. Er. SHANKAR PANNU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce a train from Anupgarh to Delhi via Suratgarh, Hanumangarh, Bhatinda;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be introduced;

(c) whether there is any proposal to extend the Mumbai-Bikaner train upto Bhatinda;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise

(e) There is no regular train between Mumbai & Bikaner. However, a bi-weekly Summer Special train is being run between Bandra & Bikaner upto 29th June '98.

[English]

Gauge Conversion between Makum and Dangori

321. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gauge conversion of railway line from Makum to Dangori in Tinsukia district of Assam has been sanctioned;

(b) if so, the time of which the work is likely to be undertaken;

(c) the present status of the gauge conversion of Rangla-Murkong Selek section of the North-East Frontier Railway; and

(d) the reasons for delay if any ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Programme for execution of the work has not yet been finalised.

(c) The survey for gauge conversion of Rangla-Murkong Selek has been taken up.

(d) There has been no delay. The section is 532 kms. long and survey work will take more time in view of the work involved. The surveys expected to be completed during the financial year 1998-99.

Extra Rush of Passengers

322. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken adequate steps to meet the extra rush of passengers during the current summer season;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the further steps are being taken up to meet the extra rush ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) On 38 Routes, 1950 trains are being run.

Besides, loads of about 75 pairs of trains have been augmented to cater to the extra rush of traffic.

[Translation]

The Expansion of BALCO

323. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount collected by BALCO, at Korba so far in the name of expansion and modernisation;

(b) whether these amounts have been collected illegally and there has also been large scale misappropriation in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of the complaints received by the Government in this regard and the action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) to (d) The smelter of Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd. (BALCO) at Korba is based on the process know-how of the late sixties and is faced with problems of low productivity, higher consumption, of inputs resulting in higher production costs. An Enquiry Committee was constituted by the Ministry of Mines to look into the award of contract for modernisation of BALCO's smelter at Korba. The Committee submitted its Report on 3.12.1996. The Report reveals that the guidelines given in the tender notice were not specific enough as the tender noticed did not contain specific details of work, the exact scope of work, etc. In view of the serious lapses pointed out in the report, the matter was referred to the CBI on 13.6.1997 for detailed investigations and to fix responsibility.

[English]

Survey for Pune-Nasik Railway Line

324. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :
SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the survey for construction of Pune-Nasik Railway line has been conducted during 1995-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the construction work has been started;

(d) if so, the present position of the work;

(e) if not, the reasons for delay in starting the construction work; and

(f) the time by which construction work is likely to be started ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF