

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) Government has seen the news-item appearing in the Times of India dated 22.3.1999 under the caption "China denies posing threat to India, calls for dialogue".

Government seeks friendly, co-operative, good neighbourly and mutually beneficial relationship with China on the basis of Panchsheel. India remains committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences. Efforts to improve bilateral relations in diverse fields are continuing. Further, trade and economic activities, people to people and functional exchanges are continuing.

India and China held the first Foreign Office Consultations on 25th to 26th February, 1999 under the Protocol of Co-operation between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries signed in 1997. The two sides agreed that they would take a positive and forward-looking approach and also agreed on continuation of the dialogue at various levels.

[Translation]

4-40 *Dis-abled*
Employment to Handicapped Persons

3509. SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the number of unemployed handicapped persons is constantly going up;

(b) if so, the number of unemployed handicapped persons in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh;

(c) since when they have got their names registered in the Employment Exchanges; and

(d) the number of such persons provided with jobs by the Employment Exchanges during 1998?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) and (b) The number of handicapped job-seekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, on the Live Register of Employment at the end of 1993, 1994, 1995 & 1996 (latest available) is as indicated below :

(in thousands)

	All India (as on 31st December)	Delhi	Uttar Pradesh
1993	337.6	5.2	25.6
1994	340.3	5.6	25.2
1995	352.7	5.6	23.7
1996	359.1	5.9	24.0

(c) Information in regard to job-seeker's length of stay on the Live Register is not maintained.

(d) The number of handicapped persons placed in Employment through Employment Exchanges during 1996 was about 3,900.

[English]

40
Privatisation of Railway Service Sector

3510. SHRI C.P. M. GIRIYAPPA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to privatise some of its service sectors related to the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith norms and condition thereof;

(c) the extent to which the Railways are likely to be benefitted by this privatisation;

(d) whether some employees' Unions have shown their protest on the decision of privatisation;

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(f) whether the works other than service sector are being privatised by Railways; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

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) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

(e) to (g) No, Sir. However on the basis of global bids invited in 1994, letter of intent has been awarded to M/s Sterling Holiday Resorts (India) Ltd. Chennai, for ownership, marketing, and management of tourist trains on the following sectors :

- (1) Delhi-Jaipur-Agra-Gwalior-Jhansi (Khajuraho)-Varanasi-Lucknow-Delhi.
- (2) Bangalore-Mysore-Chennai-Kodaikanalroad-Kanyakumari-Trivandrum-Cochin-Mettupalayam (Ooty)-Bangalore.

As per the agreement the operator will pay haulage charges and a certain percentage of gross turnover to the Indian Railways. Capital investment on the train will be borne by the operator.

40-41 *Radio*
Transmission of F.M. Station, Cochin

3511. SHRI GEORGE EDEN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the morning transmission of the F.M. station at Cochin has stopped recently;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken to re-start the morning transmission of Cochin F.M. station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Morning transmission has been stopped with effect from 27.2.99 due to extreme shortage of staff.

(c) The morning transmission can be restarted immediately after the receipt of sanction for additional posts.

[Translation]

41

Defence

Submarine Scam

3512. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the German Government have sought any clarification from the Union Government regarding submarine scam;

(b) if so, whether said clarification has since been given; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, sir, in the case of purchase of HDW submarines, CBI had sent Letters Rogatory to Federal Republic of Germany in January 1998. In response the German authorities have sought certain clarifications.

(b) and (c) The clarifications sought are being examined by CBI and a suitable reply would be sent to the German authorities shortly.

[English]

41-42

Improvement In FPI

3513. SHRI T.R. BAALU : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a High Powered Committee to study and advise for the development of the food processing industries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) While there is no proposal to set up a High Powered Committee, two Development Councils have already been constituted in connection with the development of Food Processing Industries. These are :

1. Development Council for Processed Fruits & Vegetables, Cereal Products and Beverages.
2. Development Council for Dairy Products, Marine Products and Meat & Poultry Products.

Planning of EPF for PAN

3514. SHRI R.S. GAVAI : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Employees Provident Fund Organisation is planning to introduce PAN for all its members;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Employees Provident Fund Organisation has started the computerisation of all information;

(d) if so, the progress made in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) and (b) The Central Board of Trustees, EPF has since decided to issue photo Identity Cards alongwith Permanent EPF number to the EPF subscribers.

(c) to (e) The Computerisation Programme was initially launched in the EPFO in 1989-90 with establishment of two EDP centres. So far EDP centres have been set up in 98 fields offices of the EPFO. Computers are being used for maintenance of PF accounts, preparation of annual statement of accounts, accounting of money received from the employers, redressal of public grievances, generation of pension payment orders (PPOs) etc.

SC/ST Officers in EPF Organisation

3515. SHRI JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of SC/ST officers working in Employees Provident Fund Organisation;

(b) whether any complaint against the Central Provident Fund Commissioner has been received