

(b) if so, the salient features of the new sports channel;

(c) whether the Government propose to start any training programme for the sport commentary on Doordarshan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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. To cater to the interest of millions of sports lovers in India and abroad, Doordarshan launched a dedicated 'Sports Channel' on 18.03.1999. The duration of transmission which was initially for six hours has been increased to 12 hours daily w.e.f. 25.3.99. The channel which is operating from PAS-4 satellite having footprints in 34 countries of Middle-East, CIS and Neighbouring Region, European Region and African Region will be devoted to various disciplines of sports with stress on Indian sports events, indigenous games, rural sports etc.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

65-66

Doubling of Malda-New Jalpaiguri-New Coochbehar-New Bongaigaon Railway Line

3535. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of requests received by Railways from MPs for doubling of Malda-New Jalpaiguri-New Coochbehar-New Bongaigaon-Guwahati Broad Gauge Line during the last three years; and

(b) the action taken thereon?

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) A number of requests have been received, including repetitive ones, during the last 3 years from various Members of Parliament. Very often, letters from Hon'ble Members of Parliament refer to several projects. Each request received from an Hon'ble Member of Parliament is dealt individually and due consideration is given to it. However, consolidated project-wise record of such representations is not maintained.

(b) The requests have already been acceded to. The doubling of Malda-New Jalpaiguri section has been completed except for a short stretch between

Dalkhola and Kishanganj, where the work is in progress and would be completed by March, 2000.

The gauge conversion of New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri-New Bongaigaon has been taken up. Once this line is converted to broad gauge, we will have a double line between New Jalpaiguri and New Bongaigaon. The work of gauge conversion of this line is planned to be completed during 9th Plan period depending upon availability of resources.

Between New Bongaigaon-Guwahati, a new BG line via Jogighopa is under construction and will be completed later this year. With this 2 lines which will serve the purpose of doubling will become available between these points.

[Translation]

6-6 Bihar, Labour

Violation of Minimum Wages In Granite Mine

3536. SHRI SOM MARANDI : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the private owners of black granite mine of Pakur (Bihar) are not following the safety rules and giving minimum wages to their workers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the mine owners do not attend the meeting called by Labour Commissioner to dispose off the matters relating to labour disputes; and

(d) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) to (d) The information is not readily available. The same is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

66-67

Railways

Appointment of Rail Traveller Service Agents

3537. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Mugal Sarai division of the Eastern Railway had given an advertisement in 'Hindustan' dated May 11, 1998 with regard to the appointment of two Railway Traveller Service Agents at Mugal Sarai and three at Gaya;

(b) if so, the eligibility criteria fixed by the Eastern Railway in this regard;

(c) whether the then senior R.C.M. had appointed the agents at Gaya in a hurry just before his transfer;

(d) if so, whether the appointed agents at Gaya fulfilled all the conditions, those laid down under rule 4 for getting licence; and