

accidents take place due to deliberate errors, therefore, I would like to know from him as to what action the Government have taken in the matter of accidents took place due to deliberate errors?

[English]

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : It is a suicide mentality!

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : I do not call it a suicide mentality. I call it a misadventure mentality.

Regarding all this and especially regarding the human errors, I will be placing a statement before the House.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know that my question may not be strictly within the purview of the main question . . . (Interruptions) I am afraid that of the corrective measures he has taken, it appears that suspension of the route itself is one such measure. Suppose some air crash takes place in a particular route. They will withdraw the operation in that very route. Why I am telling is that for the last six months, after the crash of the aircraft, I personally have this experience. That is why, Sir, with your permission, I am asking him what is the reason for this. Mr. Minister, have you got the Inquiry Report about the crash that had taken place in Cochin? When are you going to resume the operation? I want to know about this. Please commit it on the floor of the House.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : I understand the feelings and concerns of my senior Member Shri P.M. Sayeed. The thing is that there was a Dornier flight between Cochin and Lakshadweep. There was a bad crash about four months back. A Commission of Inquiry was set up. It has given a report. Corrective measures have been taken. The Action Taken Report has also been accepted by the Government of India. I also understand and appreciate that we need a service to that island place. We are vigorously considering it. As soon as the Dorniers are available to us, we will consider it because they are operating in the North-East. We have to connect the inaccessible regions by the Dorniers. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI P.M. SAYEED : This is not an inaccessible region. When are you going to do it? . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : It is. I am accepting the need of it. Therefore, I vigorously consider the suggestion made by the hon. Member.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : The hon. Minister in his answer has said that steps are being taken for introducing additional safety guidelines etc. etc. I would like to know whether it has been brought to his attention that in the Delhi Airport, the control tower which was built sometime ago is still not being commissioned and the pilots are complaining that they are having a great deal of difficulty in making the landings and take-off. If one were

to talk about human error, if the technology minimising that human error is not being put into operation, then why should one blame the pilot? So, I would like to know whether he is aware that the control tower that has been built at the Delhi Airport and instruments that have been put in place are still not operational.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : The hon. Member is speaking about modernisation of air traffic systems between Mumbai and Delhi, MAX-BD. Regarding secondary surveillance radars also, already we have got eight secondary surveillance radars in the country which are giving very good service and the ninth one will be commissioned shortly within the next three months in Nagpur, the major air traffic intersection.

Regarding Delhi, I am happy to inform the House that we will be commissioning the MAX-BD, the modernisation of air traffic system which includes SSRs and ILS by first or second week of January.

Expenditure on Publicity

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

- (a) whether the Railways have been incurring huge expenditure on publicity;
- (b) if so, the details thereof for each of the last three years and current financial year, zone-wise;
- (c) whether the Government propose to bring down this expenditure in future; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken by the government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

- (a) No, Sir.
- (b) Details are given in the enclosed Annexure.
- (c) and (d) Release of Railway advertisements are being normally restricted to only publications having DAVP rates which are much lower than the commercial rates of advertisements. Moreover, apart from the statutory tender advertisements, Railway advertisements are restricted to only occasions requiring determination of rail user related information on new projects, services, facilities and generating public awareness towards safety measures etc. in rail travel. To contain expenditure on publicity, actions have been taken to restrict release of full-page advertisements to only occasions of major events having national relevance and in such cases also restrict the number of newspapers.

Annexure
Expenditure Incurred on Publicity (Advertisement) By Zonal Railways
(Figures in Rupees)

Railway	Type of Advt.	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (Upto 31.10.98)
Central	Tender (Statutory)	1,57,41,546	1,96,59,522	2,35,63,779	1,52,62,575
	Display (Publicity)	58,46,518	69,44,405	81,36,990	46,19,502
	Total	2,15,88,064	2,66,03,927	3,17,00,769	1,98,82,077
Eastern	Tender (Statutory)	3,98,88,983	4,10,88,161	3,13,20,077	1,21,25,521
	Display (Publicity)	1,05,32,331	1,08,78,691	67,96,089	18,95,235
	Total	5,04,21,314	5,19,66,852	3,81,16,166	1,40,20,756
Northern	Tender (Statutory)	1,86,15,441	1,87,80,125	3,36,31,596	2,84,97,819
	Display (Publicity)	61,78,850	1,32,85,731	1,31,04,481	54,52,282
	Total	2,47,94,291	3,20,65,856	4,67,36,077	3,39,50,101
North Eastern	Tender (Statutory)	1,74,35,380	1,59,08,019	1,66,59,642	67,29,719
	Display (Publicity)	05,52,309	1,38,08,505	47,12,034	31,243
	Total	1,79,87,689	2,97,16,524	2,13,71,676	67,60,962
Northeast Frontier	Tender (Statutory)	41,60,545	78,71,784	77,14,950	62,14,564
	Display (Publicity)	05,11,858	15,83,586	23,35,870	13,92,970
	Total	46,72,403	94,55,640	1,00,50,820	76,07,534
Southern	Tender (Statutory)	1,98,79,300	2,02,02,657	3,39,93,783	2,72,16,400
	Display (Publicity)	33,52,478	98,28,284	48,37,057	37,77,057
	Total	2,32,31,778	3,00,30,941	3,88,30,840	3,09,93,457
South Central	Tender (Statutory)	N/A	85,00,000	1,12,00,000	54,00,000
	Display (Publicity)	N/A	27,00,000	07,00,000	02,53,000
	Total	1,96,00,000	1,12,00,000	1,19,00,000	56,53,000
South Eastern	Tender (Statutory)	1,67,90,981	1,92,08,938	1,19,36,598	71,32,692
	Display (Publicity)	39,42,535	17,82,351	28,44,944	17,13,501
	Total	2,06,62,516	2,09,91,287	1,47,81,542	88,46,193
Western	Tender (Statutory)	62,27,772	51,63,520	71,12,683	56,94,074
	Display (Publicity)	07,14,564	15,33,611	21,03,773	03,87,815
	Total	69,42,336	66,97,131	92,16,456	60,81,889
Metro Railway, Calcutta	Tender (Statutory)	09,26,153	05,54,928	09,28,800	14,64,208
	Display (Publicity)	20,13,487	10,08,684	10,24,000	03,17,682
	Total	29,39,640	15,63,000	19,52,800	17,81,890
Total For All Zonal Rlys. And Metro Rly. Cal	Tender (Statutory)	13,95,95,101*	15,69,37,652	17,80,61,908	11,57,37,572
	Display (Publicity)	3,36,44,930*	6,33,54,118	4,65,95,238	1,98,40,287
	Total	19,28,40,031	22,02,91,770	22,46,57,146	13,55,77,859

*S.C. Railway Figure not included.

SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Sir, the hon. Minister has given a statement about the expenditure incurred on advertisement. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any discrimination has been made between the local vernacular dailies and the national dailies while issuing the advertisement in the newspapers for certain projects.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : No discrimination is made between them. What ever is required by Zonal Railways and where ever the advertisement are to be placed. There are two types of advertisement, one is statutory advertisement, regarding tender etc. and the other one is the display advertisement, which have already been classified discrimination is made between them. Normally, the advertisements are given on the D.A.V.P. rates.

[English]

SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : During the last visit of the hon. Minister to Assam for the inauguration of a certain project in the North-Eastern States, no advertisement came out in the local vernacular dailies in Assam. While the advertisement was given to the national dailies, no vernacular daily had received any advertisement from the Railway Department. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of the fact that the local vernacular dailies have been neglected while issuing the advertisement.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : The Hon'ble Member is citing a specific example, we would enquire about that, Based on the information, I have got with me, I have reviewed it and I have got this information that no discrimination has been made between them. If there is any complaint about discrimination, the matter will be probed. Advertisements should come out in local vernacular dailies also.

[English]

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR : Hon. Speaker, Sir, it appears from the statement that has been provided by the hon. Railway Minister that a sum of Rs. 17 crore was incurred as expenditure on advertisement display. On the one hand, many of the schemes are starved of funds because of lack of resources. On the other hand, there is an expenditure on advertisement display and full page display is being used in the shape of news. These are routine things and there is nothing special about it. But, according to me, it is for the ago satisfaction of the Minister and the Zonal Managers. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : What is your supplementary?

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR : I am just coming to that in a minute. My question is in two parts. One is, what is the allocation for the advertisement display? Second, does the Minister not think that this fund can be better utilised for certain specific schemes of the Railways, particularly in respect of safety measures which are being starved of fund allocation?

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : The hon. Member has furnished the figures of Rs. 17 crore spent on advertisement display. It is not authentic. These figures are of last three years and those of upto 31st October of this year. It has been given in your appendix.

[English]

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR : If you add the figures, the total comes to Rs. 17 crore.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : You look into this carefully. As far as 1995-96 is concerned that is the statutory advertisements about the tender etc., the total expenditure of that is Rs. 13,95,95,101 and Rs. 3,36,44,930 of display publicity in which the figures of South Central Railway are not included. Thus an amount of around Rs. 19 crore was spent on this. The expenditure made on next year and in the year 1997 amounts to be about Rs. 22 crore was spent. This year till now an amount of Rs. 13 crore has been spent in which Rs. 1 crore 98 lakh 40 thousand and 287 was for display and publicity. The information about safety, and the movement of trains is given in this. As far as inauguration and functions are concerned, the instructions have already been issued in this connection, which are followed. Can you please give me any example of advertisements of inauguration covering the full page during our rule, can you please give any example, except Konkan Railway about which publicity was made as to what has been achieved by our engineers. Its special information was given in a full and half pages, besides that if you cite any single example, we will take action immediately.

The directions were issued soon after our Government resumed the office and the substantial deduction have been made and the austerity is going up. As far as the full page tender advertisement is concerned there is statutory requirement of full page tender. They are bound to give them publicity, that is legal requirement. In Eastern Railway, in South-Eastern Railway and in Northern Railway it has been decided that there fourths of advertisement are given in a day, information regarding our tender is given therein. One fourth free space is

provided therein. The concerned Railways give their advertisement regarding these activities.

The one fourth free space is covered regarding the activities of the concerned Railways. I have decided about that half of the one fourth i.e. in 1/8th page, the Zonal Railway will give their information and at the level of Railway Board, the required information would be provided to the people. Please cite an example, or any information, we will take action immediately. This amount is reducing, the rates of D.A.V.P. have increased about 20 to 30 percent. Have a glance at the expenditure amount after that time period and have a glance at the transparency.

Closure of Mini Steel Plants

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*166. SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY :
SHRI SUNIL KHAN :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mini-steel plants closed during the last three years and in current financial year alongwith the reasons therefor;

(b) the total number of workers rendered jobless due to closures;

(c) total production affected by the closure of above plants; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for their revival?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Statement

Closure of Mini Steel Plants

(a) As per available information, details of Electric Arc Furnace (Mini-Steel Plants) units closed during the last three years and in current financial year are as under :

Year	No. of Units Closed
1995-96	4
1996-97	15
1997-98	25
1998-99	7

(Total number of closed Electric Arc Furnace units as on 31.10.98 is reportedly 143).

The performance of these units has been adversely affected due to various reasons such as high power tariffs, poor quality; rising input costs; uneconomic production capacities; outdated technology; labour; financial and managerial problems; and demand slow down.

(b) The total number of workers rendered jobless due to closures is estimated to be around 34,000.

(c) The closed units represent on aggregate capacity of nearly 5.3 million tonnes per annum.

(d) Under the extant industrial policy, the Iron & Steel Industry has been completely liberalized. Market conditions therefore determine the viability of any unit. In case of sickness, Government provides the institutional mechanism of BIFR for considering revival option.

SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY : I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has come forward to revive all these sick mini-steel industries through the BIFR or from the its end. I also wanted to know whether the Government has any intention to give subsidy to these industries to compete in the Indian market economy.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH BAIS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the electric arc furnace units have been installed long ago. These units were installed in 1991 under Free licencing policy. The present government have a clear cut policy in this regard. At present, the govt. do not have the latest figures regarding the closed units so that an appropriate action may be taken in this regard . . . (Interruptions)

The Government do not have the latest figures of those units which have been installed after the declaration of the free licencing policy. As per the information available with us, the number of units closed in 1995-96 were 4, 15 in 1996-97 and 7 in 1998-99.

In all 143 units were closed till date. The factors responsible for the closure of these units are increase in power tariff, increase in production cost for maintaining the quality. Incapability of economic production, unskilled industrial labour, problems relating to financial mismanagement and frequent strikes in support of labour demands etc.

SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY : Hon'ble Minister, Sir, you have mentioned the reasons about the increase in power tariff, I would like to mention that mini-steel industries are like small scale industry which should be given subsidy from the Government. Whether the Government have any intention to provide subsidy to these industries so that these units can start production and the workers employed in these units continued to work there