

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In each Zonal Railway and in the Ministry, there is a full-fledged Public Relations Office. Complaints received through Media are put up to the Railway Board/General Manager/Addl. General Manager/Principal Head of Department who further send them to the concerned officers/Divisions for taking necessary action. Special Monitoring Cells have been set up to monitor grievances related to punctuality, passenger amenities and catering.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e). Grievances brought to the notice through the media are put up by the Public Relations Office to the concerned authorities as brought out above. Action is taken by the concerned departments on grievances pertaining to their area. The Public Grievances Cell monitors grievances received from the public.

[Translation]

Shramshakti and Kurla-Varanasi Express

4131. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Shramshakti and the Kurla-Varanasi Express cease to operate from Barauni and no other train has been provided for Mumbai in lieu of the above train, as a result of which the passengers of that area are facing a lot of difficulties; and

(b) if so, the time by which the train facility will be provided from Barauni to Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Madras?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) As part of reorganisation and provision of additional train services from Muzaffarpur/Patna to Mumbai, daily services were provided from Muzaffarpur and Patna to Kurla in lieu of existing services between Muzaffarpur and Kurla via Barauni.

(b) Barauni is already linked to Mumbai by 5645/5646 Guwahati-Dadar biweekly Express and to Madras by 5011A/5012A weekly express. There is no proposal at present to introduce direct train between Barauni and Ahmedabad.

Agreement for Construction of Railway Line by SAIL

4132. SHRIMATI CHHABILA ARVIND NETAM : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has entered into any agreement on cost sharing

basis in the construction of Dalli-Rajhara-Jagdalpur railway line; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a).

[English]

Proposal for International Airport in Karnataka

4133. SHRI B.L. SHANKAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the names of international Airports in the country; and

(b) the names of domestic and international Airports proposed to be established in the Karnataka State?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) There are five international airports in the country, namely, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Calcutta; Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi; Chennai International Airport, Chennai; Mumbai International Airport, Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram International Airport, Thiruvananthapuram.

(b) The Govt. proposes to upgrade the airstrip at Hassan for operation of 50 seater aircraft for domestic operations. The Govt. has also given its 'No Objection' to Govt. of Karnataka to develop an airport of international standard at Devanahalli near Bangalore with private participation.

Air Service to North-East

4134. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether with a view to provide better air services to North-East region, the Government have decided to set up a Committee of MPs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the main objects of the Committee;

(d) whether the Committee has since been set up;

(e) if so, the time by which it is likely to submit its report;

(f) whether private airlines have also been asked to provide better air services in North-East region; and

(g) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (g). The Government have constituted a Committee comprising one member of Parliament from each of the 7 States in North East and Sikkim, representatives of private airlines, Indian Airlines, Alliance Air, Chairman, Airports Authority of India and Director General of Civil Aviation as convenor to review the operation of air transport service in the North East and suggest improvement in the airports of the region, which is a continuous process. Two meetings of the Committee have already been held on 4.10.96 and 14.12.96 respectively.

Welfare for Cashew Labourers

4135. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) what are the welfare measures undertaken by the Government for the development of cashew labourers at present;

(b) whether the Government propose to undertake any new welfare measures such as provision of House Building advance, Educational Assistance, and any other family welfare activities etc. for cashew labourers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c). The cashew labourers fulfilling the prescribed conditions get the benefits under the Employees State Insurance and the Provident Fund Acts. However, there is now new proposal before the Government for provision of House Building Advance, Educational Assistance etc. for the welfare of the cashew labourers.

Attachment of Coaches with Long Distance Trains

4136. SHRI RUP CHAND MURMU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the demand to attach AC-3 coaches with all long distance trains;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering to fulfil this demand;

(c) whether the Government also considering to provide bedrolls to the passengers of AC-3 coaches free of costs;

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) AC-3 tier coaches are being deployed on Air brake long distance Mail/Express trains involving night

journey in a phased manner and so far 46 pairs of these trains (including Rajdhani) have been provided with this accommodation.

(c) No, Sir, except on Rajdhani Express where it is already being provided without collection of any charges.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Many passengers may not like to avail this facility and because provision of bedrolls to all passengers may require enhancement of fare.

Introduction of Superfast Train between Solapur and Bombay

4137. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that traffic between Solapur and Bombay, both ways, has increased manifold since Sidheshwar Express was introduced over twenty years ago;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to introduce another superfast train between Solapur and Bombay;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons for the delay in introduction of the said superfast train?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). At present 14 pairs of trains including 1023/1024 Sidheshwar Express are running from Mumbai and passing through Solapur. The reserved accommodation available by Sidheshwar Express is not being fully utilised. As the existing trains are adequate to cater to the present traffic, there is no commercial justification to run an additional train between Mumbai and Solapur.

Sidheshwar Express was introduced over twenty years ago. Details of traffic offered at the time of introduction of Sidheshwar Express are not available.

Sending of Labourers Abroad

4138. SHRI SOUMYA RANJAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have entered into agreements with some countries recently for sending labourers abroad;

(b) if so, whether provisions have also been made in the agreements with regard to wages and other facilities to be provided to labourers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the names of the places where these labours are proposed to be sent?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.