

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Please, listen to my reply. A sum of Rs. 396 crores has been sanctioned during the last six months for gauge conversion of Mathura-Kasganj and Kasganj-Bareilly railway lines. There are two kinds of approval in this respect; one is parliamentary approval and another is cabinet's approval.

12.00 hrs.

So far as the matter pertaining to Surendranagar and Bhavanagar of Gujarat, which our colleagues were raising yesterday, is concerned I would like to let you know that it has got the parliamentary approval and is likely to get the Cabinet's approval within a day or two. As far as money is concerned, expenditure of one or two lakhs of Rupees does not matter because when the project is cleared by the Parliament, it becomes the baby of the ministry and whatever amount does it require for its implementation, it will always be spent thereon. This much we want to assure you and this is what I was trying to let you know yesterday.

Likewise, Karoor and Selam projects have also been cleared by the Parliament but these are pending before the Cabinet. These are also likely to get Cabinet's approval within a day or two and whatever amount it requires, we will give it. This is what I was trying to tell you yesterday but you people were not ready to listen...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You may ask second supplementary.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

LT. GENERAL SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI : My question was not related to this only. What I meant to say was that this is a very old line and its gauge conversion has increased the revenue receipts of railways substantially, but at the same time traffic congestion has also increased many folds in the areas through which it passes. It requires your immediate attention. I want to know as to whether you would think over this problem and find a way out? This can be told to us later also.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Yes, we will think over it. The policies of the Government are directed to the welfare of backward class people and development of backward areas. Uttar Pradesh is also one of the backward states. Whenever any project survey is completed, it will be submitted before the Planning Commission, from where it would be referred to the Expanded Board. Thereafter we will take it up. But your question pertained to the period of last six months. We will certainly take your new demand under our consideration.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Persons killed/injured at Unmanned Level Crossings

*83. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH BHATI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of persons killed/injured at the unmanned level crossings during the last three years; and

(b) the concrete steps taken by the Government to check the recurrence of such accidents?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) The number of persons killed/injured in accidents at unmanned level crossings during the last three years is as under :

Year	No. of persons killed	No. of persons injured
1993-94	146	273
1994-95	147	115
1995-96	117	162

(b) Accidents at unmanned level crossings occur due to the negligence of road users who cross the level crossing without observing the precautions stipulated in Section 131 of the Motor Vehicles Act.

Some of the steps taken by the Railways to prevent accidents at unmanned level crossings are as under :

- (i) Speed breakers/rumble strips have been provided on the road approaches to unmanned level crossings so that the road vehicles may reduce their speed.
- (ii) Whistle boards are provided alongside the rail track on approach of level crossings to advise the train driver to whistle to warn the road users about the approaching train.
- (iii) To educate the road drivers about safety at unmanned level crossings, publicity campaign is launched through various media like quickies on TV, cinema slides, talks on radio and advertisements in newspapers and periodicals.
- (iv) State Governments are requested from time to time to exercise strict checks while issuing driving licenses, especially to drivers of trucks, buses and other heavy traffic vehicles.

[English]

Strike by Pilots

*87. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT :
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the pilots of Indian Airlines had gone on mass sick leave from January 23 to 27, 1997;

- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the accumulated loss suffered by the airlines due to strike by pilots;
- (d) the number of flights cancelled as a result thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken to avoid such losses and strikes by pilots in future?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On 23.1.1997, a total of 142 pilots represented by ICPA resorted to concerted action by reporting sick or refusing to operate flights on various grounds till 27.1.97. The main issues for the action are as under :-

- (1) Guaranteed payment of fixed hours;
- (2) Cash allowance during international flights;
- (3) Free meals to two pilots during their stay in hotels;
- (4) Comparable terms of payment with the Pilots of Alliance Air

(c) and (d) 83 flights were cancelled as a result of concerted action by the pilots. Indian Airlines suffered an estimated loss of approximately Rs. 3 crores due to this action.

(e) Following steps have been taken to avoid such losses and strikes by pilots in future :-

- (i) The Management of IA refused to entertain any demands that would amount to reopening of the settlement signed with the Indian Commercial Pilots Association in January, 1996, valid till December 1998.
- (ii) Disciplinary proceedings were initiated against all pilots who had refused to undertake flights.
- (iii) The names of Pilots who have reported sick on more than one occasion have been referred to the Airforce Central Medical Establishment through DGCA to keep it on record for consideration during periodical medical examination in future.
- (iv) The Management insisted on restoration of normalcy before commencement of any discussions.

MI-17 Helicopters

*88. SHRI N. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Russian built MI-17 helicopters are in use in India for transportation of goods or passengers;

(b) if so, the number thereof;

(c) whether Government have seen reports that Nepal has grounded these helicopters for safety reasons; and

(d) if so, the safety precautions taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) MI-17 helicopters are not being used for civil air transport operations in India.

(c) It is gathered that His Majesty's Government of Nepal had temporarily suspended passenger operations by MI-17 helicopters in December, 1996, which have since resumed and the matter is being examined by their experts.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b)

Telephone Connections

*89. SHRI A. SAMPATH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephone connections sanctioned during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the position of waiting list during the above period, State-wise; and

(c) the number of new telephone connections given during 1996 and 1997, so far, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) The details of telephone connections provided and the position of waiting list three years, State-wise are as per Statement-I.

(c) The Number of new telephone connection given during 1996 and 1997, so far, State-wise is as per Statement-II.

Statement-I

Details of Telephone Conections Provided and Posion of Waiting List During Last 3 Years

S. No.	Name of the State	1993-94		1994-95		1995-96	
		Telephone Provided	Waiting list as on 31.3.94	Telephone Provided	Waiting list as on 31.3.95	Telephone Provided	Waiting list as on 31.3.96
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	77,837	1,55,426	1,38,278	1,24,452	1,50,021	1,35,054
2.	Assam	13,430	9,820	13,103	15,028	20,295	19,648