

of Russia and M/s. Mitsui of Japan. M/s. Mitsui have since indicated their unwillingness for equity participation which is an essential requirement for selection of Joint Venture Partner. Consequently at present there is only one offer available for revival of IISCO. M/s. TPE have since informed SAIL that they require extension of three months time for submission of their Revial Plan. Consequently, SAIL have sought extension of time for a further period of 4 months from the BIFR.

As IISCO has been referred to the BIFR, any scheme to be taken up for modernisation will have to be in accordance with the orders of the BIFR in this regard.

ESI Dispensaries

858. SHRI A.G.S. RAM BABU : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the categories of employees covered under the ESI Health Scheme and the contribution deducted from the employees, category-wise during the last two years;

(b) whether any plan has been drafted to improve the general and sanitary conditions in the ESI dispensaries and increase to various services offered to patients; and

(c) the details of the ESI dispensaries located in Tamil Nadu, city-wise?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) Presently the employees drawing wages not exceeding Rs. 6500/- per month are covered/coverable under the ESI Act, 1948. During the last two years, the contribution was deducted @ 1.50% of the monthly wages of all the employees.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A *statement* indicating number of ESI dispensaries in Tamil Nadu, district-wise, is enclosed.

Statement

S.No.	Name of District	No. of Dispensaries
1	2	3
1.	Madras	22
2.	Chengalpattu	17
3.	South Arcot	2
4.	Vellore Ambedkar	8
5.	Thiruvannamalai Sambuvarayar	1
6.	Salem	12
7.	Dharmapuri	3
8.	Trichy	8
9.	Tanjore	5
10.	Pudukottai	1

1	2	3
11.	Coimbatore	33
12.	Periyar	2
13.	Madurai	10
14.	Anna	5
15.	Kamarajar	7
16.	Pasumpon Muthuramalignam	2
17.	Chidambaranar	4
18.	Nellai Katta Bomman	7
19.	Kanyakumari	2
20.	Nilgiris	1
Total :-		152

Note : In addition, the ESIC has got 6 mobile dispensaries and 2 utilisation dispensaries serving in different areas in Tamil Nadu.

Introduction of 12 Coach EMU Rakes in Calcutta Suburban Section

859. SHRI ANIL BASU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to introduce 12 coach EMU rakes in Calcutta suburban section;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) There are no such plans in the near future.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Due to infrastructural constraints.

Local Dialling Facilities

860. SHRI HARADHAN ROY :
SHRI BALAI CHANDRA RAY :
SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 290 on November 21, 1996 and state :

(a) the steps taken to connect Durgapur SDCA exchanges with Assansol SDCA exchanges so that subscribers of this entire region are able to enjoy access of local dialling facilities; and

(b) the reasons for the delay to provide group dialling system in West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Durgapur SDCA exchanges have good connectivity with Assansol SDCA exchanges through

digital microwave media. Local call facility is not admissible between the two SDCAs under the existing rules.

(b) There is no delay in providing group dialling facilities in West Bengal Circle as most of the exchanges have been covered. The facility to remaining exchanges is being extended progressively on availability of equipment and transmission media.

Loss Suffered by Railways Due to Cyclone

861. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether during the period of cyclone and rains in the Andhra Pradesh during 1996, the major railway tracks and lines were affected;

(b) if so, the total loss suffered by the railways due to the cyclone and rains;

(c) whether all the railway lines that were damaged have been repaired by now; and

(d) if so, the total expenditure incurred thereon?

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

(b) about Rs. 7.20 crore.

(c) All the damaged Lines have since been restored on temporary basis and permanent restoration work is in progress.

(d) Rs. 7.20 crore (approx.) have been incurred on temporary restoration work. Permanent restoration work would cost about Rs. 19.90 crore.

Closure of Unmanned Level Crossings

862. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA :

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have decided to close down a large number of unmanned/manned level crossings in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, zone-wise;

(c) whether the Government are considering to provide alternative roads before closing these level crossings;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b)	Railway	Number of level crossings
	1	2
	Central	46
	Eastern	19

	1	2
	Northern	85
	North Eastern	93
	Northeast Frontier	103
	Southern	117
	South Central	37
	South Eastern	8
	Western	28
	Total	536

(c) Yes, Sir. Wherever necessary the level crossing will be closed after completion of required formalities.

(d) 65 level crossing roads will be passed through existing nearby bridge. 351 level crossings will be linked to nearby level crossings.

(e) 120 level crossings will be closed, since road traffic is either absent or very meagre which does not justify their continuance.

Fire in Bhopal-Bound Shatabdi Express

863. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a fire broke out in Bhopal-Bound Shatabdi Express on January 18, 1997;

(b) if so, the main cause of the accident; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A fire broke out in the under-frame of the generator-cum-luggage van of 2002 New Delhi-Bhopal Shatabdi Express at Ajhai station on New Delhi-Agra section of Central Railway on 18.1.1997. The incident of fire is being enquired into by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Central Circle, whose findings are awaited.

(c) The following steps have been taken to prevent similar accidents :-

(i) Proper maintenance of electric fittings in all passenger coaches is being ensured at the time of overhauling.

(ii) Checks are carried out at maintenance depots to ensure proper electrical fittings and smooth working of the alarm chain apparatus in passenger carrying trains;

(iii) Passengers are not allowed to carry inflammable materials on the trains;

(iv) Portable fire extinguishers are provided in locomotives, brake-vans, AC coaches, pantry cars and the generator vans for prompt tackling of fire;