

(d) if so, the details of posts and expenditure incurred so far and the names of persons selected/appointed;

(e) whether the Corporation introduced voluntary retirement scheme in 1991-92;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of persons who sought voluntary retirement in each year so far;

(g) whether there has been under-utilisation of resources and manpower in the Corporation as reported in 'Financial Express' dated 25th March, 1997; and

(h) if so, the details and reasons therefor in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of the losses incurred by Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd. (MECL) during the last three years are as under:-

Year	1994-95	: Rs. 14.03 crores
	1995-96	: Rs. 12.24 crores
	1996-97	: Rs. 14.10 crores (Provisional)

MECL has been continuously incurring losses from 1990-91 onwards. The total accumulated losses are of the order of Rs. 64.10 crores.

(c) and (d) The Corporation spent Rs. 4,09,813.10 (Rupees Four lakhs Nine thousand Eight hundred thirteen and paise ten only) on advertisement for 49 posts. The details of posts are as under:-

General Manager (Mining)	1
Chief Manager (Mining)/(P&A)/(Finance)	3
Manager (Finance)	1
Dy. Manager (Mining)	2
Dy. Manager (F. Fin.)	1
Company Secretary	1
Asstt. Manager (Mining)	2
Asstt. Manager (Finance)	1
Sr. Mining Engineer	6
Mining Engineer	5
Management Trainee (Mining)/(P&A)/ (Finance)/(Mechanical)	16
Industrial Trainee (Mining)/(Mech.)/ (Electrical)	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>

No person has been appointed as yet.

(e) and (f) MECL introduced Voluntary Retirement Scheme in July, 1992. The main reason for introduction of VRS was to reduce the surplus manpower. The details of employees who opted for retirement under VRS during October, 1992 to 31st March, 1997 are as under:-

Year	Executive	Non-Executive	Total
1992-93 (Oct. 92-March, 93)	07	43	50
1993-94	67	507	574
1994-95	38	238	276
1995-96	07	60	67
1996-97	20	48	68
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>1035</b>

(g) and (h) Due to reduced budgetary support for promotional exploration projects and in the absence of adequate contractual exploration projects, there has been under-utilisation of resources and manpower. Due to financial constraints, replacement and repairs of old drilling machines was not possible, hence lower productivity.

[Translation]

#### Railway Crossings

6386. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of railway crossings in Nagpur district of Maharashtra;

(b) the number of such railway crossings on which under-bridges or over-bridges are proposed to be constructed and the number of such crossings where bridges have been constructed; and

(c) the reasons for not constructing such bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) 221 Nos.

(b) There are 6 nos. of level crossings on which Road Under Bridges or Road Over Bridges are proposed and 5 nos. of level crossings on which Road Under/Over Bridges have been constructed in Nagpur.

(c) Road Over Bridges/Under Bridges have been considered where proposals have been sponsored by the State Government. For other crossings, no proposals have been sponsored by the State Govt. as yet.

[English]

#### Stoppage of Bandra Express

6387. SHRIMATI SUBHAWATI DEVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to make

stoppage of the Bandra Express at Jagatbela Railway station with a view to provide facility to the passengers;

- (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) No, Sir.

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) Not justified.

#### **Stoppage to Sambalpur Hirakud Express at Khurai**

6388. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of the Government to provide stoppage to Sambalpur Hirakud Express at Khurai and Sadan Express at Mandi Bamora Railway Stations;

- (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) No, Sir.

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) Lack of justification.

#### **Policy Regarding Exploration of Minerals**

6389. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI:

DR. M. JAGANNATH:

SHRI B.L. SHANKAR:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to formulate new gold and diamond mining Policy;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the salient features of the policy regarding exploitation of minerals particularly gold and diamond bearing areas;

(d) the details of the potential areas recovered so far;

(e) whether any scheme has been prepared to exploit these areas for export earning;

(f) whether foreign technology have been adopted to modernise the obsolete, closed and many years old mines in the country; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) The National Mineral Policy, 1993 envisages induction of

foreign technology and foreign participation in exploration and mining of high value and scarce minerals to be pursued. Foreign equity investment in joint ventures in mining promoted by Indian companies would be encouraged. While foreign investment in equity would normally be limited to 50%, this limitation would not apply to captive mines of any mineral necessary for industry. Enhanced equity holding can also be considered on case to case basis. In line with the policy prescription, 13 minerals, including gold and diamond, hitherto exclusively reserved for public sector, have been thrown open for private sector, including foreign investment. The Central Government has issued guidelines for grant of large areas for aerial prospecting. The grant of mineral concessions for minerals including gold and diamond is governed by the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and the rules made thereunder. The Act and the Rules have been amended to give effect to the policy pronouncements.

(d) As per information furnished by Indian Bureau of Mines, the potential areas discovered are as under:

#### **For Gold**

- (i) Ajjanahalli and Kempinkote area in Karnataka.
- (ii) Bhukia Jagpura area in Banswara distt. Rajasthan.
- (iii) Govanikonda block in Andhra Pradesh.
- (iv) Hira Budhini block, Hutti Muski Schist belt and Chinmulgund area in Karnataka.
- (v) Gurharpahar west block in Sidhi distt., Madhya Pradesh.
- (vi) Koitari, Adyal and Parsodi in Nagpur-Bhandara-Gadchiroli districts of Maharashtra.
- (vii) Saobal and Maski, Surapalli, Jaligere and Saratur. G.K. Halli, Thippagondenahalli, Kunchiganahalli and Dangaradagani area in Karnataka State.

#### **For Diamond**

- (i) Kothapalli block in Andhra Pradesh.
- (ii) Catchment area of Ib, Maini, Mand and Tald-Utiala rivers of Bastar/Raigarh district of Madhya Pradesh.

(e) Grant of prospecting licences/mining leases for minerals including gold and diamond for exploitation is governed by provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and rules made thereunder. The export is guided by the provisions of the Export-Import Policy of the country.

(f) and (g) Induction of foreign technology for such mines depends on the techno-economic judgement of the concerned organisations.