

[English]

### Vayudoot flights to North-Eastern Region

5408. SHRI K. PRADHANI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vayudoot flights catering to the North-Eastern region are irregular;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take to improve these services?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRIMADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c). The operations of Vayudoot in the North-East Region have been somewhat irregular due to inclement weather and technical snags. Steps have been taken to improve the availability of aircraft for operations in the North-Eastern Region.

### Saloon used by Rabindra Nath Tagore

5409. DR. C. SILVERA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some efforts are underway to restore the originality of railway saloon used by Late Shri Rabindra Nath Tagore during his journey from Howrah to Bolpur in 1941;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the background and highlights of this saloon; and

(c) the estimated amount to be spent for this purpose?

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

(b) This saloon had been built in 1921 by Liluah workshops of the then East Indian Railways. It is a wooden-body coach and had been used by the then COPS of East

Indian Railways at the time Rabindra Nath Tagore undertook his last journey by train.

This coach having become uneconomical to be maintained in operation and had been in dis-use for more than a decade. In view of the historical background, the coach had not been processed for condemnation and disposal.

(c) Rs. 58,000/- have been spent in repairing and renovating the coach.

[Translation]

### More Trains on Bareilly-Kasganj line

5410. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of up/down passenger trains that are running on Bareilly-Kasganj metre-gauge line;

(b) whether there is any proposal to introduce more passenger/goods trains on this railway line; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALIKARJUN) (a) 6 trains each in both Up and Down directions.

(b) No proposal at present.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

### Rail line from Tumkur to Davanagere

5411. SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a demand for construction of a new railway line between Tumkur and Davanagere via Sira, Hiriyur,

Chitradurga; which will reduce the distance between Tumkur and Davanagere by about 60 kms (road); and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir. However, the reduction in distance through the suggested line will be about 25 km.

(b) There is no proposal to undertake construction of the line at present due to constraints of resources.

#### **Airstrip in Darjeeling**

5412. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to construct an airstrip in Darjeeling for the benefit of the foreign visitors; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b). The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council has suggested the construction of an airstrip at Tiger Hill in Darjeeling. The site was surveyed by the National Airports Authority and it was found that it might be feasible to construct an airstrip of 6500 ft. X 150 ft. suitable for operation of Avro type aircraft at a cost of about Rs. 25 crores. A Committee constituted by the Ministry of Environment & Forests has, however, not found the site to be suitable from the environmental stand point. The construction of the airstrip depends, inter-alia, on clearance being given by the Ministry of Environment & Forests and adequate funds being made available to the National Airports Authority.

[*Translation*]

#### **Training to employees working on Farakka-Lalmatia railway line**

5413. SHRI SIMON MARANDI: will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased state:

(a) the number of employees on Farakka-Lalmatia railway line to whom training has been imparted till date to make them skilled during the last three years; year-wise; and

(b) the number of employees working for the last three years who have not been imparted the said training so far and the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b). Farakka-Lalmatia Railway line is owned and maintained by the National Thermal Power Corporation, as a private siding.

[*English*]

#### **Air Taxi scheme**

5414. DR. G.L. KANAUIA:  
SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT:  
SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:  
SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Air Taxis a near flop" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated August 16, 1991;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to make alternative arrangements to air link all district in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) (a) : Yes, Sir.