

(b) The percentage growth in tourist traffic to India during first ten months of current year as compared to the corresponding period of last year was 7.4

[English]

Revival of IISCO

267. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been invited to the news-item appearing in the Economic Times dated October 19, 1996 captioned, IISCO saviours seek time to forward package to SAIL and

(b) if so, the facts, latest position and reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. SAIL has invited offers for participation in the revival/modernisation of IISCO through a joint venture arrangement with SAIL retaining majority share-holding of 51% in the joint venture Company. SAIL have received offers from two parties viz. M/s Tyazhpromexport (TPE) of Russia and M/s Mitsui of Japan. SAIL had sought extension of time from the BIFR in order to further assess the offers received by them. The BIFR have since granted extension of time to SAIL till 6th January, 1997. The latest position is that M/s Mitsui of Japan have indicated their unwillingness for equity participation which is an essential requirement for selection of a Joint Venture Partner.

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.

[Translation]

Derailment of Train

268. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Jammu bound Jhelum Express was derailed on September 14, 1996 at 7 a.m. between Nibaura and Khaira stations and as a result thereof many employees of railway staff died at the spot;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have conducted any enquiry into the causes of the accident;

(d) if so, the details of the inquiry alongwith the steps taken against the erring employees and loss of Government equipments etc.; and

(e) the strategy proposed to be followed to avert such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). On 14.9.1996, 8 coaches of Jammu Tawi-Pune Jhelum

Express derailed between Raver and Nimbhora stations on Khandwa-Bhusaval section of Central Railway. In this accident, 1 passenger died, 4 persons sustained grievous injury and 15 others sustained simple injuries.

(c) and (d). This accident is being enquired into by the commissioner of Railway Safety, Central Circle, whose report is awaited. Action under the Discipline & Appeal Rules shall be taken against the persons who will be found responsible after enquiry report is received.

(e) The following measures have been taken to reduce derailments :-

- (i) The track structure is being strengthened. The rails are being converted into long welded rails panels by welding and removing fish plates.
- (ii) The track is maintained by tie tamping and ballast cleaning machines. Track is also being laid with track renewal trains and portal cranes.
- (iii) For monitoring of the track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometers are being progressively used.
- (iv) For detection of hidden flaws in the railway not visible to the naked eye, ultrasonic flaw detectors are used.
- (v) The condition of rolling stock has been improved. Four wheeler wagons are being replaced with better bogie Air brake stock.
- (vi) To prevent cases of cold breakage of axles, all RCH Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for timely detection of cases of flaws developing in the axles.
- (vii) The examination pattern of goods and coaching trains has been rationalised.
- (viii) Workshops have been modernised.
- (ix) Safety inspections and safety checks have been intensified.

[English]

New Railway Projects

269. SHRI BALAI CHANDRA RAY :
SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI :
SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to launch some new railway projects in the country during 1996-97;

- (b) if so, the details thereof, zone-wise
 (c) the time by which the above projects are likely to be implemented;
 (d) whether the Planning Commission has given the approval to the above projects; and

(e) if so, the funds allocated by the Government for these projects?

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

(b), (c) and (e) The details are as under :-

New Lines

S No	Name of the Project	Zone/Railway	Funds allotted in 96-97 (In Crs of Rs)	Target Date
1	Nandyal-Yerranguntala	South Central	0.50	10th Plan
2	Sakri-Hassanpur	North Eastern	3.00	9th Plan
3	Kadur-Chickmagalur-Sakleshpur	Southern	1.00	9th Plan
4	Haridaspur-Paradeep	South Eastern	1.00	9th Plan
5	Dausa-Gangapur City	Western	0.50	Work will be taken up after CCEA approval. Target will be fixed once work is taken up.
6	Kumarghat-Agartala	Northeast Frontier	1.00	10th Plan.

Gauge Conversion :

1	Mansi-Saharsa	North Eastern	08.00	31.12.97
2	Hajipur-Bachwara	North Eastern	10.67	31.12.97
3	Lumding-Silchar	Northeast Frontier	10.00	10th Plan
4	Mysore-Hassan (95-96 budget but CCEA clearance given now)	Southern	01.00	30.06.97
5	Rupsa -Bangripasi (-do-)	South Eastern	00.50	9th Plan

(d) Yes, Sir. Except 5 above which has been deferred.

Exploration of Gold

270. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have undertaken the gold exploration at Ooty in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details of drilling for exploration of gold in the State;

(c) the estimated gold reserves in that area; and

(d) the steps taken for the proper exploration of gold in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Yes, Sir. Gold Exploration has been carried out by GSI in Uti area of Karnataka.

(b) A total of 9156.95 metres in 74 boreholes has been drilled in Uti area, in Uti and Uti Temple Blocks. Drilling for exploration of gold has also been carried out by GSI in Raichur, Kolar, Dharwar, Tumkur,

Chitradurga, Shimoga, Hassan and Mysore districts of Karnataka.

(c) The gold reserves of 0.884 Million Tonnes (Probable Reserve) of ore with 2.04 to 18.95 gram/tonne of gold upto 130 m depth and with widths varying from 1.00 to 7.32 m has been estimated.

(d) The exploration through drilling and pitting and trenching geochemical and geophysical methods is continuing in Nagavi North-Mallasamudra blocks in Dharwar district, Chinmulgund, Kalledevar-Hosahonatti and Karjagi blocks of Shimoga Schist Belt, Darwar District, Gonnur Block, Chitradurga district and adjacent areas of Bellerra Mines, Tumkur District of Chitradurga Schist Belt and in Valageri-ambale area in Mysore district.

Relay Stations of AIR

271. SHRI S. RAMA CHANDRA REDDY : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up three relay stations of AIR at Sompeta, Kakinada and Nellore