

Opening of new Branches of Post Offices in Thane District

4144. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals pending for opening new Branches of Post Offices in Thane district in Maharashtra as on June 30, 1996;

(b) the period of pendency and reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the new branches of post offices are likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Two proposals for opening of new Post Offices in Thane District of Maharashtra were pending as on June 30, 1996

(b) These two proposals namely Nane (Wada) and Akloli were pending for 2 and 3 months respectively as on June 30, 1996 as the targets for opening of Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices in Maharashtra for the year 1996-97 were completed.

(c) Post Offices are opened progressively under Annual Plan Schemes based on fulfilment of norms depending upon merits of each case and subject to availability of targets and resources.

[Translation]

Funds Allocated for Conversion of Meter Gauge Lines

4145. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VERMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the percentage of funds allocated for converting meter gauge line into broad gauge *vis-a-vis* the total railway budget during the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that more funds are being spent on the work of gauge conversion whereas the amount which was to be spent on the maintenance of the existing rail lines is not being spent;

(c) whether as a result of decline in the percentage of expenditure on the maintenance of rail lines, trains are derailed quite often now a days.

(d) whether the railway officers have drawn the attention of the Government on this situation; and

(e) if so, the steps being contemplated to bring about improvement in the above situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The percentage allocation for Gauge Conversion works for the last three years is as under :

1994-95	21%
1995-96	18%
1996-97 (BE)	12%

(b) No. Sir. Sufficient funds are being allocated for Gauge Conversion and maintenance of rail line works based on the traffic needs, priority of works/projects etc.

(c) There is no direct link between percentage of expenditure and derailments.

(d) and (e). Do not arise.

[English]

Tenders for Import

4146. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the areas where Railways had already obtained orders of import and the areas where Railway had issued Tenders for import during June 1996 to October 31, 1996;

(b) whether Railways are contemplating to have import substitution in most of our fastest train track renewal programme; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Introduction of Christmas Special Trains

4147. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce "Christmas Special Trains" in Kerala this year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). A daily special train on the Broad Gauge between Madras Central and Quilon, a tri-weekly special on the Metre Gauge between Madras Egmore and Quilon and a weekly Broad Gauge special between Vijayawada and Kottayam are being run to clear extra rush of passengers on the occasion of Christmas and Sabarimalai season.

Corporate Guarantee

4148. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to restore the facility given to M/s. Traco Cable Company Limited, a Kerala Government Undertaking to execute Corporate Guarantee instead of Bank Guarantee for the purchase order of Jelly filled cables as the same is withdrawn

which amounts of heavy financial burden on the company; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Like all other Public Sector Units M/s. Traco Cable Company Ltd. is also required to furnish bank guarantee in accordance with the guidelines of Bureau of Public Enterprises (No. BPE/1(4)/ADV(F)/ 69 dated 3.11.72) which read as "Since the transactions between public sector enterprises and the Govt. Dept. are of commercial nature, it would not be appropriate to exempt the public undertakings from the bank guarantees in lieu of the security deposit for fulfillment of the contract. Such guarantees show the earnestness of the public sector enterprises for the fulfillment of the contract and in such cases the normal commercial principles shall be followed."

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Allotment of Berths out of H.O.R. Quota

4149. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the norms and guidelines laid down by the Railway Board for allotment of berths out of H.O.R. quota;

(b) whether such norms and guidelines are being followed by the Commercial Officers in Allahabad Division of the Northern Railway;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government have received the complaints regarding berths earmarked for H.O.R. quota are being sold through agents at Allahabad by a Commercial Officer; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). A limited number of berths/seats have been earmarked as emergency quota to meet the urgent travel requirements of High official requisition holders, Minister, MPs/MLAs, VIPs and other emergent demands.

Requests received from various quarters for release of berths/seats out of emergency quota are given due priority taking into account factors like status of the passengers travelling, nature of urgency like Government duty, bereavement, sickness etc. These guidelines are being strictly followed by the Commercial Officers of the Northern Railway.

(d) One such complaint was received.

(e) The complaint was of general nature without quoting any specific instance. However, constant watch is kept to prevent any misuse of the reservation quota.

Serious Track Condition

4150. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that track condition between Santragachi and Bargachia is very serious;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to improve the track to increase the speed of the trains;

(c) whether any steps are being taken to provide minimum passengers amenities in all the stations of Bargachia section; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). All Railway stations are provided with amenities commensurate with the volume of passenger traffic.

Appointments on Compassionate Grounds

4151. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that a number of appointments on compassionate ground are lying pending since 1990 with South Central Railway;

(b) if so, the details of such cases in general and SCs and STs in particular;

(c) the reasons for delay in providing employment; and

(d) the time proposed to be taken for clearing all the cases of appointments on compassionate ground?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Optical Fibre Cable in Delhi

4152. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to install optical fibre cables for increasing the Telephone facilities in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.