

(b) whether a number of accidents have taken place on the road;

(c) if so, whether the Government have any proposal to construct a bypass on G.T. Road/F.T. Road to remove congestion and avoid accidents on G.T. Road; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir. Roads remains busy due to very heavy traffic. However, no blockage of the road due to VIP movement has been reported.

(b) There is no report from the State PWD that the stretch is abnormally accident prone.

(c) and (d) Proposal for construction of a bypass at Allahabad is in a preliminary stage.

[Translation]

Recruitment of Education Officers in KVs

288. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the selection procedure for the post of Education Officer in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sanghathan;

(b) whether direct recruitment for the post of Education Officer is made on the basis of a written test followed by an interview; and

(c) if so, the details of the qualifying marks fixed for written test and interview ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) to (c) 50% posts of Education Officer are filled by direct recruitment and 50% by promotion from amongst Principals of Kendriya Vidyalayas. For filling posts of Education Officer by direct recruitment, selection is made on the basis of performance in written test as well as interview. Short-listing of candidates is done on the basis of written test and the final list is prepared on the basis of the combined merit of written test and interview.

Drowning of Indians in Mediterranean Sea

289. KUNWAR SARVARAJ SINGH :
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :
SHRI SUDHIR GIRI :
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI :
SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT :
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI :
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :
SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH :
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR :
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :
SHRI THOMAS HANSDA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that at least three hundred illegal emigrants including two hundred twenty seven Indians were drowned on their way to Greece off the coast of Malta on December 25, 1996;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any inquiries into the circumstances of the clandestine escape of these illegal emigrants and the incidence of consigning them to their watery grave;

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating the action taken or proposed to be taken against the persons responsible for the incident; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to provide relief measures to those killed in the incident ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) Our Ambassador in Athens reported on 7th January, 1997 of the sinking of a ship carrying Indian nationals amongst others in the Malta-Sicily channel. The number of Indians reportedly drowned is about 175, though no trace of bodies or wreckage of the boat has been recovered so far. Estimate of those drowned including their identification is based on the evidences given by twenty two survivors who were rescued and later deported to India.

(b) On receipt of this report, Government immediately ordered a CBI inquiry.

(c) and (d) While some arrests have been made, the CBI inquiry is still in progress. Based on this inquiry further necessary action will be taken in this regard.

[English]

Visa Facilities to Indian Visitors in Pakistan

290. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pakistan has taken some measures assuring visa clearance for the business delegations within 24 hours from the date of receipt of the request;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such facility would be applicable to Indian visitors to Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (d) Pakistan has been following a restrictive visa regime for Indian nationals which involves the pre-verification of all visa applications on a case-by-case basis.

However, the SAARC Council of Foreign Ministers in its meeting in New Delhi on December 1996, which was attended by Pakistan Foreign Minister, approved the recommendations of the SAARC Committee on Economic Cooperation (CEC) that decisions on visa applications of