

to start a separate Shatabdi Express between New Delhi and Moradabad;

(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) and (b) Yes, Sir. A suggestion has been received to start a Shatabdi Express between New Delhi & Moradabad.

(c) Introduction of Shatabdi between New Delhi and Moradabad has not been found feasible on account of operational and resource constraints.

Gauge Conversion

936. SHRI KASHI RAM RANA :
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken up the conversion work of Ahmedabad-Veraval railway-line;

(b) if so, when and the amount spent so far on the project; and

(c) the time by which the work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir. Gauge conversion of Rajkot-Veraval section of the suggested line has already been taken up. Ahmedabad-Rajkot section is already a BG line.

(b) Conversion work of Rajkot-Veraval was included in 1994-95 budget and an amount of Rs. 3 crs. is expected to be incurred by 31.3.97.

(c) During IXth Plan.

Development of Narrow-Gauge Railway Lines

937. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the region-wise details of narrow gauge railway lines in Bihar.

(b) whether any scheme has been prepared for the development of these narrow-gauge lines;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The length of narrow gauge railway line (route kilometres as on 31.3.96) in Bihar is 69 kilometres. Region-wise statistics of railway lines is not maintained.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) This line has been included, for conversion to Broad Gauge and extension to Tori, in the

Supplementary Budget 1996-97. Necessary clearances having been obtained, the work is being taken up.

Bangalore International Airport Project

938. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL :
SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH
GAEKWAD :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Tata agree to build Bangalore Airport on BOT basis" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated February 2, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) the terms and conditions and present status of the agreement;

(d) whether Tata have also agreed to induct the Airports Authority of India (AAI) as one of the equity holders in the Bangalore International Airport project; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A Committee has been set up on 21st February, 1997 to finalise the terms and conditions relating to the construction of a new airport of international standards at Bangalore. The Committee has representatives of Central Government, State Government of Karnataka and M/s. Tata Industries Limited.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Key Convention 1987 of ILO

939. SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has ratified key convention 1987 of International Labour Organisation;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the major issues which ILO has to focus on the seven key convention and India's view point thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) The 74th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1987 adopted the following 4 conventions concerning seafarers :

(1) 163 - Seafarers' Welfare Convention 1987

(2) 164 - Health Protection and Medical Care (Seafarers) Convention, 1987.

- (3) 165 - Social Security (Seafarers Convention Revised), 1987
- (4) 166 - Repatriation of Seafarers Convention (Revised), 1987

India has not ratified any of the above conventions so far. However, these conventions are not treated as Core Labour Standards.

The ILO has identified the following seven conventions as Core Labour Standards :

- (1) Forced Labour (No. 29)
- (2) Freedom of Association (No. 87)
- (3) Right to Collective Bargaining (No. 98)
- (4) Equal Remuneration (No. 100)
- (5) Abolition of Forced Labour (No. 105)
- (6) Discrimination (No. 111)
- (7) Minimum Age Convention (No. 138)

India has already ratified conventions no. 29, 100 and 111. ILO convention no. 105 concerning abolition of forced labour is in an advanced stage of processing for ratification.

Conventions no. 87 and 98 require granting certain rights to government servants on par with industrial workers. Since Indian law treats the government servants as a category separate from industrial workers, ratification of ILO conventions no. 87 and 98 would not be possible at this stage. Similarly, there is no omnibus provision in the Indian laws fixing a minimum age for employment. Convention no. 138 covers all sectors of economic activities and all types of employment regardless of whether children are employed for wages or not. The convention also does not set priorities. It is, therefore, not possible at this stage, to ratify convention no. 138.

Global Tenders in Vizag Steel Plants

940. SHRI CHANDRABHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Vizag Steel Plant awarded a contract worth over Rs. 100 crores for importing coal, without inviting global tender;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (Visakhapatnam Steel Plant) entered into long term agreement in the year 1995 for a period of 3 years for import of coal from various sources in Australia in accordance with the terms and conditions and specifications of Low Ash

Metallurgical Coking Coal approved by the Board of Directors of the Company.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Pager Services in Major Cities

941. SHRI NAMDEO DIWATHE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the response to introduce pager services in the major cities, present status of the progress achieved so far and target set for the current year with financial target for investment;

(b) the details of expansion plan for pager services;

(c) whether pagers in Indian languages are proposed to be launched shortly; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, language and city-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) (i) The Department of Telecommunications has issued 106 licences in respect of Radio paging operations in 27 major cities of the country. The number of licensees are between 2 to 5 in a city depending on the size of the city.

(ii) The services is available in all the 27 cities by one or more operators. Number of subscribers to the service are 4,21,721 in these 27 cities as on 31.12.1996.

(iii) As per the licence agreement, the licensees were required to commission the service within one year of the effective date of licence.

(iv) The financial investment is to be done by the licensee company depending on the demand and the expansion programme of the company.

(c) and (d) No request from any of the licensee company has been received for introduction of pager in Indian languages.

However, some of the companies appear to be getting ready for multilingual paging services.

Expansion of Exchanges

942. SHRI P.C. THOMAS :
SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to expand Telephone Exchanges during 1997 and 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise, location-wise;

(c) whether the Government also propose to open new telephone exchanges in the State; and