

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Design, manufacture, etc. commissioning of Continuous Automatic Train Control (CATC) system.	FF 56.295 million + Rs 2.30 crore	French credit	FF56.295 million	FF 50.872 million	Nil

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI : Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to put my first supplementary question to Hon'ble Minister. Hon'ble Minister has stated in his reply that maximum funds have been made available for First, Second Railway project and for other four project. Through you, I would like to ask Hon'ble Minister that if maximum amount has been spent, what is the actual progress made in these projects, what are the benefits likely to accrue to the Railways and to what extent the passengers amenities will be increased? Whether any arrangements have been made to monitor the implementation of this project from time to time?

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, arrangements have been made for procuring new engines, transfer of technology, Railway upgradation and for procuring equipments for the projects for which loans have been taken from foreign countries. This will help our trains run faster which would benefit passengers. The Indian Railways has entered into this contract to facilitate the passengers and freight movement.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI : Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reply has been given in respect of 6 project. Besides, I would like to know from Hon'ble Minister that he has mentioned financing of other projects through foreign financial agencies. Whether the Government propose to include new projects in its agenda by getting them funded by foreign financial agencies? If so, whether the Government propose to take up some special projects of North Eastern states including Bihar and Bengal.

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : Right now no new project has been submitted to the Government. Whenever such a project is submitted, the Ministry would take it up for consideration.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, there are a number of projects which have been undertaken with foreign assistance. Now, there is a system that when a project is sanctioned, the internal rate of return is to be 14 percent. Has that aspect been taken care of in regard to those projects which have been sanctioned and undertaken with foreign assistance? Are all these projects economically viable or not?

[Translation]

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, sometimes there is delay in the process of finalization of the projects taken up by us. Right now I do not have the information regarding the projects about which Hon'ble Minister is enquiring. I will inform the Hon'ble Member in this regard.

[English]

#### Rehabilitation of Repatriates from UAE

\*104. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN :

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the number of repatriates sent back to India from Gulf and other countries, country-wise;

(b) whether the Government have formulated any Schemes/Central Fund for their rehabilitation;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether they are allowed to re-enter in the Gulf countries on the same passport?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House

#### STATEMENT

Recently, about 60,000 persons returned from the United Arab Emirates under an amnesty scheme of the UAE Government, for departure of illegal foreigners staying in the UAE without valid permits. In the recent past, there has been no major exodus of Indian nationals from other countries. However, from time to time some Indians living abroad without valid travel documents and visas have been expelled from Gulf and other countries. Country-wise details are presently not available.

No scheme/Central Fund has been formulated/set-up by the Government for rehabilitation of these repatriates

With the announcement of amnesty, it was also announced by the Government of UAE that expatriates who will be availing amnesty will be allowed to re-enter UAE on legal status. However, as per immigration

regulation of the UAE, such of the persons who deserted their employers, cannot return to UAE for six months after their exit if the employer/sponsor insists. Those who apply within this period, the UAE Government can be expected to decide within the parameters of this rule. In respect of other countries, including the remaining Gulf countries, the rule position is not presently available.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Sir, there are reports that the UAE need thousands of workers and technicians immediately. I quote: "Job seekers are still welcome," says the UAE Minister. This is from the *National Herald*, dated 17th November, 1996. In view of these reports, will the Government of India take necessary steps to facilitate the returning of the same persons who have been sent out from the UAE?

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : Yes, Sir, the Government has decided that those persons who were sent back to India by the UAE, if they are required by the employers in the UAE, the Government of India, that is, the Labour Ministry has decided to facilitate the going back of those workers who want to go back. There was a condition that before going back or anybody going for the job outside India, particularly to the Gulf countries, the Indian Embassies should verify all the documents of job and also the position with the employer. We have suspended this condition for three months so that all the Indian labourers or workers who have come back to India may go back easily.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : I would like to know whether the Union Government have received any proposal for the rehabilitation of the repatriates and if so what steps have been taken so far. If not, will the Government initiate some new schemes for the rehabilitation of the repatriates with the cooperation of the State Governments?

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : The hon. Member has not clarified the aspect of the proposal received from whom.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : I mean the proposal from the State Government of Kerala.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : If any proposal comes from the State Government, we will look into that. Already, we have taken steps to accommodate and rehabilitate them. Let me, through you, Sir, tell the august House that there are two types of problems because of repatriation and mass exodus from the UAE. It is because of the Government of UAE's action against the illegal migrants. First, there is a severe labour shortage in the UAE because of the exodus of skilled and other labourers belonging particularly to India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Secondly, because of that exodus and people coming to this country, there is social tension in the labour class and the society. So, we have taken steps to ease it out by encouraging the people to go back. Also, if we are required to extend some support, we extend support.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN : Out of the 60,000 persons who have returned from the UAE, 44,000 persons belong to Kerala. More than six lakh Malayalees are working in the Gulf countries and they are earning more than Rs 8,506 crore by way of foreign exchange per year. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister one thing. Since we are giving incentives and benefits to the exporters of export commodities and to the export-oriented industries, I would like to know whether the Government of India would give any incentive to these persons or not; whether the Government of India would form or constitute a National Gulf Repatriates Welfare Fund or not.

It is learnt from the newspapers that more than one lakh people from Saudi Arabia are going to be expelled. I would like to know whether it has come to the notice of the Government of India and whether a Welfare Fund would be formulated so as to protect the interests of the persons who have returned from the Gulf countries. It is also learnt from the newspapers that some of the persons who have repatriated from the Gulf countries and who have come to the Gujarat seashore/coastal areas have been taken by the police and the customs authorities, and their valuables have been taken by them and they have been ill-treated. I would also like to know whether it has come to the notice of the Government of India and if so what action has been taken thereof.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : Sir, the number of persons who came back from the UAE is 45,844 to whom we have given amnesty certificates and 3051 persons were of general category who came back.

As regards the views expressed by the hon. Member about any proposal to rehabilitate them, we have not received any proposal from Kerala Government. If any proposal comes, we will take that into consideration.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN : Will the Centre formulate some scheme to rehabilitate them or to protect their interests?

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : At present, we do not have any scheme so far.

MR SPEAKER : They do not have any scheme so far.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : When the exodus is there from the UAE to India, there is a group of recruiting companies operating in Delhi, which is taking applications and money from the people to send them to the UAE. This incident has happened with 10 people of my constituency also. They had given the money to the recruiting company. Now, they are told by the company that nothing could be done. So, this process is going on.

In this regard, I talked to the previous Minister that the Government of India must do something so that this is stopped temporarily by recruiting

companies. Otherwise, the poor people who are arranging money for going out by selling their lands to give it to the recruiting companies will be deprived of everything.

Is the hon. Minister aware of this and if so, what action does he propose to take? If somebody is genuine, let him go out. I do not mind. But there are fictitious applications and fictitious collections. The Government has got a responsibility to have a check on it.

MR. SPEAKER : Sontosh Mohan Devji, the question is regarding people coming back and not regarding people going out.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : It is in the periphery of the question and peripheries should be covered.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : If you permit me, the nature of complaint expressed by the hon. Member is very much all over the country. The Ministry of Labour - as you are also well aware by your experience - is having all checks and surveillance. We are supervising everything in this regard.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Have you prosecuted anybody in this regard? You are not doing anything.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : Sir, if he brings any specific complaint, I assure him that we will examine it and punish the people concerned.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, in the answer, he has said that the Government is considering certain welfare measures and amnesty given to people will be taken back.

But there is no initiative from the Government side to put our people there properly and take care of them. There is a rumour and a news item appeared in the paper that about a lakh of people are going to be sent out from Saudi Arabia. When people are sent out, only the Government is taking care of them.

My question is, what is the Government of India doing to take any pre-emptive steps with the concerned Government in the Gulf to request them not to send out the people like that and find out their difficulties. What steps is the Government going to take not to send the people put like this, in lakhs and lakhs? Would the hon. Minister kindly reply?

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : Sir, as you have very kindly explained earlier, the issue relates to UAE. Anyhow, the hon. Member has raised an apprehension about exodus of people from Saudi Arabia. But the Ministry of Labour has no such incident ever mentioned so far.

SHRI A.C. JOS : The question is, only after the incident comes, the Ministry comes to know about it. Some pre-emptive action, some surveillance actions are to be taken by the Ministry in each Gulf country. Only when the people are sent out, some action has to be taken.

The position is that, nobody is there to take care of these people. Our Embassies are totally silent, they are not doing anything to know as to why people are being sent out, what are their possibilities.

As our learned friend has mentioned, about 600 crores of rupees are coming every month to this country but this Government is not taking any steps to take care of them.

MR. SPEAKER : I think, you have made your point.

SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Everybody knows what is happening in Saudi Arabia's economy.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : Sir, I humbly request hon. Member that if he has some specific information, he should unfold it. We will do the needful.

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a question of specific information. What he wanted was, before these people are sent out abruptly, can we not alert our Missions to keep a watch so that they will try to find whether there is any attempt to send them back to India in such large numbers. If they come to know that, then they should take up with the appropriate authority.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Government has just said that they would give all facilities in order to enable these people to go back. Now there are certain difficulties. Many of those who have returned are required to obtain a new passport and a lot of delay takes place. Therefore, will the Labour Ministry coordinate these activities with the passport-issuing authorities in order to see that the passports to such persons who have returned and who require a new passport, are issued these passports as early as possible.

Similarly, there is a difficulty that in Calicut Airport specially the authorities ask even those persons who have returned and are going back to produce income-tax clearance certificates. This is an unnecessary and abrupt requirement that has come up creating a lot of difficulties and people are not in a position to go back in time for their visas. This difficulty has also to be removed. Will the hon. Minister coordinate the work of facilitating return of these with the respective departments issuing the passport and the department asking for the clearance certificate?

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : We scrutinise all the papers and satisfy ourselves before anybody goes abroad. About the complaint raised by the hon. Member, I assure you that we will take up everything with the Ministry of External Affairs and nothing bad will happen.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Sir, a question was asked very specifically as to whether there are other countries from where there has been repatriation. He has not replied to at all. Should we presume that the only country which is repatriating people is UAE and there is no other country from where repatriation has taken place? We would like to have a categorical reply.

Secondly, it is the question of protection of immigrants who are supposed to be registering. The agreements are entered into between the employer in the Gulf or other countries and the Indian citizen who is traveling there for a job. I would like to know whether the Protector of Immigrants is supposed to protect the interests of the immigrants. What is the role of the Protector of Immigrants when such contracts are branded as illegal in the countries in which he is supposed to be working? Is there any coordination between the Protector of Immigrants on the one side and the Ministry of External Affairs which issues the passports and the Missions which work there on the other? Is there any coordination? It has also been mentioned in the reply about the country-wise details. (Interruptions)

MR SPEAKER : If you speak more, it will be disallowed. You have spoken more than two minutes. If you want an answer, please sit down now.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : There is complete coordination between the Labour Ministry and our Missions abroad. As I stated earlier, we have been holding the practice of getting all the documents verified by our Missions abroad. But we have suspended this practice for three months to facilitate the repatriation of the workers. Therefore, I assure the hon. Member that every care will be taken about this.

#### New Railway lines

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\*105. SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL :  
SHRI DINSHA PATEL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that allocation of resources for creation of new railway lines have rapidly declined during the current Plan period.

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor, and

(c) the steps being contemplated by the Government to ensure allocation of adequate resources for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. The expenditure in the current plan period has been more than that in the earlier plans.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Efforts are constantly being made to get increased Budgetary Support so that a higher allocation could in turn be made for New Line projects.

[Translation]

SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to remind Hon'ble Minister that whenever his Department approaches the Planning Commission alongwith proposal for laying new lines in

backward areas of the country, it fails to present its case properly that is why lesser money is allocated. We have got their report with us. Earlier too they have done less work. The funds that are given for expansion of Railway Services are not spent for laying Rail Lines in backward areas; rather the funds are spent for providing latest and better facilities at broad gauge lines routes. The provision of new lines for backward area is being made in the budget for several years but money is not provided as per requirement to complete these projects. I would like to ask Hon'ble Minister as to when as Indore-Godhara line included in the budget proposals?

MR. SPEAKER : You should ask your question in two minutes

[English]

SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK : Backward and tribal areas should be given priority

[Translation]

SHRI SHANTILAL PARSOTAMDAS PATEL : Whenever the matter pertaining to backward areas is raised, nobody pays heed to it. An amount of 13-14 crore rupees has already been spent on this line but as on today, the work is at a standstill. I would like to know from Hon'ble Minister as to why was this project abandoned after spending 14 crore rupees on Indore-Godhara line and when would it be started again?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Hon'ble Member is aware and while presenting the Railway budget, I had stated that for expansion of the Railways the practice had been followed by the Railways was in accordance to the criteria of profitability of a particular line. More attention was paid towards profitable lines. However, this time an effort has been made in the Railway budget not to give priority to profit making lines and instead extend the Rail Line in the backward areas 11 Line of the country. Even if Railways suffers on account of this, the Government should make up for the loss. We want to take up the expansion of Railway from the point of view of development of people. From this point of view, we have tried to connect many backward areas.

It is true that Godhara-Indore Railway line is still incomplete. Work is in progress in Devas-Makasi Section and its total cost is Rs. 48 crore. As hon'ble member has stated and infact he himself has given the reply that whatever funds we get for laying new Rail lines are allocated by the Planning Commission. Whatever amount is spent, comes through budgetary support. Railways does not spend its own money. It does not spend out of its inner resources. We have made a demand that budgetary support should be increased. Earlier the budgetary support was 75 percent which has now come down to 60%. We have made a request to the Government in this regard. I would also like to inform the hon'ble Member that in the Seventh Five Year Plan, the total allocation was Rs.884 crore