

(b) The quantity of coking coal imported during 1995-96 and the average landed cost thereof per tonne is as below :

	Quantity (Million Tonnes)	Average cost per tonne (including freight upto port) (In rupees)
SAIL	5.685	2240.00
VSP	2.575	2401.90
TISCO	0.883	2219.70

(c) The quantity of low ash coal from Assam consumed by the Integrated Steel Plants in 1995-96 and the average cost thereof per tonne is as below :

	Quantity (Million Tonnes)	Average Landed cost per tonne (including freight upto port) (In rupees)
SAIL	0.146	2150.00
VSP	0.020	2076.98
TISCO	0.046	2050.00

(d) and (e) Although Assam Coal is not a substitute for imported Coking Coal, yet SAIL plants are using Assam Coal as much as possible.

[Translation]

Functioning of Kusinagar Airport in U.P.

4163. SHRI HARIVANSH SAHAI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Kusinagar airport in Uttar Pradesh is proposed to start functioning during 1997;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to start functioning; and

(c) whether the Government propose to allow the operation of air service from Gorakhpur airport till Kusinagar airport starts functioning?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (c) Kusinagar airport belongs to the State Government of Uttar Pradesh and Gorakhpur airport belongs to the Ministry of Defence. Airports Authority of India has no plans to upgrade these airports. Airlines are free to operate flights from these airports, keeping in view the traffic potential and economic viability.

[English]

Satellite National Network System for Airports

4164. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration to set up a satellite based national network system for airports in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is being implemented on a built operate transfer basis;

(d) whether there are any overseas investors of Indian corporate houses willing to fund this scheme;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which this system is likely to be made fully operational?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India is maintaining a vast communication network comprising of land-line tele-printer circuits, direct speech circuits, fax terminal and telex connections at 89 airports. To meet the future technological requirements in the field of aviation, it is proposed to switch over from land-line to satellite based tele-communication network. In the first phase, it is proposed to transfer all direct speech circuits and tele-printer circuits on to this network. In the second phase, network will be enhanced to provide extended direct VHF coverage and inter-connect radars etc.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The first phase of this network is expected to be operational in 1998.

Construction of Over Bridge

4165. DR. Y.S. RAJASEKHARA REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received some requests regarding the construction of foot overbridge at Yerraguntala, allotment of sufficient funds for the construction of new Railway line between Nandyal and Yerraguntala to enable its early completion and non-transfer of Guntakal Railway Division to Bangalore zone;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) No request has been received for foot over bridge on

deposit terms at Yerraguntala from State Government/ Local Municipality. Rs. 5 Crore in the 97-98 Budget have been provided for Nandyal-Yerraguntala new BG line. Work will be taken up after land is made available by State Government Detailed Territorial jurisdictions of newly created zones have not yet been finalised.

Reduction in Running time of Rajdhani Express

4166. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps being taken by the Government to reduce the running time of Rajdhani Express running between Delhi and Chennai;

(b) whether it is a fact that this route has more passenger traffic than the other metro connections;

(c) if so, the reasons for not increasing the schedule from once a week to six times a week; and

(d) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Upgradation of technology for speeding up of the trains is a continuous process on the Indian Railways.

(b) Route-wise data of passenger traffic are not maintained.

(c) and (d) The frequency of 2633/2634 Madras Rajdhani Express is being increased from weekly to bi-weekly during April'97. Further increase in its frequency is not feasible at present.

Development of Srinagar Airport

4167. SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to make arrangements for developing Srinagar airport as an international airport; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) Srinagar Airport belongs to Ministry of Defence. Clearance/approval of that Ministry has been sought for developing facilities to enable international operations from Srinagar airport.

Bharat Gold Mines Limited

4168. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK :

SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the production of gold by the Bharat Gold Mines Limited during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Government propose to expand the operation of BGML;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government also propose to set up a new process plant based on carbon-inpulp technology; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) The production of gold by the Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML) during each of the last three years is furnished below :

(Unit is Kgs.)

Year	Production
1993-94	672
1994-95	650
1995-96	650

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) The rehabilitation package, submitted by M/s ICICI, the Operating Agency for the revival of BGML, envisages setting up of a project for recovery of gold by treatment of tailing through carbon-in-pulp technology.

Beedi Industries in Kerala

4169. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether beedi industries in Kerala are facing serious financial crises;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to help the workers specially the large section of poor women employees?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Extraction of Lead from Bihar

4170. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA :

SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Geological Survey of India has conducted any survey for exploration of lead in Bihar;

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