

*[English]***Extension of Indian Airlines to Jabalpur**

3318. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Airlines services being operated upto Raipur are proposed to be extended upto Jabalpur; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be extended?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Old age Pension Scheme

3319. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :
SHRI UPENDRA NATH NAYAK :

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the funds allocated under the old age pension scheme and disbursed during the year 1997-98, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government have yet to revise the Old Age Pension;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefore ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) A sum of Rs. 46396.79 lakhs was allocated to the various State/UTs under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NDAPS) during the year 1997-98. Out of this Rs. 36278.88 lakhs was released. As reported by the States/UTs, a sum of Rs. 32706.31 lakhs (Provisional) has been utilised during the year 1997-98, State-wise allocation and release figures have been given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) to (d) The NOAPS introduced a national minimum standard for old age pension. Central funds are given to the States/UTs for payment of old age pension to the destitute persons of 65 years and above @ Rs. 75/- per month. The State Governments have the freedom to adopt more liberal criteria and to pay an amount higher than Rs. 75/- per month, meeting the differences from their own funds. The NOAPS has been in operation only for near about 3 years and many States are to achieve the numerical ceilings in respect of the number of beneficiaries prescribed for Central assistance and there is also the resource constraint. Hence, of late, the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment has no proposal to revise the old age pension.

Exploration of Mineral Wealth

3320. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the efforts made by the Union Government to explore mineral wealth of Maharashtra during the last three years ;

(b) whether the Government are satisfied with the results achieved; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) Geological Survey of India (GSI) has carried out during the last three years a number of explorations for basemetal, gold and manganese ore besides preliminary investigations of dimensional stones, platinum group of elements, rare earth of elements and coal.

The significant achievement are as follows :

1. Established continuity of Manganese Ore body for 210 Mts. and 600 Mts. strike length in Parsoda Block and Bolda-Junevani area of Nagpur district respectively.

2. 0.7 million tonnes of ore with 1.2% of Copper has been estimated in Gorara Block, Bhadara district in Maharashtra.

3. Small gold deposits have been established in Parsori West Block, Nagpur district with and estimated reserve of 0.137 million tonnes of gold ores average grade of 5.23 gm/tonne and in Kitari Block with 1.2 million tonnes of gold ores of average of 0.5 g/t.

4. Regional assessment has established commercial grade dimensional stones in Nagpur, Bhandara, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur and Nanded districts in three Blocks, covering an area of 30 Sq Kms.

5. GSI has conducted regional exploration for coal in Wardha valley coalfield, Chandrapur and Wardha districts and estimated 158.00 million tonne coal in Rajpura-Manikgarh and 300.00 million tonne Coal in Palashban areas.

Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) have, on behalf of Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Limited (CMPDIL) and Ministry of Coal conducted exploration of coal in Chandrapur and Nagpur district during last three years and established reserve of 131.40 million tonnes.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Questions does not arise.