

to reject the said demand, if found untenable, as per the existing instructions.

2. Procedure for applying for vehicles : The registered/recognised Welfare/Charitable/Educational institutions are authorised for one Truck/Lorry upto 6.5 Ton 4 x 2 Tata LPT 1210E, one Jeep and one Motor Cycle from the surplus defence stock in a block of 5 years. The application is submitted direct to the Government of India, Ministry of Defence alongwith the following certificates :

- i) Certificate from the Head of the Organisation/ Institution that the vehicle(s) is/are required for the bonafide use of the organisation and not for the personal use of any of its Officers/Staff.
- ii) That no vehicle(s) has/have been drawn by the institution within a period of three years prior to the date of the request.
- iii) That the released vehicle(s) will not be resold within a period of three years from the date of release.

The request should, normally, be made through the concerned Department of the State Government or Central Government, giving full justification of the requirements. The bonafides of the organisations and the reasonableness of the requirements are certified by an officer of the rank of Joint Secretary or an officer of equivalent rank by the concerned Department of the State Government or the concerned Ministry of the Government of India. Such certification, specifically, covers the financial standing of the institution and its capacity to make a capital investment, after certifying their balance sheets and accounts.

In the case of organisations, within the Defence set up, R & D organisation, DGQA, it is similarly certified by an officer not below the rank of Major General or equivalent that the requirement of the organisation are reasonable and that the vehicles asked for are required for bonafide Welfare amenity/educational purposes, and the organisation has financial standing and capacity for making the capital investment, as verified from their Balance sheets and accounts. In the case of Formation Head-quarters, an officer not below the rank of Major General for the respective side certifies.

Vehicles other than jeeps, are released at the latest average auction sale rate for the same time, make model, category as determined from time to time. In the case of Jeeps only one vehicle is released at 50% of the latest average auction sale rate for the same type, make model and category as determined from time to time. Release of any additional jeep will be at the full average auction sale rate, plus departmental charges.

The vehicle(s) are collected from the respective Depots by the representative of the organisation.

Release of vehicle(s) is not, normally, authorised to the same organisation more than once in three years.

Customers' Service "Access"

3310. SHRI P. UPENDRA :
SHRI RANJIB BISWAL :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Indian Airlines has started a new customers' service programme called "Access";
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the response of the travellers to this scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to give a quantum face-lift and to improve Indian Airlines complaint handling system, a new feedback programme named 'ACCESS' has been launched on 8th May, 1998. The scheme is based on a fully computerised data base management system, which would ensure that every writer of the Access card gets a personalised response. The scheme was started with an initial letter from the Chairman & Management Director, Indian Airlines to passengers travelling on Indian Airlines, requesting them to give their views and suggestions for the improvement of services.

(c) The response from the passengers is phenomenal. In the first month approximately 5000 Access cards were received from the passengers, which is very high as compared to the number of suggestion cards received earlier.

Water Scarcity in Maharashtra

3311. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :

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

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appeared in "The Hindustan Times" dated May 16, 1998 wherein it has been stated that more than 50 million people in the villages and slum of Maharashtra State are grappling with an acute water scarcity;

(b) whether the Government of Maharashtra has submitted any scheme/proposal and has demanded funds to ensure supply of water; and

(c) if so, the action the Union Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Drinking water is a State subject. States are expected and also guided to plan and implement individual rural water supply schemes. The Central Government supplement the efforts of the State Governments by providing central assistance under the centrally sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme. As per the Action Plan prepared by the Government of Maharashtra all rural uncovered habitations of the State will be fully provided with safe drinking water during the Ninth Plan period, subject to availability of funds.

Passenger Amenities at Railway Stations

3312. SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that passengers' amenities at the railway stations have deteriorated since the last one year;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether any surprise checks have been conducted to find out the factors responsible for it;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the concrete measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to streamline the passenger amenities at the railway stations ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) There has been no deterioration.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Regular and surprise inspections are conducted by Railway Officers and Supervisory staff at various levels in order to ensure that requisite passenger amenities are available and well maintained. As a follow up of these inspections, corrective action is being taken, where necessary. In addition, Service Improvement Groups have been constituted at important stations with a view to have a multi-disciplinary approach to the upkeep and improvement in the services provided. These Groups consist of Officers/Supervisory staff from various Departments and function at Station, Divisional and Headquarters levels.

(e) Minimum facilities have been provided at all stations. Norms based on volume of traffic at stations have been laid down for provision of various amenities viz. Waiting Hall, Sitting accommodation, drinking water, latrine and urinals, booking arrangements, water coolers, waiting rooms, covered-sheds etc. Allocation of funds for amenities are constantly being increased from year to year.

Besides, for the convenience of passengers, reserved accommodation on trains through Computerised Reservation System has been extended to 339 locations upto 31.3.1998 covering about 95% of the total reserved accommodation. Enquiry Offices are also being upgraded by providing Inter-active Voice Response System (IVRS) for telephonic enquiries, improved announcement and display systems.

Monitoring Cells at Ministry, Zonal and Divisional Railway Headquarters levels have also been set up for monitoring passenger complaints related to passenger amenities.

[Translation]

Development of Towns

3313. SHRI PRADEEP KUMAR YADAV : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the amount provided for development of towns during the last three years and till March, 1998 and the Plan Head under which the amount has been provided, State-wise;

(b) the amount provided by the Union Government during 1998-99;

(c) whether Uttar Pradesh has been provided inadequate funds for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHAMALANI) : (a) State-wise details of Central grants for development of towns for the last three years upto March, 1998 are given in the enclosed Statements I and II.

(b) and (c) The State-wise allocation funds for 1998-99 are yet to be finalised. Therefore, no Central grants have been released so far.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement-I

State-wise release of Central grants during the last three years upto March, 1998

S.No.	State/UTs	Funds released under plan head	
		Major Head 2217- Urban Development I D S M T	Major Head 2215- Water Supply and Sanitation A U W S P
(Rupees in lakhs)			
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	863.01	104.45
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	29.00	308.05