

(c) if so, the details thereof and the criteria adopted to set-up the said unit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Government has accorded approval for preparation of Techno Economic Feasibility Report for a new Zinc smelter by Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise at present.

Gauge Conversion in Orissa

2385 SHRI RANJIB BISWAL:
SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to convert some narrow gauge (NG) lines into broad gauge are pending since long;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, Zone-wise; and

(c) the steps taken for the conversion of these lines into broad gauge?

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) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

[Translation]

Fire in Goods Train

2386. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether engine of a goods train, caught fire at Sirathu railway station on April 11, 1998;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the government have conducted any inquiry into this incident;

(d) if so, the findings of the inquiry committee; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to check the recurrence of such incidents?

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 & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, on 10.4.98 electric locomotive no. 21049 type WAG-4 of a goods train caught fire near Sirathu. Fire in locomotive was controlled by engine crew with the help of fire extinguishers available in the electric locomotive and finally fire was extinguished with the help of fire brigade.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. The findings of the Committee established that the fire was due to an incipient fault in the windings of locomotive transformer. Steps have already been taken for monitoring the condition of the transformers to detect such incipient defects and ensuring desired timely attention.

[English]

State Ministers Conference

2387. SHRI ANIL BASU:
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:

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

(a) whether the issues of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Rural Housing were discussed at the meeting of State Ministers of Rural Development convened by the Union Government on May 13, 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A conference of the State Ministers of Rural Development, panchayati Raj and Rural Housing was convened on 13th May, 1998 to discuss the following agenda items:

- (i) Restructuring of Self-Employment programmes;
- (ii) Strengthening of District Rural Development Agencies;
- (iii) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana - amendments;
- (iv) Rationalisation of Employment Assurance Scheme;