

the Government of India and Government of the country concerned. Indian Airlines and Air India have, at present, no plans to provide new air links.

[English]

Construction of New Railway Lines

1339. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of surveys conducted for construction of new railway lines from 1996 onwards till date:

(b) whether survey for construction of Mehboob Nagar-Koppal via Raichur a new railway line has also been conducted;

(c) if so, the present position of the project; and

(d) the time by which construction work is likely to be started?

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) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

[Translation]

Allotment of Stalls at Railway Stations

1340. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mumbai High Court had given a Stay Order on direct allotment of catering stalls at railway stations;

(b) if so, the grounds on which the stalls are being allotted to multinational soft drink companies, like Pepsi and Coco Cola at Delhi, New Delhi; Nizamuddin and other railway stations;

(c) whether this step amount to provide special facility to the multinational companies; and

(d) if so, whether this facility would also be extended to the Indian catering contractors?

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) Yes, Sir. However, the stay has been subsequently vacated.

(b) No direct allotment of stalls is being made. automatic dispensing machines for sale of hot and cold beverages of Indian and multinational companies are being

installed at important railway stations as per prescribed procedure and guidelines.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Dollar Based Fare

1341. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the domestic airlines have made proposals to the Government to raise the dollar based fares in the context of devaluation of the rupee;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals; and

(c) the decision of the Government thereon?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Dilapidated Coaches

1342. SHRI P. SANKARAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to remove the dilapidated coaches attached to some trains running between Mangalore, Shoranore, Calicut and Palakkad; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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) No dilapidated coaches are attached to any train running between Mangalore-Shoranur, Calicut and Palakkad sections. Moreover, all coaches used on trains running in this region are well within their economic service life.

(b) Does not arise.

Losses Due to Selling of Semi-precious Stone

1343. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh is losing crores of rupees due to official ineptitude and non-cooperation from the mining department of the Government;

(b) if so, whether the neighbouring States were selling the locally mined semi-precious stones (colour stones) at a high premium in the international market;

(c) if so, the serious efforts that have been made by the State Government as well as by the Department of Minerals to check the illegal activity and streamlining the trade;

d) whether the Union Government took a decision in 1996 to auction the mines on an experimental basis; and

e) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to check the illegal trade of stones in the State of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) to (e) Information is being collected from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Flouride In Drinking Water

1344. SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of villagers are affected due to the presence of flouride contents in potable water in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the names of such villages which are affected by it;

(c) whether any funds have been provided during the current financial year in order to give respite to the people of flouride affected villages; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) to (d) As per reports of the State Governments, around 0.14 lakh habitations are affected with excess flouride in the water in the State of Rajasthan. The Government of India has been providing fund to the State Government for the implementation of schemes for providing safe drinking water. After 1.4.1998, states have been given full powers to deal with water quality issues including excess flouride.

[English]

Storage Facility for Defence Products

1345. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether safe storage facility is lacking in our ammunition and other explosives; and

(b) the steps, if any, being taken to provide safe storage facility for Defence products like ammunition,

bombs etc.?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is a shortage of storage accommodation. However, within the constraints, all efforts have been made to keep the ammunition, safe and secure. For augmentation of storage accommodation in ammunition Depots, a number of projects have been approved and included in the Major Works Programme for 1998-99.

[Translation]

Sick Iron Ore Mines

1346. SHRIMATI KAMAL RANI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sick iron ore mines in Uttar Pradesh at present;

(b) the reasons therefor alongwith the date from which these have been declared sick;

(c) whether the Government propose to revive them; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) As per the information available, there are no iron ore mines in Uttar Pradesh at present. Hence, the question of their being sick does not arise.

(b) to (d) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

[English]

Setting up of Railway Workshop

1347. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no workshop of Railways under the East Coast Railway Zone except one at Mancheswar;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to set up workshop at Berhampur under East Coast Railway; and

(c) if not, the place identified for the purpose?

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) The existing workshops on Indian Railway have not yet been distributed to the newly created zones including the East Coast Zone.