

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Konkan Railway has been opened to through traffic on 26th January, 1998 and it is hardly four months that the Railway is in operation. Already 6 Express and Passenger trains are running. However, to develop traffic to its capacity, some gestation period is involved. It is but natural in the initial first and second year of operation, till the full traffic is developed, that losses will occur. This is accounted for in the cash flows. However, the losses cannot be termed as huge and are of a magnitude which can be controlled.

(b) The main reason for the present loss is the non-materialisation of traffic to the expected levels, and the consequent short fall in earnings. However, since ten months of the current financial year are still there, the results for the full year will depend on the extent to which traffic builds up during the remaining period. It has been estimated that if earnings for the year come up to Rs. 380 crores, it would be possible to break even on ordinary working expenses and interest payments on borrowed funds.

(c) various steps are proposed to be taken to reduce the losses. As soon as the line was opened, action was taken to divert Express passenger trains as follows:-

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 26.1.98 | Mumbai-Madgaon Express(extended) |
| 21.3.98 | Netravati Express |
| 1.4.98 | Nizamuddin-Trivandrum Rajdhani Express |
| 1.6.98 | Kurla-Mangalore Express (New train) |

Further, shortly the following trains will be diverted:-

1. 2617/2618 - Nizamuddin- Mangalore Mangla Express
2. Gujarat Group of trains bound for Kerala:
 - i. 6333/6334 Trivandrum-Rajkot Express (weekly)
 - ii. 6337/6338 Cochin-Rajkot Express(weekly)
 - iii. 6335/6336 Nagarcoil-Gandhidham Express (weekly)

Expeditious action is being taken to effect this diversion as each train diverted adds to the revenue of Konkan Railway to the extent of Rs 6 to Rs. 7 lakhs per day.

Further, a strategy is being worked out to improve the freight traffic by identifying, streams of cement, fertilizer, iron-ore and steel products to move on Konkan Railway.

Religious and Tourist Places Connected by Air Service

*141. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of religious and tourist places connected by air service in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to connect other religious and tourist places by air services; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Indian Airlines and Alliance Air have connected the following new pilgrimage centres and tourist places during the last 3 years:-

Name of the station	State/Union Territory
1. Tirupati	Andhra Pradesh
2. Puttaparthi	Andhra Pradesh
3. Jaisalmer	Rajasthan
4. Agatti	U.T. of Lakshadweep

(b) and (c) Many of the stations, already airlinked, are gateways and destinations for important places of tourist and religious interests. Airlines Operators are , being encouraged to add new stations in their network subject to viability.

Anomalies in Salary Structure of Defence Personnel

1267. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the existing anomalies in the salary structure of the defence personnel; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken to overcome the same ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government appointed the Ajit Kumar Committee to examine the anomalies arising from the implementation of revised pay scales and allowances of service personnel consequent to the V Pay Commission award. The Committee has submitted its Report. The recommendations of the Committee are presently under Government's consideration.

[Translation]

Old Age Pension Scheme

1268. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Old Age Pension Scheme has been implemented in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the scheme has been financed wholly by the Union Government; and

(d) if so, the time by which the said assistance is likely to be made available in Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) to (d) The National Old Age Pension Scheme(NOAPS) being one of the three components of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) provides the benefits @ Rs. 75/- per month to the prescribed destitute persons aged 65 years or above. It is Centrally Sponsored Scheme and provides 100 percent Central assistance to the States/UTs.

In Madhya Pradesh NOAPS is in operation since 15th August, 1995. The allocation/release of funds alongwith expenditure and number of beneficiaries as reported by the Government of Madhya Pradesh since inception of the scheme are given in the following statement:

(Rs. in Lakh)

Year	Alloca- tion	Release	Reported by the Govern- ment of Madhya Pradesh	
			Expendi- ture	No. of bene- ficiaries
1995-96	2736.86	2736.86	563.70	207219
1996-97	4584.57	3606.73	3580.39	515201
1997-98	4584.53	4870.56	4596.37*	670256*

* Provisional

[English]

Maithri Housing Scheme

1269.SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS & EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether HUDCO have a proposal to provide loans for the EWS category of 'Maithri Housing Scheme' for construction of one lakh houses in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. HUDCO has sanctioned loans of Rs. 155.61 crores for implementation of 52 schemes under Maithri Housing Scheme being operated by the State Govt. of Kerala since November, 1996. The Scheme envisages providing 1 lakh houses for Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and Low income Group (LIG) The details of the schemes sanctioned by HUDCO are as follows :-

	EWS	LIG	TOTAL
No of Schemes	27	25	52
Loan Sanctioned (Rs.in crores)	80.80	74.81	155.61
Dwelling units	42525	39375	81900

In addition to the sanctioned schemes, HUDCO has received 31. Schemes from the State Govt. seeking loan assistance of Rs. 92.76 crores for construction of 48,825 dwelling units. These are in the pipelines of HUDCO for sanction during 1998-99.

[Translation]

New Housing Policy for Delhi

1270.SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS & EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to formulate a new Housing Policy for Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the times by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI) : (a) to (c) A new housing policy is under preparation as envisaged in the National Agenda for Governance which will also be applicable to Delhi as and when finalized. The Agenda has fixed a target of 7 Lakh houses in urban areas in the country every year. The modalities of implementation of the National Agenda including State-wise target for construction of dwelling units would be worked out in consultation with the State Govts./UTs.

[English]

Small and Medium Town Development Scheme

1271.SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS & EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the notified Area Committees and Municipalities in Orissa included for all round development under the Small and Medium Town Development Scheme so far alongwith funds provided;

(b) the new Towns proposed and approved recently for inclusion under the IDSMT scheme; and

(c) the names of the Small and Medium Towns in Scheduled Areas of Orissa included and to be included under the Small and Medium Town Development Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU