

[Translation]

Helicopter Service-

1864. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI :
SHRI TEJVEER SINGH :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce Helicopter Service for the 'Darshan' of holy shrines of Badrinath and Kedarnath;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by when the helicopter service is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) to (c) Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited has sent a proposal to Garhwal Vikas Nigam Limited (GVNL) offering a 5-seater helicopter for running service to/from Badrinath and Kedarnath. The helicopter service would be based at Rudraprayag and operated on Rudraprayag-Kedarnath-Badrinath-Rudraprayag sector. On receipt of the acceptance of the proposal by GVNL, the helicopter service could be started.

[English]

Establishment of Mahila Sainik School

1865. SHRIMATI BHAVNA CHIKHALIA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Gujarat for opening of Mahila Sainik School in the State; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) In a letter to the Union Home Minister, the Minister of State for Education, Government of Gujarat has suggested the opening of Sainik School for girls and permitting their entry into the National Defence Academy (NDA).

(b) The existing Sainik Schools are primarily meant to prepare boys academically, physically and mentally for entry into the NDA. At present it is not proposed to open Sainik School for girls or permit their entry into the NDA.

[Translation]

Land Reforms

1866. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
SHRI CHINTA MOHAN :

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

(a) whether some land in the country is not fit for agriculture due to being alkaline;

(b) if so, details thereof, statewise;

(c) whether the Government has prepared any time bound scheme to make such land fit for agriculture; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) As per the report of the National Commission on Agriculture (1976), there is an area of 35.81 lakhs ha. of alkali soil in the country. State-wise details are enclosed.

(c) and (d) A centrally sponsored scheme for Reclamation of Alkali Soil was launched during the VII Five Year Plan (1985-86) in the States of Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, During the VIII Five Year Plan, the scheme was further extended to the States of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The pattern of central financial assistance is on 50:50 sharing basis between the Central and State Governments on identified components. Till 1997-98, an area of 5.05 lakhs ha. has been reclaimed at a central investment of Rs. 65.67 crores. Besides an externally aided project funded by European Union for Reclamation and Development of Alkali Land is under implementation in the States of Bihar and U.P. since October, 1993. The project aims at reclamation of 15,000 ha. at an estimated cost of Rs. 85.80 crores of which Rs. 78.92 crores is European Union assistance. The project will end on March, 2001.

Statement

Statewise Distribution of Estimated Area under Alkali Soil

(Area in lakh ha.)		
S.No.	Name of State	Alkali Soils Area
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0.64
2.	Bihar	0.04
3.	Gujarat	**9.42
4.	Haryana	4.50
5.	Karnataka	0.76
6.	Madhya Pradesh	1.64
7.	Maharashtra	0.59
8.	Punjab	7.18