

rent 22,000 units of accommodation at Makkah as per the reduced rates mentioned above. The delegation will now inspect and select buildings available for renting at Makkah and Madinah.

We are deeply conscious of our responsibility to look after the comfort and welfare of our pilgrims, many of whom are old and weak and need care and assistance. It is our objective that the pilgrims should live in suitable accommodation arranged for them in advance to eliminate confusion and hardship. This year not only will the accommodation be pre-arranged but it is also our intention to ensure allotment of accommodation in a scientific and rational manner through computerised information. Every Haji on completion of his immigration and customs formalities after arrival will be promptly guided to his place of residence with the help of reservation charts. Computerisation of information will also be of invaluable help in the matter of helping lost Hajis.

We are confident that the Pre-arranged Accommodation Scheme will add greatly to the comfort and well-being of our pilgrims. The Government has also sanctioned additional seasonal staff for the Consulate General, Jeddah, to ensure proper implementation of the scheme. Another significant step taken by the Government for the welfare of the pilgrims is the establishment of a ten-bed hospital in Makkah during the forthcoming Haj. This would facilitate treatment of many cases of illness which are too serious for our Medical Mission but not serious enough for the Saudi medical authorities to admit in their hospitals. An additional ambulance is also being supplied, the quantity of medicines augmented and the strength of the Medical Mission increased.

For the long-term welfare of our pilgrims, we also propose to locate a Rubat Officer at the Consulate-General of India at Jeddah to go into the question of retrieval of Rubats. As Hon'ble Members are aware, Indians had established endowments both in Makkah and Madinah which were of invaluable help to the pilgrims. Once the Rubat

Officer completes collection of legal documents concerning these Rubats, the task of obtaining compensation for Rubats since acquired by the Saudi Government could commence. As per Saudi regulations the compensation can be used only for establishing new Rubats where our pilgrims can stay free of cost in future.

I trust Hon'ble Members will agree that Government have taken due care to ensure that our pilgrims performing Haj this year can look forward to orderly arrangements for their stay in Saudi Arabia which will not only ensure their comfort and welfare but also ensure that they are not exploited by unscrupulous landlords. I should like to inform the House in conclusion that despite acute financial constraints Government have agreed to raise the quota of Haj pilgrims who would be provided with foreign exchange for their travel from 23,000 to 24,000 this year.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla): Sir, I welcome the hon. Minister's statement, I congratulate him. It is a comprehensive statement but I would like to seek a clarification...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. No. Now, matters under Rule 377. Except that nothing goes on record.
(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: Sir, I have given a notice.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will look into that.

12.26 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[English]

- (1) Demand for reviewing the decision to set up the head-quarter of General Manager, Western Coal fields of Wani area at village Tadall in Chandrapur district, in place of Wani itself

SHRI UTTAMRAO PATEL (Yavatmal): In reply to my Unstarred Question, it was stated that the decision regarding location of the headquarters of the General Manager of Western Coal fields, Wani will be taken by the Company in due course. Now it is understood that the Government and the company

[Sh. Uttam Rao Patel]

have taken a decision to set up headquarters of General manager of Wani area, (District Yavatmal), at village Tadali district Chandrapur which will start functioning in 1989-90.

This decision is an injustice to Wani area.

Tadali in district Chandrapur is about 90 kilometres from Wani. Wani is a big prosperous town with modern facilities and is within a distance of 15 kilometres from main line manufacturing centres and various existing and new coal mines.

It is requested that taking into consideration the strong feelings of the people and necessity, the headquarters of General Manager, West Coal Fields of Wani area, should be located at Wani itself and Government should reconsider the decision in greater interest.

[*Translation*]

(II) Demand for starting construction work of Sakri-Hasanpur and Darbhanga Samastipur railway lines in Bihar

SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN (Rosa): On account of not having started the construction of Sakri-Hasanpur and Darbhanga-Samastipur railway lines, four crore people of North Bihar are very much agitated. This is so because the construction work of both these lines had been started. Under the Ruling Works Programme in the Railway Budget of 1985-86, 86-87 and 87-88, it was given a priority of first and seventh place respectively. The Railway Ministry is not paying any attention to the construction of these lines, in spite of their inclusion in the priority list. The late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, the former Railway Minister late Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra and Late Shri Kedar Pandey had even fixed the period for completion of the construction of these two lines. All the hon. Members of Parliament

from Bihar have also submitted their memoranda to the hon. Railway Minister on a number of occasions. The Sangharsh Samiti in North Bihar has started their "rail roko" movement besides offering the court arrest. Hence I urge upon the Central Government to provide for starting the construction work of Sakri-Hasanpur and Darbhanga railway line in the interest of general public of North Bihar.

[*English*]

(III) Demand for establishing a 'Gem Park' in Western Orissa

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI (Sambalpur): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government regarding the need to set up a Gem Park in Orissa. A lot of precious and Semi-precious stones have now become available in Orissa especially in Western Orissa. While diamond is available in the river bed of Mahanadi in Sambalpur, Bolangir and Phulabani district in Orissa, gems and other precious and semi-precious stones are available in Sambalpur, Bolangir and Kalahandi districts of the state. Besides a large number of outsiders and some local people are engaged in the exploitation of these precious stones. However, the exploitation of the precious and semi-precious stones is not carried out systematically. It is, therefore, very necessary to make a thorough and detailed survey on the availability of these stones and thereafter take up the exploitation of these precious and semi-precious stones in a systematic manner.

The State Government of Orissa have already sent a proposal to the Diamond and Gem Development Corporation under the Union Commerce Ministry for establishment of a Gem Park in that state on the lines of Gujarat, Rajasthan and recently in Uttar Pradesh. The Government of Orissa is willing to extend all possible help and assistance in the establishment of the park. This Gem Park will also encourage a large number of local entrepreneurs and local artisans to get gainful employment.