SHRI AJIT SINGH   As soon as possible

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO.   What about the growth centres?

SHRI AJIT SINGH. That has not been given up The State Governments have been running a number of growth centres and some money has been given but the idea of growth centres has not been given up

Computerisation In Railways

'474   SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMA-CHANDRAN   Will the Minister of RAIL-WAYS be pleased to state

(a) the details of specific programmes or expanding computerisation in the Railways during the current year,

(b) the main achievements in computerisation during 1989-90, and

(c) the extent of computerisation introduced in the Railways in the Southern Zone?

THE MINISTER O RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha

STATEMENT

(a) The programme for extending use of computerisation on Indian Railways during 1990-91 comprises

    i)   Extension of computerised Reservation to Pune, Guwahati, Jaipur, Patna Gorakhpur, Trivandrum, Jammu Tawi, Bhubaneshwar and Cuttack,

    ii) Development of Freight Operation Information System on Northern Railway,

    iii) Net working of computerised Passenger Reservation Systems to provide universalised facility of onward and return

reservation to be taken up?

    iv) Installation of a few small Management Information Systems in stores depots, locomotive sheds, etc.

(b) The main achievements during 1989-90 with respect to computerisation are:

    i)   Installation and Commissioning of a development and simulation computer centre for Freight Operation Information System at Delhi

    ii) Extension of computerised Passenger Reservation System to Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmadabad, Bhopal and Lucknow

(c) Computerisation introduced on the Railways in the Southern Zone covers·

    i)   Electronic Data Processing Systems at Zonal Headquarter and at ICF Madras

    ii) Computerised reservation System at Madras and Bangalore

    iii) Management Information Systems on Madurai and Palghat divisions, Golden Rock Workshop and Store Depot and Railway Hospital at Perambur.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHAN-DRAN It is well known that there is tremendous achievement in various fields where computerisation has been introduced, and Indian Railways is an excellent example of this great achievement But as of new, probably because computerisation is highly capital intensive, the Railway administration has thought it fit to limit the areas of its activities

I would like to know from the hon. Minister, whether as part of the technology upgradation will the Railway Ministry resort to large scale computerisation in the remain-

ing areas of its activities like freight operations and information system, etc., etc.?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: In respect of freight operation the idea is that we will for the present confine ourselves to the Northern Railway. Expansion will follow in due course, but for the present the emphasis is on developing the system on the Northern Railway. So far as the information systems are concerned, there is work in that area i.e. various centres are brought under purview.

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Whenever the question of computerisation comes up in the House it becomes a source of discussion; especially it has been so in the last Lok Sabha. This House also witnessed uproarious scenes on this. Many members who are now sitting on the Treasury Benches have been voicing their opposition to this proposal. Their apprehension was that computerisation would reduce the number of jobs to the maximum extent, now I understand that the hon. members might have changed their stand and they might have agreed to it. So, I want to know whether the present Government harbours such apprehension and I would also like to know what the policy of the present Government is with regard to computerisation.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I cannot possibly answer the last part of the question as to the policy of the Government on computerisation as such. I can speak about computerisation in the Railways. My effort will be to lay emphasis on computerised schemes rather than on areas of computerisation as they come in the order of the day. However, such works where computers have been introduced or where they have been half way through where the installation of computers is absolutely essential in the wider scheme of things, that part of the programme will be continued.

SHRI NANI BHATTACHARYA: Sir, it is usually found that computerisation leads to unemployment, atleast making the staff surplus. May I know from the Minister whether already there have been some surplus workers in the Eastern Railway and N F Railway on introduction of computer system?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I do not have any such report with me.

PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: As a part of the scheme, as far as Bombay computerisation was concerned, in Kalyan and Thane, which are parts of Bombay, it has not taken place yet. Even these days, we are not getting computerised reservation. The other question is this. Nagpur is a major city. When are you proposing computerisation in Nagpur?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: There is no immediate proposal to computerise reservations in Nagpur, Kalyan and Thane. As far as Bombay is concerned, Bombay is capable... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: Kalyan and Thane are parts of Bombay. That was a part of the scheme.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: That is a point I am making. As far as Bombay is concerned, Bombay is capable of dealing with Kalyan and Thane. However, there is a scheme where the eighty centres are being connected with the major computer reservation centres through the Automax system. And, therefore, the problem that the hon. Member has raised in regard to the suburban centres, etc. will be taken care of.

SHRI MURALI DEORA: On the one side, computerisation is there for ticket booking, etc. On the other side, it is being used all over the world in effective running of the trains itself. Yesterday there was a fire in the train near Patna. When the alarm chain was pulled, it was not working. There are systems which could have shown the engine driver whether the chains in all the bogies working or not. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he is also considering such computerisation at the time of running the train itself which can indicate the working of the chains in the bogies?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Our main thrust of computerisation in Railways is on reservation and on the freight operation and information system. That is where the thrust is. I do not think there is any plan at the moment to take it right down to that level.

SHRI MURALI DEORA: Why do you not introduce it now? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I do not believe in going in that direction just now. The amount that is required or that is colossal... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MURALI DEORA: Had it been introduced, the fire could have been averted...

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Has the efficiency of the Indian Railways increased substantially by computerisation? Has the employment opportunities been reduced substantially due to computerisation?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: This will need notice.

SHRI A.K. ROY: Sir, everyday happening in the Indian Railways does not justify any increase in efficiency by computerisation. It is a long debate whether computerisation reduces job opportunity or not. But one thing is certain. If the computerisation is indigenous with all the infrastructure, it does not affect the job potential in that way. But if the computerisation is imported, thrusted from above, then it does. I would like to know what is the position of computerisation in the Railways, whether it is imported or indigenous.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: There is import content in the computers that are going into the Railways. Of the total project cost of Rs. 1100 crores, according to 1986 prices, Rs. 294 crores is the foreign exchange component.

[*Translation*]

No Industry Districts in Madhya Pradesh

*476. KUMARI UMA BHARATI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts declared "no industry districts" in Madhya Pradesh in 1982;

(b) whether Growth Centres were proposed to be set up in all those no industry districts;

(c) the number of Growth Centres actually sanctioned by Union Government and the financial assistance given to them; and

(d) whether this financial assistance will continue during 1990-91?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) to (d). Eighteen districts have been declared as 'No Industry Districts' in the State of Madhya Pradesh. Under the Central Infrastructural Assistance Scheme for growth centres in the No Industry Districts, it was decided to assist the State Governments to take up infrastructural development in one or two identified growth centres in each No Industry District. The assistance from the Central Government is limited to 1/3rd of the total cost of infrastructural development subject to a maximum of Rs. 2 crores per No Industry District. Six growth centres have been approved in the State of Madhya Pradesh, and a sum of Rs. 7.50 crores so far has been released as central assistance to the State till 31.3.1990. Out of the six growth centres mentioned above central assistance in full has been given to two growth centres and the remaining four are eligible to get central assistance approved under the