

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Others pale into insignificance when Mr Bachchan is sitting here.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : The hon. Minister is very happy that there is ten times increase in the number of manned railway level crossings. I would like to know whether the number is decided on the basis of financial allocations or on the basis of necessity of manning them. The lesser number of accidents may be more due to the alertness of the people than performance of the railways. Therefore, I would like to know whether you decide the number of manned level crossings on the basis of your financial allocations. And how do you decide your financial allocations for this ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Naturally, the financial allocations have to be kept in mind. It is against the backdrop of the entire financial allocations that we have to decide our priorities and our allotments. But there are certain set priorities and certain laid down procedures on the basis of which level crossings are given priorities within the level crossing allocations to be manned. There is a judicious mix; it is a blend of the two.

SHRI SARAT DEB : The hon. Minister mentioned that the manning of the railway crossings has to be done by the State Governments. I would like to know under which notification etc. the State Governments have been notified about this. When in the State Assembly we raised this question about level crossings, the Minister concerned invariably said that this was a matter concerning the Central Government. Here, you say that it concerns the State Governments. I want to know what is the clear position.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Are you giving me the responsibility for answering all the maidens, Mr. Speaker, Sir ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Do not advise him to resign and go to the State Assembly.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : They are certain set procedures, which are decided in the Railway Board and the

Railway Ministry from time to time. I would also like to state that the manning of the level crossing in the majority of cases unless it is something which comes down on our priority of train-vehicle units, is normally sponsored by the State Government and the local authority concerned. But also we have the Railway Safety Works Fund and Accident Compensation Safety and Passenger Amenities Fund, which is a percentage of the total capital at charge on a specific date, and from the first fund, specially, the Railway Safety Works Fund, eighty per cent of the money collected is reimbursed to the various States.

MR. SPEAKER : We have three Members absent all the time and the questions pass. I thought, I would allow these three maiden Members in a row. This is a hat trick of the maidens.

[*Translation*]

Superfast train between Delhi and Varanasi

*458. **SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV .** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to introduce a superfast train between Delhi and Varanasi which will cover the journey in one night ; and

(b) if so, the details there of ?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) No, Sir, (b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV : Sir, I was very hopeful that Shri Scindia would say 'yes' in reply to this question, because his ancestors had been closely connected with Varanasi. GHATS were constructed in Varanasi to perpetuate their memory. Will the hon. Minister likewise introduce

a new train? It needs no mention, the hon. Minister of Railways knows it pretty well that lakhs of Indian and foreign pilgrims and tourists visit Varanasi. From industrial point of view also, Varanasi is a big centre of carpets and sarees. Therefore, when the government have announced that Delhi will be connected with important cities by trains, why do you not help Varanasi, so that Indian as well as foreign tourists could visit the city? May I know the reason why the hon. Minister does not want to extend such facility to Varanasi?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Sir, there are three daily trains from Delhi to Varanasi. In addition to that two super-fast trains also go to Varanasi thrice a week. It will not be proper to give more trains because the track between Allahabad and Varanasi is somewhat weak and is not electrified. Besides, I would also say that for the Capital, there are a number of connecting trains from Mughal Sarai which is quite near to Varanasi, perhaps 17 miles or Kilometres.

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV : Sir, the hon Minister has stated that Varanasi—Allahabad track is weak. Therefore, I want to know whether trains cannot be run to Varanasi via Mughal-Sarai's loop line which has a double-track and does not touch Mughal Sarai?

The second point is that the distance between Mughal Sarai and Varanasi is 17 Kilometres, but the train service there is highly inadequate. Repeated requests have been made that a shuttle service of 1 hour frequency should be run there, but you are not prepared for that on the plea that road transport will take care of this service. But, sometimes due to traffic jams, it takes hours to cover this distance and the people often miss their trains. Therefore, in view of all these things, will the hon. Minister reconsider this demand?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Both of your suggestions shall be examined.

SHRI UMA KANT MISHRA : The hon. Minister has stated that new trains

cannot be started. Therefore, if one of the three Super-Fast trains is run daily from Delhi in the evening, it will serve the purpose. The Super Fast train should start from here in the evening and reach there in the morning. Similarly, the same train may start from Varanasi in the evening and reach Delhi in the morning. If you give facility, it will serve the purpose

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Not three, but two Super Fast trains run between Delhi and Varanasi and they run thrice a week. This frequency is adequate.

[English]

Compensation to relatives of Kanishka Crash Victims

*460. **PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the nearest kith and kin of the victims of the accident of Air India Boeing Kanishka on 23 June, 1985 have been offered compensation by Air India;

(b) if so, what are the norms for the payment of compensation;

(c) whether the nearest kith and kin of the victims who were foreign nationals have been given compensation of 75000 U. S. dollars per victim whereas the amount of compensation to the kith and kin of Indian victims is sought to be settled through bargaining and negotiations;

(d) if so, the reasons for this discrimination; and

(e) whether this discrimination will be removed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Air India have invited claims from members of the families of the victims 'Kanishka' crash for the purpose of compensation payable to them under the Carriage by Air Act, 1972.

(b) A limit of US \$ 20,000 per