

the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal to complete those ongoing projects before taking up new projects. If so, by when?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, the work is continuing on ongoing projects. As the hon. Member knows well, there is the constraint of resources that we are facing. Amongst our priorities so far have been rehabilitation and modernisation system. However, it is my opinion that the time has now come when we should bring the expansion of the system and also it should be given due consideration because rehabilitation and modernisation steps have already been initiated and they are going ahead at a fairly good pace. And the situation is such that we are extracting every last drop out of the system.

I think, the time has come when more attention should be given to the expansion of the system, specially in certain priority areas or in project linked lines and that is going to be our recommendation to the Planning Commission. However, we are facing a constraint of resources and the ongoing projects are processed according to the priority and keeping in view the funds that are available. No distinct policy decision can be taken that no new projects will be sanctioned, until the on-going projects are completed. This sort of policy decision we will be unable to take.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Technical Committee has furnished a report for the abolition of 40 narrow gauge railway lines all over the country including Rupsa-Bangriposhi line in South-Eastern railway? But the users are agitating against this decision. May I know from the hon. Minister what is the reaction of the Government on this issue as well as whether the railway administration is thinking to reconsider the issue after resurveying all the 40 such narrow gauge lines where the users are agitating against such decision of the Government.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: The reaction of the Government is that this partic-

ular question does not come within the purview of this question. I will require a separate question for this.

Religious education in private schools run by minorities

* 967. SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government are aware that in certain private schools run by different communities religious education is being imparted and through such religious education communal poison is being spread;

(b) whether such schools are receiving Government grants; and

(c) whether any steps are being taken to counteract such trends?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L.P. SHAHI): (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

STATEMENT

The scope of the question is very wide. It would cover information about teaching matters and financial assistance relating to a variety of schools and school systems spread all over the country. Thus it is not feasible to give a specific reply in this regard. However, the general situation is as below:

Education in schools at elementary level (Classes I-VIII) is generally regulated by the State Education Departments and at the secondary level by the Boards of Secondary Education. Under Article 28 of the Constitution no religious instruction can be provided in an educational institution maintained out of State funds. In the curriculum framework prepared by the NCERT, religious instruction is not contemplated. The syllabi at these levels also do not include education about any particular religion.

However, while the syllabi lay down the programme that should be covered by the schools, they do not impose constraints beyond this. The schools have the freedom to teach desirable things beyond the syllabi. The Government and local body schools do not impart religious instruction. There are a large number of schools run by organisations connected with one or the other religion. In the case of minorities they enjoy additional protection as enumerated in the Article 30 of the Constitution. However, no educational institution has the freedom to spread communal poison in the name of moral or religious education.

Grants to individual schools are given by the State/UT Government concerned and under the Constitution the minority schools cannot be discriminated against in the payment of grants. The National Policy on Education is applicable to all educational institutions in the country and the principles in core curriculum envisaged in the policy to promote national integration and national identity are applicable to minority educational institutions also. The National Policy on Education also declares that all educational programmes will be carried on in strict conformity with secular values. Thus while Government has provided adequate mechanism for protecting the bonafide rights of the minorities, the desirability of not allowing education to be used for furtherance of communal tendencies has been underscored.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY: I am grateful to the hon. Minister that he has taken the trouble of incorporating all the Constitutional provisions and also the Education Commission report in the answer. My question is very clear, whether the Union Government are aware that in certain private schools run by different communities, religious education is being imparted and through such religious education communal poison is being spread and, if so, whether any steps are being taken to counteract such trends. This is a simple question but it has not been answered. It may be a widespread question and it may not be possible to give a specific reply. My submission is to supply the information

whether they have taken action to collect information from the State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations and whether any violation of the law or deviation from the principle of religious and moral education is permissible under certain conditions and whether such violations and deviations are taking place and whether the Government has got any information regarding it. That is the question.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): Within the time available, it was not possible for us to get any information. That is why, the first para very clearly says that this question in its very nature is very sweeping. It is concerned with the whole country. So, we will require time to get information. How do we get information? If we write to the State Governments and the State Governments write to the district authorities, they will not be able to really pinpoint any information of this kind. Hon. Members who are touring their constituencies and to whose notice these things are brought, if they are kind enough to give information to us, we will certainly specifically go into these matters. Otherwise, there is no difficulty about writing to the State Governments and trying to get information. But I do not see how specific information can come by merely writing to the State Governments. This is the position.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY: Should I take it this way that no information is available although the deviation is taking place throughout the country and in different parts of the country?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: No.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY: That is all right. You have answered that. I will ask another question.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: There is a little deviation from what I said. What I said was that this is a countrywide question. We have had no time to get full in-

formation. If we write to the State Governments now and we are writing to the State Governments on the lines suggested in the question, I personally do not feel that any institution will say that it is spreading communal poison. No institution will say, no Headmaster will say and no Management will say. So, ultimately what will be left with is a denial, total denial, which again is not true. This might be happening in some areas. So, it is from the people's representatives that atleast the First Information Report of this kind should come to us or from any other source, not necessarily from the institutions themselves. I am suggesting a practical way. But if technically we have to write to the State Governments, we will certainly write. In fact, we are contemplating to write to them.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY: Has the Government undertaken any exercise or indepth study to see that the norms that have been provided in the Constitution, the norms that have been recommended by the Education Commission have been followed in the country or not? Has any exercise or indepth study been made? If not, will the Government undertake to make an indepth study in the matter?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: That is an on-going programme. We have just passed the New Education Policy one-and-a-half-years ago. We are implementing it. Text-books are being prepared. Still, the NCERT is also engaged in finding out how the text-books are being received at the field level. So, this is a continuous programme and I assure hon. Members that we will certainly look into how these norms laid down by the Government in the New Policy are being implemented.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the hon. Minister tell if the Constitution permits the minorities to open their schools? Certain states, like Andhra Pradesh, are enacting laws against it. A law has been enacted in Andhra Pradesh to the effect that minority institutions cannot be opened without the permission of the

Government. A number of such laws have been enacted and the existing minority institutions have been brought to the point of closure as a result thereof. Have you got any solution for that? Why is there such a deviation from the agreed principles?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: First we will have to understand the problem first and then seek its solution. First, we will try to know as to what is happening there. We have got this information from you just now. We will ask for information from the concerned state and if it is found that something has to be done on our part, we will certainly consider about it.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Similarly, I want to tell you one thing more, kindly pay attention to that also.

MR. SPEAKER: No, you tell him later on.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: One medical college is functioning there. In spite of all the formalities having been completed, recognition is not being granted to this college by your medical council.

MR. SPEAKER: You may give it in writing. This is not the way. He will not be able to reply.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: This is a matter of public interest. I would like to know as to why the medical council is not according recognition to this college.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the way.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: There are 9 medical colleges in Andhra Pradesh. This is the tenth college. Which is producing the best results in Andhra Pradesh. If still you do not want to accord recognition to it, then it is nothing but injustice.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the proper way of seeking information, during the Question Hour. If you give it in black & white, I will see that the information is supplied to you. You may give it under rule 377. Please make use of the rules to get the information.

[English]

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY: It is difficult to understand what is the meaning of minority education and majority education. Anyway, I am not asking the Government to take firm action to see that education is equal for everybody. But, one thing I want to know categorically. In the name of so-called rights for the particular groups of people or so-called religious education, the kind of education the students get there does not help them to stand in life in the future. Therefore, I think persuasion, consensus campaign and the modern ideas will be helpful for them to make a future for themselves. So, I would like to know whether that will be introduced in this very institution with care and real sympathy for the people who go there in the name of religion. Have you been trying to do that?

SHRI L. P. SHAHI: Sir, the Constitution, however, does not define a minority and the limits of their rights vis-a-vis the State. Specific aspects in this regard have been determined through the judgments of high court; and Supreme Court. Generally, the picture in the light of court judgment is that the minority institution should have proper space and the facilities for health and hygiene, provision of adequate educational facilities as may be required under terms of affiliation and has the syllabi prescribed by the affiliating board or university. These requirements coupled with the provisions of the NPE would ensure the recognised minority institutions to conform to the principles laid down in the core curriculum.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO: It depends on the terms of the affiliation if it is a university and naturally, university will insist on the implementation of its own rules and regulations etc. So, there should be no difficulty in making the minority institutions conform to the rules of the university or rules of the Government, or rules of the New Education Policy. There should be no difficulty on that. If the Hon. Member wants to ask me what a minority institution is Mr. Owaisi just said that a minority institution is one run by minorities. The management is from minority. That is what

we understood by minority institutions. As my colleague has pointed out, minority as a word, has not been defined in the Constitution. From the judgments of Courts we glean what all I have just said.

[Translation]

Doubling and electrification of railway lines

* 970. SHRI RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the time by which the work of doubling of railway line between Saharanpur and Moradabad and between Delhi and Saharanpur via Meerut will be completed; and

(b) when the railway line between Delhi and Jammu-Tawi via Saharanpur is proposed to be electrified?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) Double line already exists between Saharanpur and Moradabad. Between Delhi and Saharanpur, double line exists on Delhi-Muradnagar and Tapri-Saharanpur sections. Doubling of line between Muradnagar and Tapri is not planned at present.

(b) Delhi-Ghaziabad section has already been electrified. There is at present, no proposal to extend electric traction beyond Ghaziabad towards Jammu Tawi, via Saharanpur.

SHRI RAM SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that electrification has been carried out at certain places on both the lines and double line exists between certain stations whereas the line is single between certain stations. May I know the norms adopted for electrification and for laying the lines?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Electrification of the track and laying of double line depends upon the quantum of goods and passenger traffic.