

low 14 years in age and therefore, this information is not available. Scholarships are provided to the handicapped students under the scheme of Scholarship to the Blind, The Deaf, and the Orthopaedically Handicapped for pursuing academic studies from class IX onwards and for vocational and technical training. For the 1981-82 a budget provision of Rupees 69 lakhs has been made for this scheme. During the year 1980-81 an amount of Rupees 61.08 lakhs was sanctioned to the States for giving scholarships/stipends to about 10,000 students/trainees. The States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Karnatak, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Sikkim; Andaman and Nicobar islands, Delhi, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa Daman and Diu and Pondicherry have their own schemes of giving scholarships to handicapped students for studying upto Class VIII. The Central Government has requested all the other State Governments to formulate schemes of scholarships for the handicapped students for pursuing studies upto Class VIII.

Economy in Expenditure by Indian Embassies

*488. SHRIMATI MADHURI SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the annual expenditure incurred by the Indian Embassies in the foreign countries; and

(b) the steps taken to reduce such expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) The total expenditure incurred by the Indian Embassies abroad in the financial year 1980-81 was Rs. 36.65 crores.

(b) Steps taken to reduce expenditure abroad fall broadly into four categories:

(i) continuous review and re-formulation of rules and regulations, financial and administrative, relating to per-

sonnel as well as their service conditions, with the objective of eliminating or at least reducing routine work abroad which can be done equally well at Hqrs;

(ii) Staff thus released from the larger missions to be re-deployed in hard-pressed mission in other regions such as the Gulf area and North Africa, thereby saving the expense of providing personnel from Headquarters for these Missions;

(iii) wherever possible, we are purchasing or constructing office as well as residential property abroad, so as to effect substantial reduction in rental bills. Long-term effects of this policy would be full return of cost of property in addition to acquisition of valuable permanent assets by the Government of India;

(iv) prescription of regulated administrative norms, relating to expenditure on hotel bills, ceiling on number of permitted telephone calls from residential telephones of officers, including head of missions, curtailing expenditure on telegrams, transportation and stationery. One important measure is the prescription of a minimum period of stay in Delhi between postings which would yield considerable savings in terms of travelling allowance and foreign allowance payable to personnel posted abroad.

Extra Loading in Jumbo Freight Trains

*489. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that each wagon of the jumbo freight train is loading five extra tonnes of load and that the diesel and electric locos haul trailing loads beyond the technically permissible level;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of loco failures on the various zonal railways as a result thereof during the last one year; and

(d) the steps contemplated by Government to improve the situation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALIKARJUN): (a) There are no instructions to permit loading of BCX and CRT wagons—which comprise Jumbo freight trains, by extra five tonnes above the carrying capacity. Present instructions permit loading of these wagons upto carrying capacity plus two tonnes only as in the case of all other covered broad gauge wagons. The train loads are determined by the hauling capacity of individual engines on different sections and they are followed for all trains including 'Jumbo' trains. The name 'Jumbo' is only a distinguishing mark for the staff to identify that the train is carrying a particular type of wagon.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

Late Running of Trains between Mathura and New Delhi

*490. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of the fact of late running of trains between Mathura and New Delhi.

(b) whether there is any discord among Northern Railway staff for Western Railway trains;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what action has been initiated to run the trains according to schedule time?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No, Sir. However sometimes some trains run late.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The punctuality performance of trains running on Mathura New Delhi section was quite satisfactory (75 per cent to 100 per cent) for the last few months.

The running of trains on Mathura-New Delhi section is being watched at all levels. Avoidable detentions are taken up promptly and remedial measures are taken to improve the running of trains.

Institutions run by Birla Group of Companies

*491. SHRI RANJIT SINGH: Will the Minister of EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the institutions of higher education and institutions of engineering and technology run by the Birla Group of Companies;

(b) whether Government or the University Grants Commission provide any financial aid to those institutions;

(c) whether any criteria based on merits of candidates have been laid down for admission to the various courses offered by the Birla institutions;

(d) whether Government are aware of complaints that admissions to the Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi, are not based on merit of the candidates; and

(e) whether candidates from the above institute are accorded the same recognition as those from Government run institutions in regard to appointments to various services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL): (a) The Birla Group of Companies run the Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, which offers courses in Engineering, Sciences, Humanities and Management. Other Institutes run by the Group offering courses in Engineering and Technology are: