

railway lines in the areas which do not have rail connections is under the active consideration of the Government and the "economically viable" criterion is to be given up; and

(b) if so, when a decision is likely to be taken and the new criteria evolved?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b). A new policy for construction of railway lines in backward areas of the country is under consideration of the Government. The policy will be announced in the Parliament as soon as it is finalised.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOWALLA: Sir, as it is clear from the answer of the Minister—so far the policy is yet to be announced. But there are some sectors in which the people are facing lot of hardships due to unavailability of railway lines. It results in the wastage of money and man hours. Will the hon. Minister take care to give first priority to those areas where survey has already been conducted, such as Haryana-Chandigarh railway lines, which need to have your first priority?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: There are too many areas that are demanding priority No. 1 and the difficulty is that priority No. 1 can be only one. Therefore, to go into the problem we have already set up a Committee of officials that will review the capital structure of the railways and on the basis of our study we will make certain suggestions to the Finance Ministry and the Planning Commission and only under the overall policy of the Planning Commission we will have to function as far as the construction of railway lines is concerned.

SHRI M. SATYANARAYAN RAO: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of the fact that in certain areas since Independence not even a single line is

352 LS—2.

laid. For example, the Telengana area in Andhra Pradesh. You know, Sir, he is very dynamic—not only dynamic, but he happens to be my good friend. He was sitting here for six years with me. He will also appreciate the fact. In this connection I would like to know whether he is going to lay new lines from Ramagundam to Nizamabad via Karimnagar. That demand is there since Independence and for six years I have been fighting for it and he also sympathises. But he does not do anything at all with regard to this.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Let me assure the hon. Member that I was his friend not only when I was sitting there, but even when I sit here I continue to be his friend. I am also the friend of the area from which he has come because that is one of the most backward areas that has created more problems and on various lines which were under consideration from the point of view of the development of backward area. The region to which he has referred to is definitely in our mind. The only question is getting of more allocations for the development of lines in the backward areas. For that concrete alternatives have been formulated and the moment they are cleared we will be able to go in for the line to which he has made a reference.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Over-Crowding in Pashchim Express

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

(a) whether it is a fact that on Western Railway A/C Express (De-luxe), Pashchim Express, are running over-crowded;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to help the passengers; and

(c) is it possible to provide one more Second Class ordinary coach in this train; and if not, why?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) 25/26 Bombay Central New Delhi/Amritsar A.C./Paschim Expresses are popular trains. There is some overcrowding in the unreserved portion of the train and passengers are on the waiting list for reserved accommodation.

(b) and (c) Augmentation of the loads by these trains is not feasible as these trains are already running with maximum loads. Other measures are, however, under consideration to meet the passenger demand on this route.

Gas based Fertilizer Plants

*679. **SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved the proposals to set up four gas-based fertilizer plants in the country at a cost of Rs. 800 crores; and

(b) if so, the details of such proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) and (b). Two large sized fertilizer plants based on gas from Bombay High and South Bassein are proposed to be taken up for implementation. The plants would each have a capacity for the manufacture of 1350 tonnes per day of ammonia and 1800 tonnes per day of urea and are together estimated to cost Rs. 491 crores with a foreign exchange component of about Rs. 280 crores. A Task Force has been constituted to consider the environmental impact of these projects on different possible locations. A final decision on the location will be taken after the receipt of the report of the Task Force and thereafter the projects will be processed for the necessary ap-

provals. The projects will be implemented by the 'Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers'.

Based on gas available from Bombay High and South Bassein, it is also proposed to set up two large sized projects in Gujarat. These two projects would be implemented by IFFCO and M/s. National Fertilizers Limited. The two companies have been asked to prepare a common feasibility report for the projects.

There is also a proposal to set up a fertilizer plant at Namrup with a capacity of 600 tonnes per day of ammonia and 1000 tonnes per day of urea based on gas from the oil-fields in Assam.

अधिकारियों के पदों का दर्जा बढ़ाया जाना

* 683. श्री हुकूम खान कच्छबाब : क्या रेल मंत्री निम्नलिखित जानकारी देने वाला एक विवरण मन्त्रालय पर खन्ने की हुगा करेंगे कि :

(क) गत तीन बर्षों के दौरान भारतीय रेलवे में कितने अधिकारियों के पदों का (चिकित्सा-मेडिकों को छोड़कर) दर्जा बढ़ाया गया और कब-क दर्जा बढ़ाया गया ;

(ख) उपर्युक्त अधिकारियों के दौरान द्वितीय श्रेणी, तृतीय श्रेणी और चतुर्थ श्रेणी के कितने पदों का (चिकित्सा सम्बन्धी पदों को छोड़कर) दर्जा बढ़ाया गया ;

(ग) क्या विभिन्न श्रेणियों के पदों का दर्जा बढ़ाये जाने की प्रतिगता में अन्तर है ;

(घ) यदि हां, तो उनमें एकरूपता लाने के लिये क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है ; और

(ङ) इस बारे में कब तक एकरूपता लाये जाने की सम्भावना है ?