

for keeping up his words. I am sure he will keep up his words. There are already complaints from the State of Kerala that the railway covered in Kerala is far behind compared to other States. Recently there was an agitation of 'Rail Rokho' in Kerala. For one lakh of people the average railway line is only 4 kilometres whereas the country's average is 10 kilo metres. In view of this, I would only request the hon. Minister whether the Government will consider construction of railway line between Cochin and Madurai in the coming years. The Kerala Government has already recommended this proposal.

SHRI BANSI LAL : I will consider this.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Sir, I fully agree with Prof. Kurien that Kerala is far behind in regard to coverage of railway network. There is already a proposal pending before the Government, that is, regarding doubling the railway track between Cochin and Trivandrum. This has been pending for the last 10 years. There are many constraints. At present there is only one broad gauge line in Kerala. May I know whether the hon. Minister kindly consider doubling of the railway track between Cochin and Trivandrum ?

SHRI BANSI LAL : Sir, it does not arise out of this question.

Income ceiling for National Merit Scholarships to 'Teachers' Children

*150. **SHRI A. CHARLES :** Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the ceiling fixed on the annual income of teachers for the award of National Merit scholarships to their children and the year in which the above ceiling was fixed ;

(b) whether there is any proposal before Government to raise or abolish the above ceiling in view of the substantial increase in the pay scale of

teachers in the recent years and also because the scholarships are given to the children of teachers taking into consideration the merits of the students rather than the income of their parents ; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO) : (a) & (b). The erstwhile Ministry of Education had been operating a scheme of National Scholarships for children of School Teachers from the year 1961-62 to 1978-79. The purpose of this scheme was to enable meritorious children of primary and secondary school teachers to pursue higher studies from post-matriculation stage. This was a merit-cum means scheme under which scholarships were awarded to meritorious children whose parental income was not more than Rs. 6000 per annum. The scheme was transferred to State Governments from 1979-80. Since then the scheme is being operated and administered directly by the State Governments/Union Territories and no funds have been provided by the Central Government in its budget for the scheme from that year. Since it is being implemented by States/Union Territories, no proposals are received by the Central Government in regard to this scheme.

(c) Does not arise.

SHRI A. CHARLES : Sir, the ceiling of Rs. 6000 was fixed years back and a substantive increase in the pay-scale has been given to the teachers in all the States. The ceiling of Rs. 6000 is not at all sufficient and no child is getting any scholarship under the scheme. A few months back I had pointed out some anomalous position in this to the Education Ministry. I got a written reply from the previous Education Minister that this anomaly and certain other aspects were being examined in the Education Ministry of the Central Government. May I know whether that re-examination is still there and whether the Ministry would be pleas-

ed to give some broad guidelines at least to enhance the limit of the income of the parents in awarding the scholarships.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : I would certainly go into the details of the question and the answer he referred to. But there may be some mistake also. I will not go into that right now. I would only submit that this scheme is not at present being administrative by the Central Government. It is the State Governments and the Union Territories who are doing it. As regards the feeling of the hon. Member and generally of the House that this ceiling of Rs. 6000 needs to be enhanced, we shall communicate it to the State Governments.

SHRI A. CHARLES : National merit scholarships should be awarded at the national level. It is very unfair to say that awarding of national scholarships is the responsibility of the States, when we speak much of national unity and integrity of the country. May I know whether the hon. Minister will chalk out a scheme forwarding of merit scholarships at the national level ?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : I am right in saying that there is a mistake. The question refers to a scheme which was earlier being administered by the Central Government, but was transferred in 1979 to the State Governments.

There is another scheme which is properly called National Merit Scholarship Scheme, which is still being administered by the Central Government and in respect of which also, the question of enhancement of Rs. 6000 ceiling has been raised and that is under consideration in the Ministry.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : How quickly will the consideration for the last one be over ? At the moment, because of inflation and enhancement of pay, very few people are getting benefit. In fact, it is very necessary in many cases. By what time will it be decided ?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : As soon as practicable, because it means more money, more outlay. We will examine it as quickly as possible.

Development of Haldia Port during Seventh Plan

*151. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state the proposals of his Ministry for the development of Haldia Port during the Seventh Plan period ?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (SHRI BANSI LAL) : A Statement is given below.

Statement

The development schemes included in Seventh Five Year Plan 1985—90 for Haldia Port are given below :—

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name of Scheme</i>
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A. Continuing Schemes

1. Procurement of Addl. Locomotives
2. Hardstanding in the container yard and back up area.
3. Modification of coal handling plant Phase II.
4. Marine Repair workshop.
5. New Hospital Building with attached quarters.
6. Construction of Administrative Building.