

and exit of the train. These are the two benefits that will accrue.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to know from the Hon. Minister the number of such areas in India as are backward and have not been connected with railway lines? You are spending so much on the computerisation for increasing efficiency but how that will benefit 75 crore people of India? This money can be utilised in those areas where railway lines have not been laid so far. The foreign exchange you are thus spending is not going to benefit the people of India. Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are no railway lines in the backward areas. Ask him to reply this question.

MR. SPEAKER : Every thing will be done turn by turn.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : They are not laying even a single line in Rajasthan and are spending crores of rupees on computerisation.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI AMAL DATTA : Sir, what the Hon. Minister has said about the signalling system, it is on that point that I want to ask you a question. The signalling system improvement in Delhi is no doubt necessary, but I think the Hon. Minister will agree that the commuter traffic coming to Delhi is not even a fraction of what comes to Calcutta. I do not think that they have made any improvement in the signalling system in Calcutta as a result of which all long distance trains have to stop at the outer signals whenever they are late. Usually they are supposed to arrive before the commuter service starts arriving. If they are late even by as little as half-an-hour, they ultimately become late by one hour, one-and-a-half hours to two hours because they have to stand in outer signals. Therefore, an urgent necessity is there to improve the signalling system in metropolitan cities where the commuter traffic is very dense. So, what is being done in this connection for Calcutta, Bombay and Madras?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Because it is Bengal there are more red signals there.

MR. SPEAKER : The trains won't enter!

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : It is an on-going process. It is true that the signalling system will be greatly improved by computerised control and Delhi is really a pilot project. Ultimately in our planning we do envisage the extension of such a system to other metropolitan cities and signalling is a very important part of railway working and we are doing our best to improve the signalling in the Calcutta area also. We understand this problem.

Incidence of leprosy in tribal and harijan colonies

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*88. **SHRI JAGANNATH PATTNAIK :**
SHRI H. B. PATIL :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government have conducted any survey regarding the number of cases of leprosy in the country;

(b) whether incidence of leprosy is found high in the tribal and harijan colonies and also amongst students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) whether Government have framed any plan to eradicate this disease and provide a preventive cover to the growing leprosy population as well as the places where incidence of leprosy is suspected to be several times higher than the State average?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) : (a) to (d). A statement is given below.

Statement

1. Leprosy cases are reported by all

States. However the prevalence of the disease is not uniform. It varies from State to State and district to district.

2. Disease has no affinity to any particular group of the society. It has clustering tendency accentuated by over crowding, poor hygiene and mal-nutrition.
3. Survey of the community, patients' families and school children has been made an integral part of duty of leprosy workers under the programme. This has been done to detect the cases in the early stage of the disease to achieve complete cure and avoid disabilities. There is no evidence to suggest any recent increase in the incidence of the disease.
4. National Leprosy Eradication Programme has been launched to achieve disease arrest activity in all the leprosy cases by the year 2000 AD. Multi drug treatment to leprosy cases is being planned in a phased manner so as to cover all the 201 high endemic districts by 1995. So far 48 such districts with a population of 99.2 million and 1.34 million leprosy cases have been brought under MDT coverage.
5. To create awareness among the community and to avoid social stigma, health education activities have been mounted through mass media and involvement of voluntary organisations.
6. The research is on to develop suitable leprosy vaccine to provide preventive coverage.

SHRI JAGANNATH PATTNAIK : I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what is the development and achievement in our research work with regard to preventing, early arrest of the disease and permanent cure.

(Interruptions)

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE : I have not followed your question. Will you please repeat ?

[Translation]

SHRI JAGANNATH PATTNAIK : What development has been made in the field of research for prevention, early arrest and permanent cure of diseases.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SCI's passenger steamer service at certain ports on Bombay-Goa route

***89 SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK :** Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Shipping Corporation of India's passenger steamer service operating on Goa-Bombay sea-route, which has commenced its regular service from 1 October, 1987 is not calling at the ports of Jaygad, Musakaji, Jaitapur, Vijaydurg and Devgad on its route; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) and (b). The Shipping Corporation of India vessels are calling at all intermediary ports on scheduled routes between Bombay and Panaji since 25th October, 1987.

Nangal-Talwara railway line

***90 PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the progress in the construction of Nangal-Talwara railway line in Himachal Pradesh as on 30 September, 1987;

(b) whether the railway line would be