

[English]

Criteria of Local Call

935. SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM' : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria under which some of the towns around Delhi such as Gurgaon, Faridabad, Bahadurgarh, Ghaziabad etc. have telephone connections with Delhi on local call basis;

(b) whether such criteria is not applicable in the case of towns in Sonapat district of Haryana;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to extend this facility to the towns of Sonapat districts;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Gurgaon, Faridabad, Bahadurgarh, Ghaziabad towns have been given inter-dialling facility with Delhi on 180 sec. pulse rate as their local telephone systems have common boundary with that of Delhi.

(b) Yes, Sir. This criteria is also applicable to 3 towns viz. Kundli, Akbarpur Barota and Nahra towns of Sonapat district of Haryana.

(c) and (d). This facility is already available between Kundli and Delhi. Two towns viz. Akbarpur Barota and Nahra are proposed to be provided this facility in near future. Other towns of Sonapat Dist. do not meet the criteria and hence do not qualify for this facility.

(e) Not applicable in view of (c) and (d) above.

Reservation of seats in trains for handicapped persons

936. SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the Government's policy regarding reservation of seats in trains for handicapped persons;

(b) whether the Government propose to review the same and increase their quota;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) The following facilities have been provided to the handicapped persons :

(i) Two berths in sleeper class have been earmarked for handicapped passengers and their escorts.

(ii) Separate accommodation has been earmarked in suburban trains for handicapped persons.

(iii) One seat near the door in every second class compartment is being earmarked for handicapped persons.

(b) There is no such proposal at present.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The reserved accommodation available in the train is subjected to periodical review and suitable adjustments are made wherever necessary based on the traffic justification and availability of accommodation in the trains.

Direct Train from Asansol to North-Eastern States

937. SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is no direct train from Asansol to North Eastern States;

(b) if so, whether there is a persistent demand for the introduction of direct train;

(c) whether the Government have taken initiative to introduce such train;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some representations have been received in this regard.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Due to operational/resource constraints.

STD/ISD Facility in Jaunpur

938. DR. RAMVILAS VEDANTI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether STD/ISD facility at Singramau and Badalapur of district Jaunpur is out of order;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any complaint/correspondence have been received in this regard;

(d) if so, the steps taken thereon;

(e) whether there is any scheme of providing exemption to the subscribers on rents/bills for the period when the lines were out of order;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No Sir.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) No such complaint is pending.

Faults are attended immediately after receipt of complaint.

(d) Steps are being taken to shift the STD/ISD on reliable media.

(e) Yes Sir.

(f) Rental rebate is given to subscriber if the telephone line remains out of order continuously for seven or more days due to departmental reasons.

Full month's rebate in rental is given if the line is continuously out of order for more than 14 days due to departmental reasons.

(g) Not applicable in view of (e) above.

[English]

Railway net work in Coochbehar

939. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received some representations/requests for expansion of railway network in Coochbehar district of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon with a view to provide better railway services there and introduction of new train from Coochbehar to Calcutta?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). (Demand No. 1)

Expansion of Rly network between Moinaguri Rly Stn. and New Coochbehar Rly Stn. via Changarabanda-Mathabhanga in order to develop railway communication in Mathabhanga and Mekhliganj two important sub-divisions, of Coochbehar where there is no Rly communication facilities:

Position :

The suggested line would be 110 kms long and will cost not less than Rs. 150 crs. The Railways are facing an acute resource crunch and have on hand a huge shelf of new line projects requiring over Rs. 6000 crs. for their completion while the funds being made available by the Planning Commission which were of the order of Rs. 220 crs. in 96-97 which will barely be enough to cater to the inflation. In view of this it would be difficult to consider construction of the suggested line till the resource position improves and some of the ongoing projects get completed.

Demand No. 2

Extn. of railway net work from New Coochbehar to Golokganj.

Position :

Golokganj is already connected to Coochbehar via Fakiragram and Alipurduar. The traffic requirements can easily be met by the existing line. The suggested line would be 80 kms and would cost about Rs. 120 crs. The Railways are facing an acute resource crunch and have on hand a huge shelf of new line projects requiring over Rs. 6000 crs. for their completion while the funds being made available by the Planning Commission which were of the order of Rs. 220 crs. in 96-97 which will barely be enough to cater to the inflation. In view of this it would be difficult to consider construction of the suggested line till the resource position improves and some of the ongoing projects get completed.

Demand No. 3

Doubling of the Malda-NJP-New Coochbehar-New Bongaigaon-Guwahati BG line.

Position :

Doubling of Malda NJP has been completed except for short stretches between Dalkola and Kishanganj, where the work is in progress and would be completed by Dec'97. Between NJP and New Bongaigaon doubling is planned by conversion of the MG line and this work would be taken up in the 9th plan period. Between Bongaigaon and Guwahati, doubling will be achieved by the provision of a second line via Jogighopa and Gaolpara on which the work is planned to be completed in 97-98 subject to availability of resources.

Demand No. 4

Conversion of Alipurduar : New Coochbehar-Gitalda MG line into a BG line.

Position :

The Railways have taken up Project Unigauge for conversion of selected MG/NG lines to BG to move towards Unigauge. Due to limited availability of resources this work can be carried only in a phased manner. In the first phase lines required on urgent operational/strategic considerations, have been taken up. The said section will be considered alongwith the remaining lines when the next phase of this project is taken up.

Demand No. 5

Installation of pit line and work shed for petty repairs at New Coochbehar Rly Stn. so that trains to and from Guwahati may terminate at New Coochbehar Rly Stn. during Bundh and other troubles in Assam.