

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether that firm was earlier declared of technically unsuitable;

(d) if so, whether its credentials were thoroughly examined before deciding to award the contract to this firm;

(e) the reasons for ignoring the offers of other firms from countries like Japan etc; and

(f) the firm quoted the lowest rate and the reasons for not awarding the contract to the firm giving lowest quotations ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) to (d). The Visakhapatnam Port Trust has awarded a contract for the supply of 4500 metres of steel cord conveyor belt (3000 Metres of 1600 mm. and 1500 metres of 1200 mm) at a cost of Rs. 85.8 lakhs to M/s. Srig of Italy, whose offer was the lowest. The offer of the firm was not considered earlier as their compatability with the existing belt had not been established at that time. The contract was awarded by the Port Trust after thorough checking and satisfying themselves about the credentials of the firm.

(e) The offers of the firms from countries like Japan etc. were not accepted because the prices quoted by them were about 60% higher than the price of M/s. Saiag of Italy.

(f) The contract was awarded to M/s. Saiag of Italy whose rates for the supply of 4500 metres of steel cord conveyor belt (3000 metre of 1600 mm and 1500 metres of 1200 mm) were the lowest.

#### Concession in Fare to accredited Correspondents

3050. SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS : Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Accredited Correspondents are provided with concession in Railway fare;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Press Association, New Delhi has requested to provide 50 per cent concession in the first class and super fast trains and to use Railway rest houses at rates paid by Railway officers; and

(d) if so, whether Government have considered their request ?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 15% concession in first class and 50% concession in second class on production of prescribed certificate from the competent authority.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir. But it has not been found feasible to accede to their request.

#### Namkhana-Budge-Budge B.G. Line in West Bengal

3051. PROF. M.R. HALDER : Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Namkhana-Budge-Budge broad guage line in West Bengal has got clearance from the Planning Commission;

(b) if not, whether Government propose to consider it in the next financial year; and

(c) whether there is any proposal for shorter link of this project ?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Re-appraisal of a shorter link between Lakshmikantapur and Namkhana via Kulpi will be considered at the time of mid-term appraisal of the Seventh Five Year Plan,

#### Development of Buckingham Canal

3052. SHRI N. SUNDARARAJ : Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the survey of Inland coastal waterways has been completed;

(b) whether the improvement scheme of Buckingham Canal was taken up in order to develop navigation; and

(c) if so, the progress made so far in this regard ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) :** (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Yes, Sir. The Stage-I works involving widening and deepening of the Buckingham Canal restoring it to its original dimensions of 20 ft width and 3 ft depth, have been already completed and now a comprehensive feasibility study has been planned for inter-linking of the canal system (Buckingham Canal-Commamur Canal-Eluru Canal-Kakinada Canal) for navigation between Madras and Kakinada Ports.

#### National Ayurvedic Institute in Kerala

3053. **SHRI A. CHARLES :** Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal to establish a National Ayurvedic Institute in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) :** (a) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to set up a National Ayurvedic Institute in Kerala.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

#### Helicopter Corporation of India

3054. **SHRI JITENDRA PRASADA :** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the date from which the Helicopter Corporation of India will start functioning;

(b) the number of helicopters at present or likely to be in the fleet of the Corporation during the current financial year; and

(c) the number of officers in posts as also the total number of employees at present or likely to be on the rolls of this Corporation during the current financial year ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) :** (a) The Helicopter Corporation of India will commence its operations in October, 1986.

(b) The Corporation will be acquiring helicopters progressively and is likely to have 19 helicopters in its fleet by the end of the current financial year.

(c) There are at present 86 employees in the Helicopter Corporation of India including 22 Officers/Pilots/Engineers. A total of 355 employees are likely to be on the rolls of the Corporation during the current financial year which will include executives, pilots and engineers.

[*English*]

#### Air India's Rights for Commercial Landing

3055. **SHRI AMAL DATTA :** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government/Air India has the commercial landing rights at two places in some countries, if so, the name of the country, the places and the dates from which such rights exist;

(b) to what extent such rights of landing at two places have been utilized so far;

(c) whether any country has sought for similar rights in India and to which country, if any, such rights have been granted so far;