

(a) whether a final decision on the configuration of the railway communication network using terrestrial and satellite linkages has been taken;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this configuration is more economical than the one proposed by a team of West German consultants;

(d) whether any fees have been paid to the foreign consultants in this regard;

(e) whether the plan for a more economical configuration was presented by any Indian agency; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No, Sir. Some suggestions were made by Indian experts for economy either by curtailment of facilities or on cost sharing basis relevant only for a portion of the total railway network as recommended by the consultants.

(f) Does not arise.

River Service between Haldia and Allahabad

1603. SHRI ZAINAL ABEDIN:
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Inland Water

Transport Corporation proposes to run regular river service between Haldia and Allahabad; and

(b) if so, by what time such service is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b). Central Inland Water Transport Corporation is running regular river service between Haldia/ Calcutta and Patna. The extension of this service beyond Patna upto Allahabad would be possible after navigability round the year on this stretch is established for which pilot project works is in progress.

Illegal felling of Trees in Gujarat

1604. SHRI ZAINAL ABEDIN:
SHRI SURESH KURUP:
SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHODHARY:
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:
DR. SUDHIR ROY:
SHRI AMAL DATTA:
SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Environmentalists in Gujarat have represented to Union Government about the large scale illegal felling of trees and diversion of forest land for non-forestry purpose in the State; and

(b) if so, the corrective steps taken or proposed to be taken by Union Government to stop further denudation of forest in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The following guidelines have been issued by the Central Government to the

State Government to stop further denudation of forests in Gujarat:-

- i) Checking illicit felling of trees and removal of forest produce.
- ii) Enforcement of the provisions of the Indian Forests Act.
- iii) Providing deterrent punishment to the offenders.
- iv) Programme for Wasteland Development for fodder.
- v) Strengthening of Forest Protection Forces.
- vi) Control on shifting cultivation.
- vii) Stricter control on functioning of saw and veneer mills.
- viii) Increase in protected areas like Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks.
- ix) Closure of vulnerable forest areas to grazing.
- x) Promotion of use of alternative fuel to reduce pressure on forests on account of firewood extraction.
- xi) Substitution of wood in industries, railways and other uses.
- xii) Elimination of contractors.
- xiii) Guidelines for preparation of working plans and felling in the forest issued to State/UTs for conservation of fragile areas in particular.
- xiv) Restriction on felling trees above an altitude of 1000 meters.

The Central Government has also introduced a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of infrastructure for protection of forests from biotic interference, under which funds are provided to the State Governments on a 50% shared basis, to prevent illegal exploitation of forests. Rupees 5 lakhs have been given to the State Government of Gujarat under this scheme.

[*Translation*]

Air Pollution in Delhi

1605. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMMOOWALIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the documentary film titled 'Portrait of a city' produced by the Central Institute of Educational Technology of National Council of Education Research and Training, conveys a message regarding air pollution from industries and power stations in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have prepared any effective scheme to reduce air pollution in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) and (b). The Central Institute of Educational Technology of National Council of Educational Research and Training has prepared an Audio-Visual Programme on 'Portrait of a City' to sensitize high school teachers in issues related to ecology in India. This is based on materials compiled from newspapers, magazines and other publications. This Audio-Visual Programme has highlighted the problems of air pollution in Delhi due to industries and power stations.