

Translation]

Powers to Panchayats

259. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the importance of the Panchayati Raj institutions in the country and whether Government have amended the laws to provide adequate powers to Panchayats;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the Government propose to provide such powers to the Panchayats so as to enable them to fulfil their duties towards society and function effectively ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have introduced part IX to the Constitution through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment making panchayats constitutional entities. Further the provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 have come into force on 24 th December, 1996 extending panchayats to the Fifth Schedule areas of eight States of India viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan.

(c) As per the Constitution the Panchayati Raj Institutions have been endowed with such powers and authority as may be necessary to function as institutions of self government. Part IX of the Constitution contains provisions of devolution of powers and responsibilities upon panchayats at the appropriate level with reference to (a) the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice; and (b) the implementation of such schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them. The extent of devolution of powers, functions and responsibilities upon the PRIs is left to the State/Union Territory Governments. The status of devolution of powers is being constantly monitored by the Ministry. The Conference of Chief Ministers was held on 2nd August, 1997 and also a meeting of State Ministers incharge of Panchayati Raj was held on 13th May, 1998 in this context.

Introduction on Extension of Trains

260. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce any new train between Gaya and Mumbai and if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether there is any proposal to extend 1093/1094 Varanasi-Mumbai Mahanagar Express and 8689/8690 Alapy-Bokaro train upto Gaya and if so, by when;

(c) whether there is any proposal to operate 8605/8606 Ranchi-Gaya-New Delhi Golden Jubilee Express daily and if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to increase reservation quota for Gaya and if so, the names of these trains and by when it is likely to be done and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) No, Sir. Due to terminal/line capacity constraints.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir. Due to operational and resource constraints.

(d) No, Sir. Reservation work at Gaya has been computerised and it has access to the entire general quota in trains defined on Calcutta PRS on first-come-first-served basis. Hence passengers at Gaya can get reservations for most of the trains, and need for additional separate quota is not justified.

[English]

Allotment of Plots to Petrol Pumps

261. DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applications from Oil companies pending with DDA for allotment of plot to commission Petrol Pumps in Delhi, Company-wise;

(b) the details of the allotments made during the last three years, Company-wise;

(c) whether DDA maintained seniority-wise priority list;

(d) if so, the time by which the waiting list is likely to be cleared ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) Delhi Development Authority has reported that 78 applications from Oil companies are pending with DDA for allotment of plots to commission Petrol Pumps in Delhi as follows :

I O C	47
H P C	14
B P C	10
I B P	7
Total	78