

(a) whether Hindi medium schools following Bihar syllabus giving free education according to NJCS Agreement are being changed into English medium following CBSE course resulting in charging of fees by the management of Bokaro Steel Plant; and

(b) if so, the facts in details and the justification thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) At present, no Hindi medium school is being changed into English medium school by the management of Bokaro Steel Plant.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Wages to Workers

3230. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether HSCL workers of Durgapur Steel Plant, are not getting wages for three months;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ;

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS) : (a) to (c) It is a fact that HSCL workers of the Durgapur Steel Plant could not be paid their wages for the last three months due to acute financial crunch faced by the said public sector undertaking. The management of HSCL has been trying their level best to improve the turnover of the Company and to realise outstanding dues from their customers in order to enable payment of wages to the employees as early as possible. In view of the poor financial condition of HSCL, Government have been taking steps for assisting HSCL in obtaining more work orders. It is expected that an improved turnover would ultimately lead to an improvement in the financial condition of the Company.

Slaughter House on Railways' Land

3231. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways had acquired land at Mourigram about 16-17 km. from Calcutta for Panikuni Mourigram linkage project ;

(b) whether the same acquired land has been given to Fregerio Conserva Allana Ltd. popularly known as Allana of Mumbai for setting up a slaughter house on long lease of 99 years or so; and

(c) if so, the reasons thereof ?

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) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Linking of Western Ghat With Hinterland

3232. SHRI FRANCISCO SARDINHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the missing Railway links across the Western Ghats and Hinterland (Ratnagiri-Kolhapur, Sawantwadi-Kolhapur, Kanwar-Hubh) have been identified; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be completed so as to boost economic development of the region?

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) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) *Kolhapur-Ratnagiri and Sawantwadi-Kolhapur*

For providing a link between the Konkan Railway alignment and the hinterland, a survey for a new BG line from Kolhapur to Ratnagiri via Talwade is presently in progress. Further consideration of the project will be possible, once the results of the survey become available.

As far as Sawantwadi-Kolhapur new line is concerned, no survey has been done so far nor is any proposal under consideration. In any case, if the Ratnagiri-Kolhapur line is ever taken up, link between Kolhapur and Sawantwadi via Ratnagiri will become available.

(ii) *Hubli-Ankola new line*

A new BG line between Hubli and Ankola (new Karwar) has been sanctioned which when completed will link Karwar with the hinterland.

Final location Survey for 94 kms. has been completed and is in progress for balance portion which is likely to be completed by September, 1998. Land acquisition plans for 13 kms. length have been submitted to the State Government. Work would be started once the land becomes available.

Tourism Counters at I.G.I. Airport, New Delhi

3233. SHRI SURENDRAN CHENGARA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that Indian Tourism Development Cooperative Limited, now known as National Tourism Development Co-operative approached Airports Authority of India for allotment of counters at IGI Airport during 1996-97.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the capital of India Tourism Development Co-operative Limited, who were its promoter members and who are presently managing the said co-operative ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The request of the Indian Tourism Development Co-operative Ltd. in 1996-97 was for the extension of licence granted to them earlier in 1995 for providing travel and tourism related services.

(c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

Handing over of Bridge at Rajahmundry

3234. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have agreed to hand-over 130 years old bridge across the river Godavari at Rajahmundry to the State Government;

(b) if so, whether any final agreement has been reached in this regard ;

(c) if so, whether any modalities of the new arrangements have been worked out; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

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) to (d) No, Sir. The issue is still under consideration.

[Translation]

Fund Utilised by Gram Panchayat

3235. SHRI MOHAMMED ALI ASHRAF FATMI : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether some Gram Panchayats have not utilized the amount provided to them under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana ;

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

(c) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL) : (a) to (c) The utilization of funds by the Gram Panchayats are not monitored at the Central level. However, as per the guidelines, the implementing agencies DRDAs/Zilla Parishads, Intermediate level Panchayats and Gram Panchayats are allowed to carry over an unutilized balance equivalent to 25% of their allocated. If the carry over funds are more than 25% of the allocation funds during a particular year, DRDAs/ZPs can impose a cut in the share of Gram Panchayats and Intermediate level Panchayats to the extent of excess unspent balance at the time of release of the second instalment during the next year.

[English]

Air Concessions to Handicapped Citizens

3236. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Air India/Indian Airlines give concession in air fare to the Physically Handicapped/Blind citizens on the lines of Indian Railways; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) and (b) Indian Airlines gives 50% discount on fares to Blind persons on its domestic sectors and India-Nepal Sector. However, the airlines does not give any concessions in fare to other Physically Handicapped Persons. No international airlines including Air India however gives any concession in fares to Physically Handicapped and Blind persons.

Fare of Rajdhani Express

3237. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the passengers travelling from Calicut to Nizamuddin by Rajdhani Express are charged the same fare right from Cochin itself; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the action proposed to be taken to rectify this anomaly ?

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) and (b) No, Sir. The rail fares are different from Calicut to Nizamuddin and from Earnakulam (Cochin) to Nizamuddin by Rajdhani Express.