

(a) whether Government have received any proposal for starting Helicopter services in inaccessible regions of Chadh, Dhadh and Nubra in Ladakh;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(c) the time by which Government propose to start Helicopter services in Ladakh?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOWAMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Helicopters in the fleet of Pawan Hans Limited are not suitable for operation at such high altitudes.

[English]

Price Hike to Catering Items

1980. SHRI B. RAJA RAVI VARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway catering services have hiked steeply the prices of food packets etc;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to withdraw the hike in prices; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There has been no increase in the prices of standard meals/breakfast and tea/coffee in cups. However, some zonal railways made some increase in the prices of instant coffee and a few a-la-carte-items.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The increase in the prices is considered reasonable keeping in view the increase in costs.

Objection to Air Taxi Operation

1981. PROF. K. V. THOMAS:
SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian airlines employees have objected to the operation of private air taxi service; and

(b) if so, the reason therefor and reaction of Government to their suggestion?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Union/Associations of the Indian Airlines employees are of the opinion that this would undermine the position of Indian Airlines in the domestic sector. The Government is of the opinion that Indian Airlines will continue to be the dominant domestic carrier. Air Taxi Scheme was conceived following the recommendations of the National Transport Policy Committee, and has its own role. Government also expect Public Sector Undertakings to be efficient, competitive and responsive to consumers.

[Translation]

Hydro-Electric Projects of Himachal Pradesh

1982. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of hydro-electric power projects in Himachal Pradesh in respect of which survey is being conducted and the names of projects which have been approved by Union Government: