

project, viz., from Bankura to Deliatore (20 Km.) has been sanctioned. Five tenders for earthwork and minor bridges for km. 0.6 to km. 20 have been finalised. Tenders for soil exploration and temporary office buildings are in the process of being awarded.

Direct Trains for State Capitals

3791. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the capitals of every State have been connected by direct trains;

(b) if not, the State capitals connected and not connected with direct trains; and

(c) whether Government would arrange a direct train to Gandhinagar (Gujarat) in the Millennium?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRIDIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Srinagar, Gangtok, Kohima, Imphal, Itanagar, Agartala, Shillong and Panjim are not connected to the Railway network. Shimla and Gandhinagar are not linked with Delhi by direct train. The remaining state capitals are connected to Delhi by direct services.

(c) Introduction of a direct train between Delhi and Gandhinagar is not feasible, at present, due to operational constraints.

Loss of Railways for provision for concessions

3792. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how much loss is incurred by Railway on the provision for concession to the disabled and aged persons, annually;

(b) whether Government had constituted Reivew Task Force to review the plethora of concessions and if so, the details of recommendations made by the Task Force; and

(c) what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The exact figures relating to loss of revenue on account

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of concessions granted by Indian Railways is not maintained separately for each category of concession. However, information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

(b) & (c) An internal committee has been constituted to conduct a detailed study of concessions being granted to various categories of persons including disabled persons and senior citizens. The committee has not yet given its recommendations.

Child Labour in Railways

3793. DR. MANMATH NATH DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the railway authorities are aware of the engagement of child labour to sweep and clean rail compartments in all trains on all lines;

(b) if so, what measures are being taken to abolish this inhuman system; and

(c) what kind of substitute measures are being contemplated to keep the compartments clean?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No child labour is engaged on Railways for cleaning of coaches.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise. However, Railways have a well organised system for regular cleaning and sweeping of coaches.

Losses to Railways

†3794. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for which apprehension has been expressed that the Railways would suffer a loss of more than one thousand crore rupees after the efforts made to reduce expenditures, and increase the number of passengers and quantity cargo transportation during the current financial year; and

(b) the items of expenditures reduced, which make up crores of rupees, together with other measures being taken by the Railways so that economic crunch can be overcome?

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.