

local Residents' Welfare Association and the school authorities over the parking of buses inside the park (play ground). At present, status quo has been granted by the court over this plot.

The school authorities have been advised to park their buses inside the school premises. Private hired buses are not allowed to be parked in front of the houses. However, buses arrive a little earlier than the time the school opens/closes. The school authorities have been advised to reduce this time to bare minimum.

Computerisation of registered Mail Services

3167. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have chalked out a detailed programme of computerisation of registered mail services in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Department has installed 2300 Multipurpose Counter Machines in Post Offices which can do registration booking, amongst other functions. The Department has computerised Registration Sorting work partially in Delhi, Mumbai, Madras and Hyderabad.

The Department's Annual Plan for 1996-97 visualises installation of 1500 computer based Multi-Purpose Counter Machines. The Plan also envisages computerisation of registration sorting work in more Mail Office subject to availability of funds.

Replacement of old aircrafts

3168. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the causes of accidents of four IAF aircraft in one week in August, 1996;

(b) the special measures being taken to maintain the ageing Air fleet giving the details of phasing out of old aircraft; and

(c) whether new fighter aircraft are being purchased to ensure national security; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) Three IAF aircrafts crashed in a week in August 1996. Courts of Inquiry for each crash are in progress to ascertain the cause of each accident.

(b) The Government proposes to upgrade the existing fleet to improve their performance and extend their life for a period of 10 years. There is also a plan to phase out 2-1/2 squadrons of old aircraft like Hunters and Canberra.

(c) The IAF propose to replace aircraft being phased out with newer and more modern versions.

Addition of mileage to National Highways in Maharashtra

3169. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the addition of mileage to National Highways in Maharashtra during the last five years and funds provided therefor;

(b) the schemes under which financial assistance is provided to the State Government for surface transport and the details of progress made under the Schemes, Schemewise, in Maharashtra in view of heavy traffic on National Highways in Western Maharashtra; and

(c) whether Government are considering provisions of additional funds to compete with the ever increasing volume of pressure of traffic and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) None.

(b) Financial assistance is provided to State Governments for improvement of certain categories of roads under the Scheme of Economic and Inter-State Importance. One project costing Rs. 4 crore, with Central share

of Rs. 2 crore, has been approved in principle for Maharashtra during the 8th Five Year Plan. The work has yet to be sanctioned as the State Government has not sent the detailed estimate.

(c) The Central Government is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways only and funds for the same are released depending upon the inter-se priority and the availability of resources. As for development of State Roads, the responsibility lies with the State Government.

Dental of visa to Punjab D.G. Police by U.S. Government

3170. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn towards certain reports appeared in April, 1996 indicating that some congressmen of U.S.A. urged U.S. Secretary of State to deny visa to former Punjab Director General of Police, Shri K.P.S. Gill for his visit to U.S.A. for the Olympics;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the reasons for such denial;

(c) whether such denial tantamounts to direct interference in the internal affairs of India;

(d) if so, whether Government have taken up the issue with U.S. Government; and

(e) if so, the details thereof with results achieved in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 51 members of the US Congress wrote to the US Secretary of State urging him to deny a visa to Shri K.P.S. Gill on account of alleged human rights violations in Punjab. However, visa was not denied to Shri Gill.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

Creation of a separate Bodoland

3171. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering creation of a separate Bodoland on the pattern of Uttarakhand recently announced;

(b) if so, details thereof and if not, reasons therefor; and

(c) the reaction of Government to the recent demand for setting up a "States Reorganisation Commission" to execute the need of small States in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDERJIT GUPTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Bodo Accord has been signed with a view to providing autonomy to the Bodos for their socio-economic, educational, ethnic and cultural advancement. The implementation of the Accord needs to be watched.

(c) No proposal to constitute a State Reorganisation Commission is under consideration of the Government at present.

Construction of Naval base at Karwar

3172. DR. MOHAN BABU: SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the present position in regard to construction of a Naval base at Karwar;

(b) the details of financial support required therefor; and

(c) by when is it likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) The Master Plan and the DPR have been prepared. About 98 percent of 5762 acres of Forest/Revenue land and about 75 percent of 2412 acres of private land have been taken over. Consultants for construction supervision for marine works have been appointed.

(b) A proposal for Phase I of the project with a completion cost of Rs. 1294.41 crores by the year 2005 has been approved in October, 1995.

(c) Phase I of the project is expected to be completed by the year 2005 A.D. The time frame for Phase II has not been worked out.