

(b) what is the number of kilometres likely to be covered by this scheme; and

(c) whether this scheme would be introduced from Kanyakumari to Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Conversion of Madras Tirunelveli Express into a Superfast Train

101. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether Government propose to convert Madras-Tirunelveli Express into a superfast train in view of the fact that Tirunelveli Express takes more than 15 hours to cover 620 kilometres in comparison to Pallavan and Vaigai Express which covers 470 kilometres from Madras to Madurai in seven hours?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): No, Sir.

Railway accidents

102. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 455 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 11th November, 1987 and State whether the reasons for rail accidents which took place in the country during the last three years were the failure of Mechanical devices or human errors?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): About 75 per cent of the accidents during the last three years were attributable to human failure which includes failure of persons other than Railway staff also. Failure of mechanical devices

has accounted for about 13 per cent of the accidents.

Waiting room and refreshment at Tirunelveli Railway Station

103. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no second class waiting room for ladies and that refreshment etc. are also not available at Tirunelveli Railway Station in Tamilnadu; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take action to provide these facilities?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) Waiting Rooms exclusively for use by ladies travelling on unreserved Second Class are not provided on Indian Railways. Those holding tickets for reserved accommodation can avail of the facility of upper class waiting room at Tirunelveli Station. As regards refreshments, two stalls, a light vegetarian refreshment stall and a combined fruit and vegetarian tea stall, are available.

(b) As mentioned above, these facilities are already available.

Provision of passenger facilities at the airports in the eastern region

104. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the responsibility for providing passenger facilities at the airports rests with the National Airports Authority; if so, whether medical, toilet, night landing facility and passenger facilities have been provided at Agartala, Aizwal, Imphal and other airports in the Eastern sector;

(b) whether Indian Airlines and Vayudoot officials have been repeat-

edly requesting the National Airports Authority to provide said facilities; if so, whether National Airports Authority has cooperated with the Airlines in this regard; and

(c) by when airports in the Eastern sector are likely to become operational for Boeing flights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir. Passenger amenities such as toilets, ambulance with provision of first-aid facilities, drinking water, snack bar, telephone etc. are available at the airports at Agartala, Aizwal, Imphal, Guwahati, Dibrugarh (Mohanbari), Silchar etc. Improvement of facilities is a continuous process and is reviewed periodically. Night landing facilities have been installed at Guwahati and Agartala and these are proposed to be provided at Imphal and Dibrugarh (Mohanbari) airports.

(b) Periodical requests are received from Indian Airlines and Vayudoot for upgradation of facilities. Their suggestions are given due consideration and facilities improved, where necessary, to the extent possible keeping in view the availability of resources.

(c) Indian Airlines is already operating B-737 services to/through all airports in the Eastern region, which it serves.

Fare of Air India and the Royal Jordanian Airlines for Calcutta-Jeddah-Calcutta

105. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that West Bengal Government have decided to pay the entire amount of 612 Haj pilgrims to Royal Jordanian Airlines for Calcutta-Jeddah-Calcutta journeys in foreign exchange;

(b) whether Air India complied with the directive of his Ministry to charge 85 per cent of the IATA fare for Haj pilgrims and what was the IATA fare allowed last year;

(c) whether Air India has raised the fare this year to rupees 11,604 for Calcutta-Jeddah-Calcutta journeys and what is the fare fixed by Royal Jordanian Airlines for the same journey this year; and

(d) whether West Bengal Government had formally requested to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and other Ministries to arrange for Haj flights independent of the Central Haj Committee, Bombay; if so, whether such permission would also be given to the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh Governments to negotiate with foreign Airlines to fly Haj pilgrims, directly from their States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) The West Bengal State Haj Committee have arranged Haj charter flights of 612 pilgrims of West Bengal from Calcutta to Jeddah and back through Royal Jordanian Airlines. Government have no information about the mode of payment.

(b) Air India has adhered to the directive of the Ministry to fix charter fare levels at 85 per cent of last year's IATA fares, despite increase in IATA fares effective May 1988.

(c) The West Bengal State Haj Committee arranged Haj charter flights of 612 pilgrims of West Bengal from Calcutta to Jeddah and back through Royal Jordanian Airlines at a fare of Rs. 8300/-. Air India was not asked to operate.

(d) The West Bengal Haj Committee negotiated with Royal Jordanian Airlines to carry Haj pilgrims of West Bengal and asked for permission of Ministry of External Affairs. 'No objection' from the Ministry of Ex-