

**Frequent-Traveller schemes on Shatabdi trains**

1910. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans to introduce frequent traveller benefit schemes on short-distance trains like Shatabdi trains; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) With a view to improve the patronisation of higher classes, where occupancy level is relatively low as compared to that in Sleeper class and 3-AC classes, a Scheme of Frequent Travellers (SOFT) has been launched in the month of February, 2006, which is applicable to 1st AC, 2AC and AC Chair Car Classes. A Frequent Traveller will get a complimentary train trip after certain numbers of reward points are accumulated.

**Escalator facility at Madurai**

1911. SHRI C. PERUMAL:

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up escalator facility at Madurai railway station; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There is a proposal for provision of escalator facility at Madurai Junction railway station and the same would be considered alongwith other works subject to availability of funds, etc.

**Bijapur-Yeshwanthpur-Basava Express**

1912. SHRI KB. SHANAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bijapur-Yeshwanthpur-Basava Express has started operating on daily basis instead of thrice in week;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for not operating the Bijapur-Yeshwanthpur-Basava Express on daily basis even after the long pending demand from public and the Members of Parliament and other representative from this area; and

(d) the date from which the train would operate on daily basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS  
(SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Due to operational and resource constraints.

(d) At present, there is no proposal to increase the frequency of the train to daily.

#### **New railway projects in North Eastern Region**

1913. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of new railways projects in the country particularly in the North Eastern Region that have been formulated during the current year;

(b) the total funds allocated on the these projects; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS  
(SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) No new project in the North Eastern Region has been included in the Budget 2006-07. However, two new line proposals from Dimapur to Kohima (Zubza) and Azra-Byrnihat have been processed for necessary approvals.

#### **Proposals of Gujarat for railway crossings**

1914. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as many as 59 proposals of the Gujarat State for permission of railway crossings are pending for approval at different levels in Railways since long;

(b) whether it is also a fact that for want of permission of Railways, the project for water supply cost over-runs and population of scarcity prone areas do not avail benefits from such water supply infrastructure;