

for conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga section. The N.E. Railway has been asked to update the cost of this work in view of escalation in prices of labour and material, and submit a revised estimate to the Ministry of Railways for sanction. The target date for completion of this work will be fixed after sanction to the revised estimate. The work regarding Darbhanga-Jayanagar section will be considered after receipt of the project report from N.E. Railway.

**Supply of Devanagiri typewriters to Embassies and High Commissions abroad**

449. SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have supplied the requisite Devanagiri typewriters and posted Hindi typists, Hindi translators and Hindi Stenographers to its Embassies and High Commissions abroad; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and (b) Hindi typewriters have already been supplied to 72 Missions abroad; and one Hindi typewriter each will be supplied to the remaining ones during this year. Hindi Officers, Hindi translators, Hindi typists and stenographers are already functioning in certain Missions. Training in Hindi typewriting, etc. is being organised for members of our staff.

**Abolition of the post of Hindi Officer in the Indian High Commission, London**

450. SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the posts of Hindi Officer in the Indian High Commission, London, has been abolished;

(b) if so, when the post was abolished and the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to restore that post and post some Hindi Officer there?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Hindi Officer's post was never established in the High Commission of India, London.

(c) The question of establishing posts of Hindi Officers in several of our Missions abroad, including London is under consideration.

**Population policy**

451. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU: Will the Minister of HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate a new population policy; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be formulated?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) The population policy of the Government emphasises integration of family planning and maternal and child care services and seeks to promote acceptance of the small family norm by the eligible couples voluntarily, by means of imparting information and education.

(b) Does not arise.

**Review of the Indian Railways Act**

452. SHRI NARSINGH NARAIN PANDEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to review the Indian Railways Act, if so, what are the details of the proposal;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the present Act, vests all powers in the Railway Board and its Chairman; if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the reasons necessitating the review of the Act?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes. It would be premature to indicate details of the proposal, as the review of the Act has not yet been completed.

(b) No. The powers of the Central Government are vested in the Railway Board only by notification issued from time to time under Section 2 of the Indian Railway Board Act, 1905.

(c) The Indian Railways Act was passed in the year 1890, when Railways were run by Companies. Today, barring a few small railway companies, Railways have been completely nationalised. There have been as many as 41 amending Acts passed by Parliament from time to time. To comply with the repeated demands made in Parliament, it was decided to undertake a review of the whole Act Section by Section to keep abreast of the times, with the following objectives:—

(i) to make the provisions more rational and intelligible;

(ii) to make changes—which have become necessary in the light of changed situations and policies;

(iii) to remove the difficulties caused by judicial decisions;

(iv) to delete such portions as have become obsolete or redundant;

(v) to simplify and speed up procedures wherever possible; and

(vi) to bring about, wherever necessary, substantial changes as would facilitate a more efficient working of the Railways.

#### **Safe custody of International Agreements and Pacts**

453. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the original copies of the agreements and

pacts entered into by Government of India with the Government of Bangladesh are missing; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to punish officials responsible for the safe custody of such documents?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) Original copies of formal political agreement entered into by the Government of India with the Government of Bangladesh are available in the Ministry of External Affairs. Original copies of Commercial, Economic and other Technical Agreements are kept in the Ministries/Departments concerned.

(b) Does not arise.

#### **Sponsoring of Shri T. N. Kaul for the membership of the Executive Board of the UNESCO**

454. SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India had sponsored Shri T. N. Kaul for the membership of the Executive Board of the UNESCO at the last General Conference in Belgrade;

(b) whether it is also a fact that to get Shri Kaul elected, the Prime Minister and the Education Minister wrote to their counterparts in other countries;

(c) whether several special missions were deputed to various countries to canvass support for Shri Kaul's candidature;

(d) the number of telegrams sent by the Ministry of External Affairs en clair and otherwise for this purpose and the cost thereof; and

(e) the expenditure incurred on the stay of Shri T. N. Kaul in Paris and Belgrade on official entertainment by the Indian Delegation at Belgrade in this connection?