

duction of double decker coaches on Bombay-Manmad route is under consideration and action as found feasible will be taken.

(b) and (c) 24 double decker coaches were on order and these have since been manufactured. The feasibility of improving double decker coaches with a view to eliminating/minimising inadequacies/defects pointed out by passengers is under examination on completion of which further manufacture of double decker coaches will be duly considered.

Closure of book stall at Puma Junction

1031. SHRI G. R. MHAISEKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the book stall at Puma Junction on the Kachiguda-Manmad line has been closed down;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to reopen the stall?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) The book stall at Puma Junction station was closed on 3rd January, 1980. Puma Junction is one of the 25 stations where M/s. A. H. Wheeler & Co. had surrendered their contracts for allotment to unemployed graduates, their partnerships, cooperative societies, etc. This contract has since been allotted to an unemployed graduate as per extant rules and the bookstall will be opened shortly.

Late running of trains on the Kachiguda-Manmad line

1032. SHRI G. R. MHAISEKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons of the late running of trains on the Kachiguda-Manmad line particularly on

Kachiguda to Manmad for the last ten years;

(b) what steps the railways authorities have taken; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to improve the punctuality of the trains which are running two to three hours late on that line?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) The main reasons for late running of trains on the Kachiguda-Manmad section are Alarm Chain pulling, Loco failures, losses due to bad coal, acute water scarcity, thefts of communication wires and transformers causing interruption, etc. The punctuality performance of the trains running on Kachiguda-Manmad section during the month of January to June 1980 range between 78.3 per cent to 95.8 per cent for Mail/Express trains and 79.9 per cent to 98.4 per cent for Passenger trains as against 58.3 per cent to 81.2 per cent and 43.4 per cent to 78 per cent respectively during the corresponding period of last year. All efforts are being made to improve the punctuality performance further and all avoidable detentions are being taken up.

Proposal from Maharashtra Government for declaring- Aurangabad-Jalna, Parbhani-Nanded-Hyderabad route National Highway

1033. SHRI G. R. MHAISEKAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the Maharashtra Government to declare the Aurangabad-Jalna, Parbhani Nanded-Hyderabad route as a national highway; and

(b) if so, since how long the proposal has been pending with the Central Government and what is the present position of the proposal?