

Minister of State's visit to Philippines

283. SHRI GHOUSE MOHIUDDIN SHEIKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs recently visited Philippines and had discussions with the various leaders of that country; and

(b) if so, what is the nature of discussions held and what is the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The discussions provided an opportunity to review the international situation and the existing friendly bilateral relations. The Philippines leaders reciprocated India's desire for further strengthening of economic, technical and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

Broad gauge railway line from Rampur to Haldwani

284. SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA PANT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in the construction of a broad gauge railway line from Rampur to Haldwani and the conversion of a metre gauge line to broad gauge from Moradabad to Kasipur; and

(b) by when they are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) and (b) Although construction of a new BG line between Rampur and Haldwani and gauge conversion to BG of Moradabad-Kaashipur-Ramnagar line was approved, it has not been possible to start construction work due to constraint of financial resources. Comple-

tion of the project is linked with the availability of adequate funds.

Withdrawal of free railway first class pass from former President

285. SHRI VITHAL GADGIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the free railway first class pass issued to Shri V. V. Giri, former President has been withdrawn; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) and (b) On the expiry of this 1st class AC All India Complimentary Card Pass on 21-9-1977, the request from Shri V. V. Giri for its renewal was not agreed to, as it is not covered by the broad guidelines decided by the Government for the issue of such passes.

Fast day-time train between Chandigarh and Delhi

286. SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representations to introduce a fast day-time train between Chandigarh and Delhi from some Members of Parliament and the Punjab Government; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken or propose to take thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAN): (a) Yes.

(b) Introduction of an additional train between Delhi and Chandigarh is operationally not feasible due to strained line capacity on sections en-route, especially the Delhi-Ambala section which is at present working to saturation. However, works are in progress to increase the line and terminal capacities so as to make it possible to introduce this train in future.