

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUKHDEV PRASAD): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Revision of bus fares in Delhi

233. SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY:

SHRIMATI LEELA DAMODARA MENON:

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA:

SHRI PRAKASH VIR SHASTRI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating a revision of bus fares in the Capital;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures taken by Government to streamline the functioning of the D.T.C.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): (a) The question of revision of the fare structure of the D.T.C. is under consideration.

(b) The fare structure of the Corporation was last revised/rationalised in 1964. The present fares are uneconomic and do not cover the cost of operation on account of the sharp increases in the prices of fuel, lubricants, spare parts etc. increase in the scale of dearness allowance payable to the Corporation's employees and revision of their pay scales.

(c) Steps are being taken to rationalise the routes, improve the maintenance organisation, strengthen checking and streamline the working procedures in the Corporation.

Arms Build-up by Pakistan

234. SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY:

SHRIMATI LEELA DAMODARA MENON:

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any information regarding the extent of arms

purchased by Pakistan from various countries recently; and

(b) the steps taken by Government for the adequate safeguard of country's security?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SAR-DAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Government are aware that Pakistan has acquired substantial quantities of arms including tanks, Ack Ack guns, artillery, gunboats, Torpedo boats, submarines, helicopters and different types of aircraft, from various countries. The impact of such developments on our defence preparedness is fully taken into account while planning our defence measures.

Strike in Bhilai Steel Plant

235. SHRI RABI RAY:

SHRI J. S. ANAND:

SHRI S. KUMARAN:

SHRI S. G. SARDESAI:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the units of Bhilai Steel Plant were paralysed on the 11th April, 1975 as a result of the shortage of gas following the refusal for the second successive day by some workers to close the gates of the blast furnaces;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what were the demand of the strikers; and

(d) what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUKHDEV PRASAD): (a) and (b) Following upon their refusal to change the tuyers and monkeys of the furnaces, the hearthmen working in the blast furnaces of the Bhilai Steel Plant went on an illegal strike from the 9th of April. As a result, two of the blast furnaces had to be banked on the 9th April, 1975, and pushing of coke ovens was also restricted. Consequently, some of the finishing mills had

to be shut down. There was a slight improvement in attendance on the 12th and 13th April, 1975. Production in the affected departments was resumed from 17th April, 1975 and has been completely normal from 20th April, 1975.

(c) The demands of the hearthmen related to increase in manning and upgradation of posts.

(d) This was a matter for the Management of the Plant who found that the demands were not justified.

Alleged Involvement of Chogyal in Murderous Attempts On Politicians in Sikkim

236. SHRI M. KADERSHAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chogyal of Sikkim is master minding the attempts of political assassinations in Sikkim;

(b) if so, whether Government have enquired into the circumstances and the likely external assistance which may have become available to Chogyal for carrying out reported anti-State activities; and

(c) what is the reaction and assessment of Government in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) and (b) The Chief Minister, Sikkim wrote on the 8th April, "The sum total of the details now available has proved beyond any doubt that there is a deep-rooted plot to assassinate me and other members of the Council of Ministers and to spread terrorism throughout Sikkim . . . We have the grave apprehension that the Chogyal and his Palace stooges, who are totally unreconciled to emergence and establishment of a popular democratic government in Sikkim, are actively planning to carry out even more vicious terrorist activities through the Sikkim Guards . . ."

The Government have no information of external involvement in those activities.

(c) It was against this background, and in the context of the breakdown of the constitutional machinery in Sikkim, that the

Sikkim Assembly took the decision on the 10th April to abolish the institution of the Chogyal and to make Sikkim a constituent unit of India. This decision was overwhelmingly endorsed by the Sikkimese people in the special poll held on the 14th April 1975.

Development of Indian Coastal Shipping

237. SHRI HIMMAT SINGH:

SHRI R. K. MISHRA:

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA:

DR. V. B. SINGH:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Minister of State for Shipping and Transport had delivered the annual lecture on "India and Indian Shipping" at the Institute of Port Management at Calcutta in March last;

(b) whether he had laid stress on the development of Indian coastal Shipping to protect India "being involved in any international conflict in the Indian Ocean"; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken in light of the above to develop our coastal shipping along 5,000 kms of our coast lines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The point stressed was that India having a vast coast line should have the sea lanes open for the country's commerce and that for such purpose a strong merchant marine would be very desirable.

(c) As on 1-4-1975 coastal shipping has an operative tonnage of 3.11 lakh GRT. All efforts are being made to achieve the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan operative tonnage of 6.00 lakh GRT. These include evolving a rational framework of arrangements so that the coastal shipping operations would be on the basis of viable and economic operation of the vessels.