

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) A few representations have been received regarding permission for sale of miscellaneous items from the existing STD/PCO booths. As STD/PCO Booths are allotted for a specific purpose, sale of new items and additional items has not been permitted from such booths.

Loss due to non-viable routes

2743. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether several non-viable routes of Railways have been causing huge losses;

(b) if so, the details of the non-viable routes identified;

(c) whether Government proposes to restrict investments in the non-viable routes and other uneconomical railway projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (d) Expansion/augmentation of rail-network is done on the basis of remunerative rate of return. However, some projects are taken up, even when the rate of return is below the expected indices for remunerativeness, on socioeconomic considerations and as a part of social service obligations of Railways to foster inclusive growth.

In the last assessment made in the year 2009-10, 102 lines were found to be under the category of uneconomic branch lines. Steps are taken from time to time to minimize losses on these lines by rationalizing the staff strength, restrictions on night working etc.

Nexus between ticket touts and railway officials

2744. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that touts have been running a train ticket racket allegedly in collusion with railway officials;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether the *modus operandi* of such touts have been investigated; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to break such nexus of railway officials with touts and penalize the guilty railway officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Some reports on irregularities in ticket booking