

official recognition having regard to its present stage of development.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Pilferage of Consignments

521. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be released to state :

(a) whether there has been an alarming increase in the case of short receipts, non-receipts, pilferage and overcarriages of consignments booked by Railways in recent years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the compensation paid in this regard by the Railways during each of the last three years; and

(d) the remedial measures taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI) : (a) No, Sir. In fact there has been a decline in such cases.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The details are as under :

Year	No. of claims preferred	Amount of compensation paid (Rs. in crores)
1992-93	216,954	22.34
1993-94	193,012	25.43
1994-95	177,614	25.31

(d) Railways are relentlessly striving to secure safety of goods entrusted to them for carriage and to ensure that consignments reach their destination without pilferage or damage. For this purpose, various preventive measures are adopted which include proper packaging, marking and labelling of consignments, proper pad-locking of brake vans, and luggage vans, using of commercially fit wagons, escorting of goods trains by Railway Protection Force in vulnerable areas, surprise checks and close liaison and coordination between Railway Protection Force and State Railway Police etc. Speedy despatch of goods by Block Rakes is being done to avoid loss and damage in transit.

Low Cost Building Materials

522. SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken to propagate the use of low cost building materials based on local resources and waste;

(b) whether the Government propose to supply the low cost material through the Nirman Kendras;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the abnormal rise in the cost of cement during the last six months has hampered the housing activities; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to reduce the cost of cement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA) : (a) In accordance with the National Housing Policy, the following steps have been taken to propagate the production and use of cost effective building technology :

(i) The Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC) has been set up at the national level for the selection, extension and promotion of proven technology and building materials and the use of materials conforming to affordable standards and quality construction.

(ii) A national network of Building Centres has been established with a view to providing cost-effective and innovative technology and training and upgrading the skills of artisans.

(iii) Some of the proven low-cost technologies have been incorporated in the national standards and specifications laid down by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD). The State agencies have been advised to incorporate these in their schedules of specifications.

(iv) With a view to promoting the production and use of building materials based on agricultural/industrial waste, like flyash, phosphogypsum, red mud, etc., financial incentives, viz., excise duty and customs duty exemption/concession, have been extended.

- (v) The entire range of building materials produced by Building Centres included in the national network are eligible for excise duty exemption.
- (vi) Certain other basic incentives, such as free supply of flyash, allotment of land near the source of generation of flyash at concessional rates and terms, have also been provided.
- (vii) The Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) is providing both equity support and term-loan to building materials manufacturing units using agricultural/industrial wastes, etc. The National Housing Bank (NHB) is also providing equity support to such units.
- (viii) HUDCO and the NHB have been using their financial leverage while approving the housing schemes in different parts of the country to persuade housing agencies to incorporate low-cost building materials and construction techniques appropriate to their regions.
- (ix) HUDCO also extends architectural design and consultancy services to the housing agencies which are keen to use cost-effective and appropriate construction techniques in their schemes.

(a) the cost of generation of wind energy per unit;

(b) whether the Government propose to give encouragement for tapping non-conventional energy sources in the light of increasing cost of generation through conventional sources of energy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (PROF. P.J. KURIEN) : (a) The average cost of wind power generation is generally in the range of Rs. 2.00-Rs. 2.50 per unit, depending upon the sites.

(b) and (c). Several promotional and fiscal incentives are being offered by the Central and State Governments to encourage tapping of non-conventional energy sources for power generation. The Central incentives include a five-year tax holiday, 100 per cent accelerated depreciation, concessional/exemption from customs duty and excise duty. Some State Governments/State Electricity Boards allow wheeling, banking, buy-back of electricity generated from these projects. Third-party sale and sales tax incentives are also available in a few States.

Over Bridges

524. DR. AMRIT LAL KALIDAS PATEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of road over bridges under construction in Gujarat;

(b) the extent of progress made so far in completing construction work of each of these road bridges; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to expedite the construction work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI) : (a) 5 on cost sharing basis in replacement of level crossings.

(b) A *Statement* is attached.

(c) The Railway constructs the bridge proper across the tracks. The State Government constructs the approaches. Railway programmes the construction of bridge across the track so as to complete it before or along with the completion of work on approaches. Regular efforts are made to get the work progressed by the State.

Harnessing of Wind Power

523. SHRI RAM KAPSE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :