

**Sale of Eatable Items in Trains***[English]*

2976. SHRI GOVINDA CHANDRA MUNDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that sub-standard eatable items are being sold at high prices in trains and on stations by the contractors who are not having any licence in connivance with the Railway police;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to check such sale by the said unauthorised contractors;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken against such contractors and Railway employees involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (d). Unauthorised hawking/vending is a punishable offence under Section 144 of Railways Act, 1989. To check this menace, regular checks are conducted by railway officials with the help of Government Railway Police and Railway Protection Force personnel. Such offenders are dealt with in accordance with the Railway Act. The Railway and RPF employees and GRP personnel if found involved, are dealt with departmentally. During the period from April, 1993 to March, 1994, 57967 checks were conducted against unlicensed hawkers/vendors leading to prosecution of 18,157 persons, 2580 persons were sent to jail and Rs. 20.27 lakhs were realised as fine.

**Gauge Conversion**

2977. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps are being taken for conversion of Siliguri to New Jalpaiguri railway line into a broad gauge one;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not taking up conversion work in the Eastern and North Eastern Regions?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Conversion work is in progress on several projects in the Eastern and N.E. Regions. Siliguri-New Jalpaiguri section will be considered for conversion in the next phase of the Action Plan taken up by this Ministry under Project Unigauge.

**Rail Traffic**

2978. PROF. SUSANTA CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rail Traffic has come down from 65% in 1970-71 to about 45% in 1989-90 *vis-a-vis* corresponding increase in the road traffic;

(b) whether it has further come down in the year 1993-94;