

**Conversion of railway line from  
Porbander to Jetty and old Jetty**

479. SHRI BHARAT KUMAR ODEDRA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government have any proposal under consideration regarding conversion of Metre Gauge line to Broad gauge line from Porbandar Station up to all weather port Jetty and Old Jetty;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The port traffic is moving by road.

**Subsidised loans to mechanical sailing  
vessel owners**

480. SHRI BHARAT KUMAR ODEDRA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Shipping Board had recommended for subsidised loans to Mechanised Sailing Vessel Owners of Saurashtra, Gujarat;

(b) whether the recommendation of the Board has not been implemented by Government and all the cases are still pending since more than a year;

(c) if so, the time by which Government propose to take a final decision in this regard; and

(d) the total number of cases pending with Government till date ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) The National Shipping Board has favoured an alternative scheme of grant of subsidised loans through

Banks for Sailing Vessels on the pattern of loans being granted to inland vessels.

(b) and (c). A decision has already been taken to formulate a scheme in this regard. No application for grant of loans is pending with the Government.

(d) None.

**Subsidised loans through Banks**

481. SHRI BHARAT KUMAR ODEDRA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Shipping Board has favoured subsidised loans through Banks as an alternative scheme of grant on the pattern of similar loans granted to inland vessels;

(b) if so, the number of such loans sanctioned, State-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some complaints have been received regarding sanction of loans for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) and (b). The National Shipping Board favoured an alternative scheme of grant of subsidised loans through Banks in the case of sailing vessels. A decision has been taken by Government to formulate a scheme in this regard. No loans have yet been sanctioned.

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

**Increase in incidence of blindness**

482. DR. G. S. RAJHANS :  
SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI  
GUPTA :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the World Health Organisation has recently expressed its deep concern over the rising cases of blindness in the