

revealed that the line would not be remunerative. However, several MPs and CM/ Kerala had indicated that if the proposed line could be extended to Trivandrum, and from Sabarimala to Dindigul, the lines would form alternative routes and would become viable. There were also several demands for these lines independently. As such, in order to get a realistic idea of the costs and traffic potential of the routes which would be created as well as of the individual segments, the scope of the survey was enlarged to include the survey for a new BG line from Punalur to Trivandrum. These surveys are still in progress. The reports are expected within this year. Further consideration of this project would become possible as soon as the survey report becomes available.

Impact of Petroleum Price Hike

1490 SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the impact, both direct and indirect, or hike in the prices of petroleum products on the farmers having marginal, medium and large holdings, category and cost-wise, separately;

(b) whether the Government propose to compensate the farmers for the increase in the costs and if so, the extent and manner of doing the same;

(c) if not, whether the Government propose to evolve a formula by which the farmers especially with marginal and medium holdings are to be compensated; and

(d) if so, the broad contours of the said formula?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) In agriculture sector diesel is mostly used for farm machinery and irrigation. As per estimates available under the Comprehensive Scheme for Studying cost of Cultivation/Production of Crops in India, on an average, cost of diesel in the total cost is estimated to be about 4%. This percentage is slightly higher upto 6% in more mechanised States of Punjab and Haryana. The 15% hike in price of diesel is likely to increase the overall cost of production of crops by about 0.6% while it may be in the range of 0.7 to 0.9% in the States of Punjab and Haryana for different crops. Estimates according to size class of holdings are not available.

(b) The increase in the price of diesel will get reflected in the cost of production which is one of the important tangible factors in determining the level of minimum support price of major agricultural commodities. Thus, the rise in the prices of diesel will be duly taken into account in working out the minimum support prices.

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

Doubling of Railway Line

1491. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal for the doubling of Ernakulam-Kayamkulam via Kottayam railway line; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Processed Food Factory of NAFED

1492. SHRI B.L. SHARMA PREM : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Processed Food Factory of NAFED at Delhi is running into huge losses for the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the causes therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to institute an inquiry into the whole issue to locate the reasons for the huge losses and fix the responsibility;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The losses incurred by Processed Food Factory of NAFED at Delhi from 1992-93 onwards are as under:

Year	Net Losses (in Rs. lacs)
1992-93	44.60
1993-94	55.14
1994-95	130.50

The main reasons for the said losses are generally obsolete plant and machinery, interest on capital, high wages and administrative overheads.

(c) to (e). The Board of Directors appointed an Expert Committee to look into the working of the processed food factory. The Expert Committee made certain recommendations which are under implementation.

Introduction of AC Coaches

1493. SHRI A.G.S. RAM BABU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce

three-tier AC Coaches in the trains running in Madurai-Bangalore section:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, not at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) A.C. 3 tier coaches being manufactured by the Railways are having air brake system and are being progressively deployed on trains getting converted into Air Brake.

Representations from Jamnagar

1494 SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether representations have been received from Jamnagar regarding extension of long distance trains upto Dwarka, increase in reservation quota at Jamnagar station and change in time schedules of Saurashtra Janata, Saurashtra Express and Intercity Express

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) : From time to time, representations are being received in this regard from Members of Parliament and others including Passenger Associations of Jamnagar.

(c) The extension of long distance trains upto Dwarka, Change in timings of Saurashtra Janata Express, Saurashtra Express and Hapa-Rajkot-Ahmadabad Express have been examined but not found feasible due to operational exigencies.

Regarding increase in reservation quota at Jamnagar, this station has been provided with a Passenger Reservation System (PRS) and has access to the entire quota on Mumbai PRS on first-come-first served basis. For the trains in which specific quota has been allotted after computerisation of reservation at Jamnagar, the quotas are reviewed periodically and adjustment are made on the basis of utilisation to the extent possible.

Forest Cover

1495 SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA

DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of reserve as well as total forest cover during 1985 and as on date, State-wise;

(b) whether deforestation/illegal felling of trees at the rate of 47,000 hectares annually has brought down the forest cover in the country to ten per cent only;

(c) the main causes of the low percentage of forest cover

(d) the impact of deforestation on environment and ecology of the area; and

(e) the effective measures/scheme being taken and proposed to be taken by the Union and State Governments to arrest the deforestation activities and increase the forest cover?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) The Statewise details of the forest cover for the period 1985-87, 1989-91 and that of reserved forest for the period 1987-89 are given in the Statement enclosed.

(b) As per the State of Forest Report, 1993 the area under the forest cover in the country is 64.01 million hectares which is 19.47% of the total geographical area of the country.

(c) The main causes for sub-optimal forest cover in the country are excessive biotic pressure with increasing human and cattle population, encroachments, lack of natural regeneration due to excessive grazing, shifting cultivation, forest fires, diseases, natural calamities like floods, droughts, cyclones, avalanches, etc.

(d) The impact of deforestation on environment and ecology of the area are as under

- Land degradation and impoverishment of the soil due to heavy erosion caused by rain, wind etc.
- The loss of gene-pool, bio-diversity and wildlife habitats of great biological significance.
- Lowering of productivity thereby leading to lesser production of biomass for use of humans and animals.
- Extinction of rare and threatened species of plants and animals.
- Deterioration of life-support systems including water resources.

(e) The effective measures/scheme being taken and proposed to be taken by the Union and State Governments to arrest the deforestation activities and increase the forest cover are as under

- Enactment of Forest Conservation Act, 1980 to regulate diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes.
- Implementation of Indian Forest Act, 1927 and Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to check forest and wildlife offences.