

>

Title : Need for doubling of Madurai-Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari railway line.

SHRI S.S. RAMASUBBU (TIRUNELVELI): Tamil Nadu is lagging behind in the development of railway network in the country. Various railway works like gauge conversion, electrification and new lines pertaining to the State are running much behind the schedule due to inadequate fund allocation and cost escalation.

One of the important projects is doubling of Madurai-Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari Section. Madurai, Tirunelveli, Courtalam, Nagercoil, Kanyakumari are important tourist places of attraction in southern Tamil Nadu. Large number of people from within the State and abroad are visiting these places throughout the year. There is a heavy traffic on this route and people going to Rameshwaram and Trivandrum are also using this route.

Presently doubling of railway line has been sanctioned for Villupuram-Dindigul section. Ongoing doubling work between Dindigul-Madurai is likely to be completed shortly. Hence, doubling of line between Madurai-Kanyakumari via Tirunelveli should be taken up on priority. At present, there is a single line on this

* Treated as laid on the Table.

route. People visiting various tourist places of importance are facing lot of difficulties, because of capacity reduction, railways cannot introduce more number of trains to meet the increasing demand of passengers. If double line is laid, the people residing at Maniyachi, Virudhunagar, Kovilpatti will also be benefited as it will open connectivity to those places. There is also simultaneous demand from Kerala for doubling of Nagercoil/Kanyakumari-Trivandrum Section. This will facilitate large number of tourists visiting both the States. Number of trains which were running up to Madurai earlier have been extended upto Tirunelveli in the recent years. If the doubling of Madurai-Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari becomes a reality, it will facilitate large number of people from all parts of the country visiting Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

I, therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Minister of Railways to take up the work of doubling of Madurai-Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari railway line on priority basis and allocate adequate funds for the project.