

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 138
ANSWERED ON 15.12.2023

UNDERUTILISATION OF UPGRADED RAILWAY TRACKS

* 138 SHRI P. WILSON:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has spent more than ₹1000 crore for upgradation of gauge from Madurai to Coimbatore to increase speed and reduce travel time and whether it is a fact that upgradation was completed in 2017 but the trains are still being operated at a lower speed, if so, the details of trains which are being operated at lower speed and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether Government is aware of concerns raised by Tamil Nadu regarding poor connectivity to southern districts of Tamil Nadu from Coimbatore;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the current progress of Hosur-Jolarpettai and Madurai-Tuticorin Railway projects?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, COMMUNICATIONS AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 138 BY SHRI P. WILSON ANSWERED IN RAJYA SABHA ON 15.12.2023 REGARDING UNDERUTILISATION OF UPGRADED RAILWAY TRACKS

(a) to (d) Under uni-gauge policy of Indian Railways, since year 1992 many meter gauge and narrow gauge lines have been converted to broad gauge. This enables interoperability of train services. It also allows seamless movement of trains from one point to another. The speed of trains on Indian Railways is dependent inter-alia on speed potential of the rolling stock used, Maximum Permissible Speed of the concerned section, condition of track, up-gradation of signaling systems and interlocking, availability of double/multiple lines, number of stoppages enroute. etc.

Further, as the Railway network straddle across State/district boundaries, trains are introduced, as per network requirement, across such boundaries. However, 05 pairs of train services connects Coimbatore to prominent cities like Madurai and Rameswarm, located in the Southern district of Tamil Nadu. Besides, introduction of new train services is an ongoing process on Indian Railways subject to operational feasibility, traffic justification, availability of resources, etc.

Survey for a new BG line between Jolarpettai/Tiruppatur and Hosur via Krishnagiri (98 Km) has been sanctioned and survey work has been taken up.

The project for connecting Madurai and Thoothukodi via Aruppukottai has been taken up. Milavittan – Melamarudur (18 Km) section has been commissioned in March, 2022. The preparation of detailed estimate for the remaining stretch from Melmarudur to Madurai via Aruppukottai has been taken up.

Since 2014, there has been substantial increase in Budget allocation and commensurate commissioning of projects. Budget allocation for infrastructure and safety projects falling fully/partly in the State of Tamil Nadu has been enhanced to highest at ₹6,080 crore in current financial year (2023-24), which is nearly seven times of the budget allocation of ₹922 crore in 2013-14

Though fund allocation has increased manifold but pace of execution of project is dependent on expeditious land acquisition. Railway acquires the land through State Government. State Government assesses the compensation amount and advises to Railway. On receipt of demand from State Government, Railway deposits compensation amount with concerned District Land acquisition Authority. Execution of important infrastructure projects falling fully/partly in the State of Tamil Nadu is held up due to delay in land acquisition and only about 624 Ha land has been acquired out of total requirement of about 1832 Ha. Railway had initiated efforts for acquisition of land but could not succeed in acquiring land for projects. Support of the Government of Tamil Nadu is needed to expedite the land acquisition.

The completion of any Railway project depends on various factors like quick land acquisition by State Government, forest clearance by officials of forest department, shifting of infringing utilities, statutory clearances from various authorities, geological and topographical conditions of area, law and order situation in the area of project site, number of working months in a year for particular project site due to climatic conditions etc. All these factors affect the completion time of the project. With above constraints, every effort is being made to execute the project(s) expeditiously.
