

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1367
ANSWERED ON 02.08.2024

ALTERNATIVE RAILWAY LINE FROM CHENNAI TO TUTICORIN

1367 SHRI R. DHARMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there is a railway line from Chennai to Thoothukudi via Trichy, Madurai, Kovilpatti and a new railway line is to be laid from Aruppukkottai Vlachikulam to Thoothukudithe;
- (b) whether Government is aware that both routes pass through busy Madurai and Trichy junctions and distance is not short;
- (c) whether Government is aware that demand of alternative railway line from Chennai to Tuticorin which is 65 km shorter and new railway line of only 83 kilometers from Manamadurai to Vlachikulam via Pasumbon, Kamudi, Perunali is enough;
- (d) whether Government has received any proposal from State Government of Tamil Nadu; and
- (e) if so, action taken by the Government thereon?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1367 BY SHRI R. DHARMAR ANSWERED IN RAJYA SABHA ON 02.08.2024 REGARDING ALTERNATIVE RAILWAY LINE FROM CHENNAI TO TUTIUCORIN

(a) to (e): Sanctioning of Railway projects is a continuous and dynamic process of Indian Railway. Demands of Railway Projects are raised by State Governments, Central Ministries, Members of Parliament, other public representatives and Railways' own requirements. They are taken up on the basis of remunerativeness, last mile connectivity, missing links and alternate routes, augmentation of congested/saturated lines, socio-economic considerations etc. As receipt of such Proposals /suggestions is a continuous and dynamic process, centralized compendium of such requests is not maintained.

The Railway projects are surveyed/sanctioned/executed Zonal Railway-wise and not State-wise as the Railway projects may span across State boundaries.

Chennai Egmore and Thoothukodi (Tuticorin) are connected via Tiruchchirapalli Madurai and Kovilpatti.

Chennai Egmore and Thoothukudi (Tuticorin), a New Line project between Madurai and Tuticorin via Aruppukkotai (143.5 Km) was included in Budget. The alignment passes through Vilathikulam. Section between Milavittan and Melamarudur (18 Km) has been commissioned in March, 2022. Total 74.87 Ha land, out of 870.98 Ha, has been acquired for the balance stretch. Work has been taken up in available land.

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.

Since 2014, there has been substantial increase in fund allocation and commensurate commissioning of projects in State of Tamil Nadu as under:-

| Period | Average Outlay | Increase w.r.t. average allocation of 2009-14 |
|---------|-----------------|---|
| 2009-14 | ₹879 crore/year | - |
| 2023-24 | ₹6,080 crore | more than 6 times |
| 2024-25 | ₹6,362 crore | more than 7 times |

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 807 Ha land has been acquired out of total requirement of about 2749 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.

Presently, proposal for a New Line between Manamadurai and Vilathikulam via Pasumbon, Kumudi, Perunali is not under consideration. However, connectivity between Manamadurai and Vilathikulam has been envisaged on completion of Madurai and Tuticorin via Aruppukkotai (143.5 Km) new line project.

In last three years (i.e. 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-24 and current Financial Year i.e. 2024-25), total 21 Nos. of Surveys (04 New Line and 17 Doubling) falling fully/partly in the State of Tamil Nadu, total length of 1,813 Km have been sanctioned and survey work has been taken up.

The survey of New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling of existing rail network are taken up under PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP) for the development of multimodal connectivity infrastructure to various Economic Zones with an objective to have integrated planning, enhanced logistics efficiency and remove gaps for seamless movement of people, goods and services, connectivity to industrial clusters, ports, mines, power plants, agricultural zones including tourist and cultural places.
