

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 904
ANSWERED ON 06.02.2026

HIGH-SPEED RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN CHENGANNUR AND PAMBA IN KERALA

904 DR. JOHN BRITTAS:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is considering a new proposal for a high-speed railway line between Chengannur and Pamba in Kerala;
- (b) if so, the details and present status of the new proposal; and
- (c) whether the said project is proposed in addition to or in derogation of the Angamali – Erumeli Sabari rail project, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (c): Angamali - Sabarimala via Erumeli new line project was sanctioned in 1997-98 on 50:50 cost sharing basis. Work on Angamali-Kaladi (7 Km) and long lead works on Kaladi-Perumbavoor (10 Km) was taken up. However, further works on this project could not be taken forward due to protests by local people against land acquisition and fixing of alignment of the line, court cases filed against the project and inadequate support from the Government of Kerala. Accordingly, the project was kept under abeyance in Sept, 2019.

Subsequently, to provide connectivity to Sabarimala Shrine, a survey on alternate alignment i.e. Chengannur - Pamba (75 Km) new line was also carried out. However, the project was not found feasible.

Meanwhile, the estimated cost of the Angamali - Sabarimala via Erumeli new line project was updated at ₹3,801 crore and submitted to Government of Kerala for the acceptance of the estimate and willingness to share cost of the project.

In August 2024, the Government of Kerala communicated their conditional consent. Government of Kerala was requested by Railway to submit unconditional consent for sharing the cost.

Then the Minister of Railways requested the Chief Minister of Kerala to acquire land using their share of 50% of the cost of the project. Once land acquisition by State starts, work can proceed further.

Now, on the request of Ministry of Railways, the Govt. of Kerala has initiated land acquisition proceedings and the Angamali – Sabarimala new line project has moved forward. Ministry of Railways is following up the land acquisition process with Govt. of Kerala.

Kerala

Budget allocation in the recent years has increased significantly. Budget allocation for infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/partly in the State of Kerala including Angamali – Sabarimala project is as under:-

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹ 372 crore/year
2025-26	₹3,042 crore (more than 8 times)

As on 01.04.2025, 06 projects (02 new line and 04 doubling) of 266 km length, costing ₹9,415 crore falling fully/partly in Kerala are sanctioned. The summary is as under:-

Category	No. of projects	Total Length	Length Commissioned	Balance to complete	Expenditure upto March 2025 (₹in Crore)
New line	02	146 km	0 km	146 km	309
Doubling /multitracking	04	120 km	26 km	94 km	2,941
Total	06	266 km	26 km	240 km	3,250

Zonal Railway wise details of Railway projects are made available in public domain on Indian Railway's website.

Details of some of the recently completed projects falling fully/partly in Kerala are as under :

S.N	Project	Cost (₹ in Crores)
1	Dindigul-Pollachi-Palghat & Pollachi-Coimbatore gauge conversion (217 km)	1,360
2	Quilon-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur gauge conversion (357 km)	1,122
3	Mulanturutti-Kuruppantara doubling (24 km)	303
4	Chengannur-Chingavanam doubling (27 km)	436
5	Ambalapuzha-Haripad doubling (18 km)	346
6	Kuruppanthara-Chingavanam doubling (27 km)	749

Some of the projects falling fully/partly in Kerala which have been taken up are as under:

S No.	Project	Cost (₹ in Crores)
1	Tirunnavaya –Guruvayur new line (35 Km)	138
2	Angamali-Sabarimala new line (111 km)	3,801
3	Ernakulam-Kumbalam doubling (8 km)	595
4	Kumbalam-Thuravur Patch doubling (16 km)	803
5	Trivandrum- Kanyakumari doubling (87 km)	3,786
6	Shoranur - Vallathol doubling (10 km)	367

In last three years (i.e. 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-25 and current financial year i.e. 2025-26), total 09 Nos. of Surveys (03 new line and 06 doubling) falling fully/partly in the State of Kerala having a total length of 1,124 km have been sanctioned and survey work has been taken up.

Execution of important infrastructure projects falling fully/partly in the State of Kerala are held up due to delay in land acquisition. Status of land acquisition in the State of Kerala is as under:

Total Land required for Projects in Kerala	476 ha
Land Acquired	65 ha (14%)
Balance Land to be acquired	411 ha (86%)

Railway had deposited ₹1,975 crore for land acquisition to Government of Kerala. Support of the Government of Kerala is needed to expedite the land acquisition. For instance, details of some major

projects which are delayed due to land acquisition are as under:-

SN	Name of the project	Total land required (in Ha)	Land acquired (in Ha)	Balance Land to be acquired (in Ha)
1.	Angamali - Sabarimala new line (111 km)	416	24	392
2.	Ernakulam – Kumbalam Patch doubling (8 km)	4	3	1
3.	Kumbalam – Turavur Patch doubling (16 km)	10	9	1
4.	Shoranur - Vallathol doubling (10 km)	5	0	5

Government of India is geared up to execute projects, however success depends upon the support of Government of Kerala.

Sanction of any railway project depends upon many parameters/factors which include the following:

- Anticipated traffic projections and remunerativeness of the proposed route
- First and last mile connectivity provided by the project
- Connection of missing links and providing additional route
- Augmentation of congested/saturated lines
- Demands raised by State Governments/Central Ministries/Public representatives
- Railway's own operational requirements
- Socio-economic considerations
- Overall availability of funds

Completion of Railway project/s depends on various factors which include the following:

- Land acquisition by State Government
- Forest clearance
- 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 etc.

All these factors affect the completion time and cost of the project/s.