

Extra charges levied on passengers

3184. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government would reconsider levy of unfair hidden railway charges aimed at propping up its revenue like levy of superfast surcharges on trains running at average of less than 55 kms. per hour;

(b) whether more than 360 designated superfast trains fetch Rs. 520 crore extra without adding anything to the running cost;

(c) whether there is any rationale in levying return journey surcharge; and

(d) the Tatkal scheme in which 30 per cent of berths are kept aside and sold at Rs. 150 extra for sleeper and Rs. 300 for AC classes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Surcharge is levied on trains designated as superfast trains having higher average speed.

(b) During year 2008-09, superfast trains fetched a revenue of around Rs. 243 crores. The running cost including fuel cost of superfast trains are more than the ordinary trains.

(c) To recover the additional expenditure involved in maintenance and continuous upgradation of a network system, enhanced reservation fee for the tickets booked for journeys originating from other than the ticket booking station was levied.

(d) The extent of accommodation varies with the demand in various classes and trains subject to a ceiling of 30%. Unutilized Tatkal accommodation gets released to general RAC/Waiting list passengers at the time of preparation of charts.

The Tatkal charges have been levied with a view to make cornering of tickets unremunerative for touts/unscrupulous elements. Action has also been initiated to reduce these charges as per announcements made in the Rail Budget 2009-10.

Gauge conversion of rail line in North Eastern States

3185. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that about half of the railway lines in the North-Eastern States comprise of metre gauge lines;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the main purpose of carrying essential commodities and construction material cannot be served for want of broad gauge lines;

(c) the problems of gauge conversion in the Lumding-Badarpur sector and the extent of sufferings caused to the people; and

(d) how Government propose to get over the problems and expedite conversion works?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The main problems being faced in execution of the work of gauge conversion of Lumding-Silchar include adverse law and order conditions in North Cachar hills, dearth of resourceful contractors willing to work in the region, short working season, bad conditions of roads etc. The needs of the people are being-served by the existing metre gauge services.

(d) Steps have been taken for deployment of dedicated security forces at work sites through proper liasoning with State Government. The matter has also been taken up for improvement of conditions of road in the area.

Measure to scale down export of raw material for steel

3186. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the capacity for production of steel proposed by various investors in steel, capacity created during the last three years and the capacity likely to come up in the next five years;

(b) considering the substantial capacity addition, has the Ministry proposed for stopping export of iron ore, manganese etc. or scaling down such exports; and

(c) if so, the progress of such efforts and if not, the reasons for not protecting the Indian Steel Industry from a future shortage of raw materials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP): (a) Proposed steel capacity addition by major steel producers in the country is given in the Statement (See below). Crude steel capacity in the country for the last 3 years period from 2006-07 to 2008-09 is tabulated below:—

(Crude Steel Capacity in million tonnes)

Year	Total capacity as on 31st March	Capacity addition
2006-07	56.84	5.67
2007-08	59.84	3.00
2008-09*	65.36	5.52

Source JPC, * = Provisional.

Based on the steel investment scenario in the country, it has been estimated that, India's steel production is likely to be 124 million tonnes by the year 2011-12.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Steel is in favour of providing domestic value addition of iron ore as an important criteria for consideration of allocation of iron ore mines. Government has approved National Mineral Policy, 2008, which *inter-alia* provides for preference to value adders in the allocation of captive mines of iron ore. Further, the Group of Ministers had decided that conservation of iron ore resources of the country is of paramount importance, however, the same may not be achieved by banning or capping the export of iron ore but by taking recourse