

- (a) the progress made on Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail project;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the project has been significantly delayed and there have been cost over-runs;
- (c) if so, the details of extending time-limit and cost over-runs;
- (d) whether it is also a fact that expert committee on the said project has received inputs apprehending the technological sustainability and financial viability of the project;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether Government proposes to make changes in the route in view of such reservations?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) On this rail project, Jammu-Udhampur and Anantnag-Baramulla sections have already been completed and commissioned to traffic. Qazigund-Anantnag section is targeted for commissioning in August 2009. The section from Udhampur to Katra is targeted for commissioning by December, 2011 and Qazigund-Banihal by March, 2012. The alignment between Katra-Banihal has been under review and an Expert Committee appointed to study the issues involved has recently submitted its report. The report of the Committee is under examination in the Ministry.

(b) and (c) This is a project being done in Himalayas which are the youngest mountain range in the world. The terrain is difficult with geological uncertainties. There have been delays due to technical difficulties being faced and the same may have cost implications also. The time schedule for completion of the entire project will be fixed once the decision on the report of the Expert Committee is finalized.

(d) and (e) The Expert Committee had received inputs through interaction with the contractors, consultants and officials associated with the project. The issue of financial viability was not referred to the Committee.

(f) The route will get decided once the final decision on the report of the Committee is taken.

#### Sugar Mills

†\*116. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that around 650 mills are engaged in production of sugar in the country;
- (b) if not, the actual number of these mills;
- (c) whether out of these only 107 mills have electricity generation as a by-product;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(d) if not, the facts thereof and whether as a result of provision of by-production, these sugar mills also get assistance in offsetting general economic loss; and

(e) if so, Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) As per the information available with the Government, there are 626 sugar factories in the country as on 30.06.2009.

(c) As on 31.03.2009, 136 sugar factories have bagasse based co-generation power plants.

(d) and (e) Utilization of their by-product viz. bagasse for cogeneration of power is an economic activity involving value addition which improves the viability and profitability of sugar mills. This adds to green power availability in the country and helps in meeting the overall power requirement. The green power so generated has the potential of giving carbon credits to the sugar factories and to the country as a whole, further improving revenue generation. Therefore, the Government would continue to support bagasse based co-generation projects.

#### **Procurement of wheat and rice**

\*117. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRITYA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether wheat/rice procurement has gone up and procurement is on the higher side and shortfall is expected in wheat, oil seeds, sugarcane and pulses;

(b) if so, to what extent there is a decline in foodgrain, especially in wheat; and

(c) what is the total procurement made so far and to what extent it has been helpful to the country to make it sufficient in regard to food products?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) There has been a record procurement of 250.44 lakh tonnes of wheat (as on 6.7.2009) in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2009-10, as against total procurement of 226.89 lakh tonnes in RMS 2008-09 and there is no shortfall in wheat procurement. Similarly, a record procurement of 312.66 lakh tonnes of rice (as on 6.7.2009) has been achieved in Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2008-09 as against 284.93 lakh tonnes in the entire KMS 2007-08. The procurement of oilseeds and pulses under Price Support Scheme have shown a decreasing trend during past three years. Sugarcane is not procured under Price Support Scheme.

(c) Adequate stocks of foodgrains (wheat & rice) are available in the Central Pool to meet the requirements of TPDS and other welfare schemes and also to maintain required buffer stocks for ensuring food security.