

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) The international economic recession has adversely affected the export market of Indian industry, including the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and in particular, sectors such as textiles, leather, gems and jewellery, auto components, etc. have been mainly affected. The micro and small enterprises (MSEs) working in these sectors, as a percentage of total MSEs, are 3.7% (textiles), 1.4% (leather), 1.3% (gems and jewellery) and 0.2% (auto components).

(c) and (d) Keeping in view the impact of international economic recession, the Government has announced several economic measures for protecting and providing a stimulus to the MSMEs. According to available information, the auto component sector and textile products have shown signs of recovery. Full impact of the stimulus packages, however, is expected to be seen in the coming months.

Reduction of tatkal charges

237. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to reduce the charges of tatkal tickets to protect the interests of poor passengers at least for the sleeper class;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The matter is under review.

Encroachment of Railway land

†238. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large expanse of prime land under Railways ownership has been encroached upon by unauthorized person and land mafia;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the concrete steps taken by the Railways to clear the encroachment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Railway land measuring 1023 hectares is under encroachments involving a total of 140177 encroachments. These encroachments are existing since long. Railways are engaged in continuous exercise to remove encroachments from Railway land.

Rail projects in NER

239. SHRI BISWAJIT DAIMARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railway lines from Rangia to Murkongsilec being upgraded from meter gauge to broad gauge;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, the schedule of completion;
- (c) the Indian Railways are being converted from meter gauge to broad gauge but why has the railway line from Lumding to Agartala made a meter gauge;
- (d) the reasons for not providing broad gauge instead; and
- (e) whether there was a demand for railway coach factory in Bongaigaon, Assam and by when is it being implemented?

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

(b) The target for completion of the project is March 2013.

(c) and (d) The existing rail network beyond Lumding Southward is on Meter Gauge for which gauge conversion has been taken up. The line from Kumarghat to Agartala has been constructed to Broad Gauge standards but laid with meter gauge as the connecting Lumding-Badarpur-Kumarghat line is on meter gauge. The line will be converted to Broad Gauge once gauge conversion of Lumding-Badarpur-Kumarghat is completed.

(e) Demands for establishing railway coach factory are received from different zones. However, there is no proposal at present to set up a Rail Coach Factory in the region.

Demands for rail projects from North Gujarat

240. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of various demands for North Gujarat pending with the Railway Ministry;
- (b) whether Ministry respond to the demand of reducing running hours of S.J. Rajdhani Express in between Ahmedabad-New Delhi;
- (c) what is the status of direct train from Patan in North Gujarat to Mumbai; and
- (d) what is the status of direct train from Palanpur to Mumbai?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Details of each and every demand is not maintained. However, a request has been received from the State Government of Gujarat some time back containing some of the railway projects of North Gujarat. The details are as under:

1. Harij-Mahsana-Radhanpur: Survey completed and proposed new line not taken up.
2. Gauge conversion of Mahsana-Taranga Hill with extension to Ambaji: Survey completed and proposal not taken up.