

already sanctioned as a part of Quilon-Tirunelveli-Trichendur and Tenkasi-Virudhunagar gauge conversion project Gauge conversion of this section is targeted for completion during 2010-11.

Proposal for construction of Madurai-Tuticorin new line passing through Tuticorin District is being processed for requisite clearances.

#### **Infrastructural facilities for stations in Tamil Nadu**

3533. SHRI PAUL MANOJ PANDIAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps will be taken by Government to provide infrastructure facilities for the Palayamkottai railway station, Tirunelveli district and Armuganeri railway station, Tuticorin district, Tamil Nadu on an urgent basis; and

(b) whether necessary funds will be allocated in the budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Palayamkottai and Armuganeri are 'E' category railway stations and they have been provided with amenities as per norms commensurate with present level of traffic. In addition, works pertaining to construction of platform fencing and toilet have been taken up at Palayamkottai station. Similarly, works pertaining to extension of Platform No.I to hold 24 coaches at Armuganeri station have been taken up. Necessary funds are available to carry out these works.

#### **Hiring of out agencies**

3534. SHRI G.N. RATANPURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) when was the current Railway Out Agency engaged in carriage of various Railway goods from Jammu Tawi Railway Station to different destinations in J&K first hired by the Railways for this purpose;

(b) whether such agencies are hired by open bids or tenders and when is the next such exercise expected; and

(c) the number of agencies/companies participated in such bids/tenders for this particular job, when the current Out Agency was hired?