

**Gauge conversion work between Sengottai and
Punalur section**

598. SHRI S. THANGAVELU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the gauge conversion project between Sengottai and Punalur section of 49 kilometers with 950 meters of tunnel in Tamil Nadu is delaying for long time;
- (b) if so, whether such delay has caused escalation of estimated cost; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government for early completion of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) MG traffic on Sengottai-Punalur (49 km.) Ghat section has been suspended and gauge conversion block has commenced. Section involves difficult terrain requiring special track design and construction of 5 tunnels for which tenders are under finalisation.

This work is expected to be completed in next 2 to 3 years subject to availability of resources.

**Setting up of rail wheel and electronic locomotive
factories in Bihar**

599. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the progress of rail wheel factory and electronic locomotive work factory which were to be set up in Bihar as announced in the railway budget of 2006 and 2007 respectively;
- (b) whether the land has been acquired for the two projects;
- (c) by when these projects are expected to be operational;
- (d) the number of units each factory is expected to produce annually; and
- (e) the number of jobs both factories are expected to create?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The project of Rail Wheel factory at Bela, Bihar is being constructed on turnkey basis. A composite tender for setting up the project was awarded in July, 2008. Work is in progress.

The process of Request for Qualification of short listing bidders for Electric Loco Manufacturing factory at Madhepura, Bihar has been finalized. Further action is being taken.

- (b) Most of the land has been made available for Rail Wheel factory at Bela.

Process of Identification and making available land required for factory at Madhepura is in progress.