

(a) whether the Government of Madras have submitted a proposal for conversion of metre gauge Railway line into broad gauge from Madras to Tuticorin via Tiru-chirappalli in conformity with the results of traffic survey conducted by the National Council of Applied Economic Research that the cargo traffic would be increased from 1 to 2.7 million tons; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAM NATH) : (a) and (b) The survey undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research has not yet been finalised. The Madras Government, in the meanwhile, had suggested inclusion of the conversion of this section in the Fourth Plan. Adequate spare capacity is at present available on the metre gauge lines serving Tuticorin Port which could further be augmented by diesel traction and improved signalling. However, the long term rail traffic requirements of the Tuticorin Port as well as of other developments in the region are being evaluated in regard to the commodities, the volume and pace of growth and the characteristics of load (whether long, medium or short). Depending on the results of these studies the decisions on the best means of providing the requisite additional capacity for the Port as and when required will be taken in time to allow for the physical construction period of new facilities.

ANNEXATION OF C.P. RAILWAY CO. LTD. AND B.D.R. RAILWAY CO. LTD. TO INDIAN RAILWAYS

257. SHRI T. V. ANANDAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the agreements with the Central Provinces Railway Co. Ltd. and the Bankura Damodar River Railway Co. Ltd. will terminate on 31st March, 1967; and

(b) if so, whether these two Railways will be annexed to the Indian Railways?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAM NATH) : (a) and (b) The agreements with the Central Provinces Railway Company Ltd. and Bankura-Damodar River Railway Company Ltd. have no dates of termination. Under these agreements the next

option to acquire these Railways compulsorily, in accordance with the terms contained in the agreement, falls due on 31st March, 1967, and can be exercised by the Government by giving one year's notice to the Companies. The question whether to exercise the option or not is under consideration.

LOANS ADVANCED BY MMTC TO SUPPLIERS OF IRON AND MANGANESE ORES

258. SHRIMATI TARA RAMCHANDRA SATHE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount of loan advanced by the Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation during 1964-65 and 1965-66 to various suppliers of iron and manganese ores for the development of mines, etc.;

(b) the criteria followed to determine the suitability of the party for such loans;

(c) the safeguards the Corporation have taken or take to ensure timely recovery and repayment of such loans;

(d) the names of the parties to whom the loans have been advanced or sanctioned by the Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation and the amount given or sanctioned to each; and

(e) how the Corporation ensures that the amount of loan advanced is spent for the purpose for which it is given to the party concerned?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH) : (a) The following amounts of loans were advanced by the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation during the years 1964-65 and 1965-66 :

	1964-65 (Rs. lakhs)	1965-66 (Rs. lakhs)
Iron ore	1.17	23.96 (up to 1-1-66)
Manganese ore	3.00	23.34 (upto 19-2-66)
TOTAL	4.17	47.30

Besides, the Corporation have also sanctioned loans to the extent of Rs. 29.13 lakhs to suppliers/Mine owners of Manganese ore, of which excepting a sum of Rs. 25,000 the rest have yet to be disbursed.