

passengers will curtail the availability of accommodation for general public. However, earmarking of accommodation for different categories of passengers in suburban trains is a continuous process subject to increased availability of Suburban coaches/infrastructure.

#### **Protection to coconut growers**

\*137. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the background of new challenges posed by ASEAN treaty with massive duty-free import of palm oil, Government would consider to announce a special package with adequate funds allocated with plans to diversify the products, value addition, better farming with introduction of new technology and machines for making coconut farming competitive;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and other alternative steps proposed to be taken to protect the coconut cultivation and growers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) There has been no reduction in duty applicable to Crude Palm Oil (CPO) and Refined Palm Oil (RPO) after entering into Agreement on Trade with the ASEAN which came into force on 1st January, 2010. As such, there has been no impact of the aforesaid agreement on imports of edible oil on account of India being deficient in edible oil domestically.

Government of India is implementing various schemes/programmes for coconut development in the country through Coconut Development Board (CDB), Kochi, such as (a) Integrated Development of Coconut; (b) Technology Mission on Coconut; (c) Pilot Project for Replanting and Rejuvenation of Coconut Gardens in three districts of Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands; (d) Coconut Palm Insurance Scheme (CPIS).

Apart from the above schemes, to protect the interest of coconut growers, Minimum Support Price (MSP) of de-husked coconut and Copra is announced by the Government every year. In addition to the MSP, procurement of Copra is also taken up through NAFED in major coconut growing States.