

(e) No, Sir. The originating freight loading on Indian Railways was 921.51 MT in 2010-11 as compared to 887.99 MT in 2009-10 registering a growth 3.77%.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

Electrification of railway lines in North-Eastern region

2134. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the status of electrification of railway lines in North-Eastern region;

(b) whether the Ministry would take initiative to make proper budget provisions to complete the work of electrification of railway line between New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati in the financial year 2011-12; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI):

(a) At present, there is no electrified rail line in North-Eastern region. However, electrification of New Jalpaiguri-New Bongaigaon-Guwahati rail line is a sanctioned work in North Eastern region.

(b) and (c) Electrification of New Jalpaiguri-Guwahati rail line is a part of Barauni-Katihar-Guwahati including Katihar-Barsoi, a sanctioned railway electrification project, for which adequate budget provisions have been kept during 2011-12. The work of electrification between Barauni-New Jalpaiguri-Guwahati is planned for completion during 12th Five Year Plan as the electrification from New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati will only be useful after the electrification of Barabanki-Gorakhpur-Barauni-New Jalpaiguri, on which the work is already in progress.

Haflong-Silchar hill track

2135. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry has considered measures to protect the historic rail track of Haflong meter gauge lines in the Dima Hasao District of Assam;

(b) whether Ministry has considered introduction of luxury coaches for tourists on the lines of Palace on Wheels or Deccan Queen in the Haflong-Silchar Hill track for promotion of tourism; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI):

(a) Meter Gauge section from Harangajo to Migraindesa in the Dima Hasao District of Assam, including Haflong Hill, is planned to be preserved as heritage.

(b) and (c) Luxury Tourist Trains are introduced at the instance of State Tourism Corporation / Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation, subject to market potential and operational feasibility by the Railways. No such proposal has been received for this sector, so far.

Manned and Unmanned level crossings

2136. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of unmanned and manned level crossings in the country;

(b) whether there is any proposal to convert all unmanned level crossings into manned level crossings; and

(c) if so, the details of action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI):

(a) There are 14,896 unmanned level crossings and 17,839 manned level crossings in the country as on 01.04.2011.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. All unmanned level crossings on Indian Railways are planned for manning/elimination by March 2015. Unmanned level crossings have been identified for elimination by construction of subways, diversion road to adjoining manned level crossing/grade separators, closure of level crossings with low/negligible rail/road traffic and manning of such unmanned level crossings which cannot be eliminated by above methods.

Complimentary train passes by Railway Ministers

2137. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway Ministers have distributed approximately 5,000 passes for free train travel during last three years, thus causing additional expenses of hundreds of crore per year to Railways' revenues;