

**Cost of J&K National Railway Link Project**

\*275. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the cost of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) National Railway Link Project has gone up to six times of the original estimated cost; and
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The cost of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla new line project in Jammu and Kashmir which was initially assessed as Rs. 3077 crore as per Detailed Project Report (DPR) is now estimated to be Rs. 19565 crore.

(b) The Project was initially taken up on the basis of aerial & topographical survey and actual cost of construction could be assessed only after thorough detailed Final Location Survey and geotechnical/geological investigation. The work on Udhampur-Katra and Katra-Banihal sections of the project have been delayed due to various factors leading to prolonged gestation period and resultant increase in project cost. However, apart from general escalation, the cost of the project has also increased due to various other factors like geological uncertainties, increase in tunnelling scope, increase in prices of cement and steel, enhancement in security provisions due to adverse law and order situation and introduction of new items like electrification, access roads and approach roads for stations which were not envisaged initially.

**Status of pisciculture**

\*276. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal before Government to consider Pisciculture as an integral part within the wider definition of Agriculture;
- (b) if so, whether Government would agree to the same; and
- (c) if not, whether Government would consider to treat Pisciculture at par with Agriculture to provide all incentives like low interest rates, debt relief and all kinds of subsidies?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Some State Governments and Associations of Aquaculture sector have suggested that Pisciculture/aquaculture be treated at par with agriculture so that the subsidy, income tax benefits and other incentives available to agriculture could be extended to Pisciculture. The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture had requested the Ministry of Finance to consider these suggestions. The Ministry of Finance has informed that the income from fisheries does not qualify as agricultural income under the Income Tax Act, 1961 and hence is subject to income tax. However, some incentives are available for cooperatives and enterprises for fisheries activities under section 80P, 80-IB (11A) and 35 AD of the Income Tax Act, 1961. In respect of provision of loans at low interest rates, it has been clarified that the provision of interest subvention is available for crop loans upto Rs. 3 lakhs to the farmers. Loans for the purpose of fisheries sector are not covered under this scheme at present.

**Modernisation of new unit at BVFCL**

\*277. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the functioning of the Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Unit at Namrup in Assam; and

(b) the details of the status of modernisation and extension of the new unit in the Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited (BVFCL)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) BVFCL has two operating units—Namrup-II and Namrup-III. As their performance was below par, an in-depth internal study of the plants was carried out for improvement of the plant performance by removing bottlenecks causing limitation in production. Based on the study of the plants, schemes were drawn to carry out for renovation of the plants. The fund to carry out the renovation jobs was provided by the Government of India in phased manner during Eleventh Five year plan period. On implementation of the major schemes, performance of plants has improved. Both Namrup-II and Namrup-III Plants have achieved record production during current financial year 2012-13 with Namrup-III Plant achieving over 102% capacity utilization.