(a) the details of cotton produced in the country during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether production of cotton is declining continuously;

(c) if so, the main reasons therefor; and

(d) the measures being taken by Government for increasing the production of cotton?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Details of cotton production in the country during the last three years are as under:

Year	Production (Million Bales of 170 kg each)
2009-10	24.02
2010-11	33.00
2011-12	35.20

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) To improve production, productivity and quality of cotton, assistance is provided to farmers under Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) for seeds, agriculture implements, water-saving devices, bio-agents/bio-pesticides, integrated pest management, demonstrations, training, etc. Further, All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Cotton is being implemented by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to develop new high yielding varieties/hybrids and production technologies in cotton. Central Institute for Cotton Research at Nagpur is also conducting basic and strategic research on cotton.

Speeding up the trains

*269. SHRI JAIPRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are focusing on speeding up the trains at a high speed in the near future;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the maximum speed of trains in the country and whether it is very slow as compared to countries like Korea, Japan and China; and

(d) the steps being contemplated to speed up the trains by upgrading technology and improving the tracks?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Railways in consultation with State Governments has selected seven corridors for carrying out prefeasibility studies for introduction of High Speed Passenger trains. Present status of prefeasibility studies on these seven High Speed Rail Corridors is as under:

(i) **Pune-Mumbai-Ahmedabad - 650 km -** Prefeasibility study has been completed and the Final Report submitted by the Consultant has been accepted by the Ministry of Railways.

(ii) **Delhi-Agra-Lucknow-Varanasi-Patna - 991 km -** Prefeasibility study has been completed. The Consultant has submitted the Final Report.

(iii) **Howrah-Haldia - 135 km -** Prefeasibility study has been completed. The Consultant has submitted the Final Report.

(iv) **Hyderabad-Dornakal-Vijaywada-Chennai - 664 km -** The study is in progress. The consultant has submitted Inception Report, Interim Report I & II and Draft Final Report.

(v) **Chennai-Bangalore-Coimbatore-Ernakulam-Thiruvananthapuram - 850 km -** The study is in progress. The Consultant has submitted Inception Report and Interim Report No.I and II and Draft Final Report.

(vi) **Delhi-Jaipur-Ajmer-Jodhpur - 591 km -** No consultant has been finalized.

(vii) **Delhi-Chandigarh-Amritsar- 450 km -** The work of carrying out prefeasibility study on this corridor has been entrusted to Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL).

(c) The maximum speed of trains in the country is 150 kmph as compared to other countries like Korea, Japan and China, where maximum speed is upto 350 kmph.

(d) For High Speed trains, totally new railway tracks will have to be laid. It is not feasible to achieve speed of 300-350 kmph on Indian Railway existing tracks by upgrading technology and other improvements.