

Linking Kandla and Mundra ports by rail

595. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have plan to link Kandla and Mundra ports by rail;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the commodities proposed to be handled by rail; and

(d) the foreign exchange savings likely to be achieved by rail links?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Both Kandla and Mundra Port are already linked by rail.

(c) Major commodities already being handled at these ports by rail are food grain, coal, fertilizers, vegetable oil and de-oiled cake. Recently movement of containerized cargo by rail has also started for Kandla and Mundra Ports.

(d) No foreign exchange component is involved.

Bio-diesel fuel

596. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a detailed plan has been formulated to run locomotives on bio-diesel derived from certain plants like "jatropha" and "karanj" which can be grown even on wastelands along the railway tracks;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including arrangements made, if any, to ensure steady supply of viable quantities and large scale production of bio-diesel at affordable prices, as compared to the fossil fuel currently used by the Indian Railways; and

(c) what are the advantages of using the bio-diesel fuel for the railways?