

Reconnaissance Engineering-Cum-Traffic-Survey (RETS) for new line between Vijayawada and Guntur *via* Amravati (67 km.) has been included in Budget of Railway for the year 2016-17. This survey is being carried out by M/s Rail Vikas Nigam Limited. Budget outlay for the survey for the year 2016-17 is ₹7.00 lakhs. Execution of this work has not been taken up as the project is yet to be sanctioned.

Option of foregoing concessions by senior citizens

1474. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have now given senior citizens option of foregoing concession on purchase of reserved class tickets;

(b) whether it is a fact that subsidies cost the public sector behemoth about ₹ 1600 crore in the last fiscal on account of concessions extended to passengers in various categories, including senior citizens, sports awardees and cancer patients; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the maximum number of concessions are availed of by senior citizens, which alone put a subsidy burden of ₹ 1100 crore on the Railways last year, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Facility of giving option for availing or not availing senior citizen concession has been available since 01.09.2001.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. As per data captured by Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), the revenue foregone due to concession being given in passenger fares to various categories of passengers during 2015-16 is approximately ₹ 1602 crores. Revenue foregone due to concession being given in passenger fares to senior citizens during 2015-16 was approximately ₹1286 crores.

Request for railway station near Kochi International Airport

1475. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have received any request from Government of Kerala for full-fledged railway station near the Kochi International Airport, Kerala; and

(b) if so, the status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Yes, Sir. A request was received from the Chief Minister of Kerala during the year 2014.