

Railway line connecting Chennai and Puducherry

1238. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for connecting Chennai and Puducherry in the direct line *via* Tindivanam-Puducherry or along the east coast road;

(b) whether Government will fulfill the long pending demands of the people of Puducherry by introducing super fast train services between Chennai and Puducherry *via* Tindivanam; and

(c) whether Government would take action to lay new line between Cuddalore and Puducherry in order to connect Karaikal directly as there is no direct train service from Puducherry to Karaikal *via* Cuddalore and there is no railway line between Puducherry and Cuddalore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (c) Construction of Chennai-Cuddalore *via* Puducherry new line along the East Coast Road has been taken up.

(b) Introduction of new trains services including super fast trains is an ongoing exercise over Indian Railways subject to traffic justification, operational feasibility, availability of resources, etc. At present, one express train and one pair of passenger train are available between Chennai and Puducherry *via* Tindivanam. However, presently, there is no proposal to introduce super fast train services between Chennai and Puducherry *via* Tindivanam due to operational and resource constraints.

Lack of funds for improving basic amenities

1239. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways do not have funds required for improving basic amenities and its modernization;

(b) if so, whether Government would allow private investment for these purposes;

(c) whether such a proposal has been received; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action being taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (d) It is Railways' endeavor to provide basic amenities at all railway stations commensurate with category. There is no scarcity of funds to provide basic amenities at all the stations. No private funds are required for the purpose.