Further, Railways have initiated various measures such as prioritizing the preventive maintenance of assets failure, rectification of asset failures in the shortest possible time and having better co-ordination with State Governments and civil authorities.

High Speed Rail

2526. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether it is a fact that preliminary works pertaining to introduction of High Speed Rail between Chennai-Delhi, Chennai-Mumbai and Chennai-Howrah is still a non-starter;

(b)   if so, the reasons therefor;

(c)   whether Government would come forward to give priority to this project and start the preliminary works in the coming days; and

(d)   if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Chennai-Delhi, Chennai-Mumbai and Chennai-Kolkata corridors are part of the six corridors on Diamond Quadrilateral connecting metropolitan cities and growth centres identified for High Speed Rail. Feasibility Study for Delhi-Nagpur portion of Chennai-Delhi High Speed Corridor has been taken up with Government of China under Government to Government cooperation. Feasibility Study for Chennai-Mumbai Corridor has been taken up.

(c) and (d) High Speed Rail Projects are highly capital and technology intensive and therefore, their sanction depends on technical feasibility, financial viability and availability of resources.

Operating ratio of Railways

2527. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether Railways are likely to end this financial year with an operating ratio of 95 per cent and set a target to improve it to 93 per cent in the next fiscal;

(b)   whether Railways are considering to reduce its working expenses in 2018-19 to achieve a better financial health by the end of next fiscal;

(c)   whether at 95 per cent, this year's operating ratio is a marginal improvement over last year's 96 per cent, as per revised estimates of budget 2017-18; and