

[English]

Production of Paper From Jute

2077. SHRI PRAKASH KOKO BRAHMBHATT: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-traditional raw materials for producing papers from jute and kenaf as principal inputs for paper making appears weak;

(b) whether Australia and U.S. are making massive investment to set up kenaf based paper mills;

(c) if so, whether the Indian jute technology research laboratories has also made some progress in developing the technology for making newsprint from jute; and

(d) whether Union Government is considering to make paper by using jute, if so, to what extent the efforts have been made so far?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (d). Central Pulp & Paper Research Institute, Saharanpur, in collaboration with Indian Jute Technology Research Laboratory, has conducted pilot plant tests for manufacture of Newsprint from Kenaf, which have shown encouraging results. Information regarding investment made by other countries to set up Kenaf based paper mills is not available. Government have already exempted from excise duty paper containing 75% or more of jute fibres in the pulp furnish.

Renewal of Tracks

2078. SHRISANATKUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total kilometer of worn-out and

aged railway track in the country at present which needs renewal and replacement;

(b) whether any time bound programme for track renewal has since been worked out by the Railway Board; if so, its broad features and the estimated capital outlay involved;

(c) whether this programme also covers all weak tracks to ensure faster and safer movement of trains, if so, its salient features;

(d) whether any action plan has also been formulated to ensure the timely availability of high poundage rails by the various Steel Plants and the manufacture of concrete sleepers preferably by the Railways themselves to obviate any structural defects; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI AJAY SINGH): (a) The length of worn out and aged track over-due renewals as on 1.4.90 is about 12,000 kms.

(b) Yes, Sir. During the VIIIth Plan, Railways had planned to carry out 23,500 kms. of track renewals i.e. an average annual quantum of 4,700 kms. This would have enabled complete wiping out of 12,000 kms. of arrears of track over-due renewals and also would have taken care of the average annual accruals of 2,300 kms. the estimated outlay required for carrying out 23,500 kms. of track renewals is Rs. 6,585 crores. However, with the limitations in the resource position, it appears that some arrears may have to spill over to the IX Plan. Efforts all the same will be made to ensure that track renewals on the high density routes are made current by the end of the VIIIth Plan.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Programme of track renewal envisaged in the VIIIth plan covers