

11.40 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS—  
CONTD.

[English]

**Chamarajanagar-Mettupalayam Rail  
Line**

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\*825. SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRI-  
YAPPA:  
SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be  
pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey was carried out  
for the construction of railway line between  
Chamarajanagar and Mettupalayam via  
Satyamangalam (B.G. line);

(b) If so, when it was completed;

(c) the revised estimated cost of the  
project; and

(d) the time by which the construction  
work of this project is likely to start?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI  
GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d). A state-  
ment is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

**STATEMENT**

(a) to (c). No, Sir. However, a Preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic Survey, the details of  
which are as under, was completed in 1986.

<i>Particulars of line surveyed</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Cost (in crores of Rs.)</i>
1	2	3
(1) Chamarajanagar to Coimbatore via Bennari and Mettupalayam	185 Km	155.91
(2) Chamarajanagar to Coimbatore via Bennari and Satyamangalam	183 Km	169.45

(d) The project has not been approved  
for construction.

[English]

SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA: Mr.  
Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in  
his statement that preliminary Engineering-  
cum-Project survey has been conducted in  
regard to Chamarajanagar Mettupalayam  
Railway Line. But, detailed survey has not  
been conducted so far. Only preliminary  
survey has been conducted. He has also  
stated in answer to part (b) of the question  
about the conception of this approach. I want  
to know from the hon. Minister why this had  
not been approved any why detailed survey  
has not been conducted?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: A num-  
ber of surveys have been conducted. The first  
was conducted in 1932-33, the second in  
1940-41, 3rd in 1946-47, 4th in 1969-70 and  
the last in 1980. Sir, on examination of the  
potential of this sector, it has not been found  
worthwhile at this moment to go ahead.

SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA; Mr.  
Speaker, Sir, the Chamarajanagar is a tour-  
ist attraction town and it attracts many tour-  
ists and also like-wise the Mettupalayam is a  
big industrial town and there is a traditional  
business relationship between the Chama-  
rajanagar and the Mettupalayam. In view of  
this, may I request the hon. Minister to recon-  
sider once again the conception of new rail  
line?

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** Sir, the information that we have shows the negative return of investment on this particular sector. Now, if any further survey is to be conducted or if any view is to be taken, there will have to be a sufficient reason to undertake a new exercise. I do not believe at the moment a new railway line could be constructed there.

[*Translation*]

**KUMARI UMA BHARATI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister through you whether a survey was carried out for Lalitpur—Singrauli railway line...(*Interruptions*)...

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is a different question. This question does not arise out of the reply given by the Hon. Minister. You may ask a specific question...(*Interruptions*)...

**KUMARI UMA BHARATI:** I am asking a specific Question only. I am not asking the Question in a roundabout manner. The only difference is that I am asking the Question in a straight forward way. A survey was conducted in respect of Lalitpur Singrauli railway line during the year 1977 to 1980, and at that time, it was considered to be highly economic. Therefore, again a survey was carried out during the congress regime and it was not found to be economic. Now after that, I have again come to know that a survey is going to be conducted again. I have got this information from the Ministry. Is it going to meet the same fate as it has been stated by an Hon'ble Member who spoke before me because a survey has already been conducted in respect of Lalitpur-Singrauli railway line about on three occasions. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister through you that since he has announced it in very clear terms that all those backward areas which can be developed with the construction of a railway line, would be definitely provided with a railway line. Being it so, is the Government going to consider the proposal for the construction of Lalitpur-Singrauli railway line? Or the Ministry is going to make a change in respect of a fresh survey proposed to be conducted on

the proposed route of Lalitpur-Singrauli Railway Line which was decided at the time of survey conducted during the period 1977-80?

[*Translation*]

**THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am firm on the views I have expressed in the House on this issue. So far as the issue of conducting a further survey for Lalitpur Singrauli Railway Line is concerned, I hope that the report of the survey will be an accurate one this time.

[*English*]

**DR. VENKATESH KABDE:** I know the task of the hon. Railway Minister is difficult. Many areas in the country are demanding new railway lines. Whenever a new rail line is asked, each time the Railway Department goes through the routine procedure of a technical survey comprising of returns on the traffic and freight. In view of the aspirations of the people, have the Railway Ministry made any changes in the guidelines with regard to the sanction of new railway lines?

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** Sir, there are no new guidelines. But as I said, given the resource constraints that we have, one has always to be careful in seeing that the best use is made of those limited resources.

**SHRI R. GUNDU RAO:** Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister about this Chamarajanagar—Mettupalayam Rail line. I am hearing it for the last forty years that the survey has been made and the technical report is not correct. I would like to know whether the Government is thinking to take up this line between Mettupalayam and Chamarajanagar. Or, let them say, once for all, that it is not possible to do it in this century and that *Aaj Dekhney hain, Parsoon Dekhney hain* they will see it in the next century. Why unnecessarily make all this *hangama* that I want a categorical answer from the Government whether it will be taken up or not. Why

waste money on all these surveys? How many surveys have been conducted? As I know, about half a dozen to one dozen surveys have already been made. I am not concerned whether this Government was there in power or not. I want to know from the Government, from technical engineers or somebody, whether they are able to take up this line or not. Or, let them, once for all, say that it is impossible to take it up, that they have no money, that they have no technical report at all. Why to unnecessarily say that this survey will be taken up, that survey will be taken up? So, I want a specific answer from the hon. Minister whether in this century they will take it up or not ..(*Interruptions*)

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** It is not last forty years, it is last sixty years because the first survey was made in 1932, that is, two years after I was born.

**SHRI R. GUNDU RAO:** Sir, let us clearly tell our people that the Government of India is not able to take up this railway line at all. Why are we unnecessarily raising the question and we are telling our people that it will be taken up? Let even the technical people say that it is not possible under any circumstances for another fifteen or twenty years to take up this railway line.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** Sir, I do not think the hon. Member should lose heart so soon.

**SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, now that the hon. Minister has been kind enough to go beyond the confines of the question to a certain extent, I may bring, through you, to his notice that the Karur-Dindigul line work is going on and it is completed also. Not only that, the train has run on it. A slight extension between Karur and Salem will ensure that the train goes from Salem to Madurai straight. Would he kindly consider that, both from the survey point of view as well as from the work point of view?

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** Yes, Sir.

[*Translation*]

**PROF. YADU NATH PANDEY:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the fact that even through the people of my constituency, i.e. Hazaribagh have the graduate and post graduate qualifications, they did not find an opportunity to see a train to this day. Could I hope that the Hon'ble Minister of Railway will make effort to connect the Hazaribagh area with a railway line in respect of which a survey has already been conducted. Therefore, Hazaribagh may be linked with the railway line.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** Sir, I need notice on this.

#### **Helicopter Service for ONGC on Rental Basis**

\*826. **SHRI R. JEEVARATHINAM:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to engage helicopter services on rental basis from foreign companies for the Oil and Natural Gas Commission operations in the Western region; and

(b) if so, whether Government have any proposal to engage such services in the Southern region also, especially for offshore and on-shore drilling operations in the Cauvery basin in Tamil Nadu?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY):** (a) Yes, Sir. ONGC have placed a firm telex order on M/s. Canadian Helicopters, Canada on 10.4.90 for the charter hire of two large size helicopters for a period of three months for Bombay offshore. In addition, one medium size helicopter belonging to this company has also been hired for a period of one month from 8.5.90.

(b) No, Sir.