

(c) whether there are any on-going plans to double the existing track network and strengthen the track between Raipur - Visakhapatnam; and

(d) what other steps and new routes are proposed to reduce the track congestion between North and South to improve speed and traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The main route connecting North and South is *Via* Vijaywada, Kazipet, Ballarshah, Nagpur, Bhopal and Itarsi. Alternate route *Via* Visakhapatnam, Titlagarh, Raipur to Nagpur already exists. To improve capacity on this alternate route, doubling between Raipur and Titlagarh, third line between Vizianagaram and Kottavalasa and fourth line between Kottavalasa and Simhachalam north sections have been sanctioned.

(d) To improve line capacity on the main routes connecting North and South, various works have been sanctioned which include doubling, 3rd and 4th lines, automatic signalling, grade separator, Intermediate Block Sections, electrification, strengthening of tracks, yard remodelling, crossing stations and additional loops at stations.

Road overbridges near level crossing in Orissa

†824. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that there has been a demand for years to construct road overbridge (ROB) at level crossings near Boinda station of Sambalpur division, Dhenkanal of Khorga Road division and Talchar Road station under East Coast Railway in Orissa;

(b) whether Government is also aware that there is widespread dissatisfaction among people for delay in these works; and

(c) if so, by when these three ROB's would be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir. Road over bridge (ROB) near Boinda in Sambalpur Division is a sanctioned work & part of the work has been completed.

Works of ROB's at Dhenkanal-Sudasibpur in lieu of level crossing (LC) No. CT-41 in Khurda road Division and ROB between Budhapank-Talchar of same Division in lieu of LC No. CT-81 have been included in the Works Programme of 2009-10.

(b) and (c) If the State Government co-operates in making the land available promptly and also clears the General Arrangement Drawing in time, the work of ROB would be taken up on priority.

Extention of Vidhan Express upto Baidnath Dham

825. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(a) whether Government has received several representations for extending Vidhan Express from Asansol to Howrah upto Baidnath Dham;

(b) if so, what are the reasons that Railways have not, so far, implemented the extension of above train upto Baidnath Dham; and

(c) by when this project of extension is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Extension of the train upto Baidyanath Dham is presently not feasible due to terminal and operational constraints.

(c) Does not arise.

Mandate of Reservation and Cancellation of tickets to IRCTC

826. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IRCTC has also been given the mandate regarding reservation and cancellation of tickets;

(b) whether IRCTC being a corporation earns revenue for providing the service for the Railways;

(c) whether IRCTC as a corporation also charge service tax from the passengers over and above the rail fare and reservation charges; and

(d) if not, whether IRCTC is exempted from service tax and if so, under which rule?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been assigned the work of providing reservation on internet using the Indian Railway's computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS).

(b) Yes, Sir

(c) IRCTC realises service charges from passengers and pays service tax to the Government out of the service charges collected.

(d) Does not arise.

Ticket reservation and cancellation by IRCTC

827. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IRCTC has also been given the mandate regarding reservation and cancellation of tickets;

(b) whether such functions were part of original mandate of IRCTC;