

(c) the steps taken to enhance the facilities for passengers who suffer due to lack of timely and correct information from Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Fog is a natural phenomenon adversely impacting all transportation services, including train movement. During such foggy periods, the emphasis is on running trains safely through restricted speeds, deployment of adequate staff, counseling of train running staff, dissemination of late train running information to passengers etc.

(c) Information relating to arrival/departure/late running of trains can be accessed by dialing a universal number '139' without prefixing any STD code from any type of phone and is also being made available through radio and television. Local helpline telephone numbers are made available station wise and the late schedule of trains is announced through public announcement system at stations.

Breaking out of fire at container depot

3981. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major fire broke out in container depot of Railways in Tughlaqabad area recently;

(b) if so, whether any preliminary investigation into the cause of the fire in container depot has been conducted;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the responsibility fixed by Government and steps taken to check recurrence of such incidents?

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

(b) and (c) A committee of Senior Officers of CONCOR is enquiring into the incident. Enquiry report is awaited.

(d) Necessary action will be taken on receipt of the enquiry report.

Number of SC and ST employees in Railways

3982. SHRI MANGALA KISAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of SC and ST employees in Railways in Group-A;

(b) the number of posts of SC and ST lying vacant in Railways and since when;

(c) whether Government would go for a special recruitment drive to fill up these vacant posts in near future;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the other steps which are being taken by Government or proposes to fill up the backlog vacancies in all the posts reserved for SCs and STs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) There are 1,166 SC and 615 ST employees in Group-A as on 31-3-2007.

(b) 10395 posts of SCs and 12491 posts of STs were identified as lying vacant as on 1-11-2008 including Gr. 'A'.

(c) and (d) Special Recruitment Drive (SRD) has already been launched *w.e.f.* 1.11.2008 to clear the backlog vacancies.

(e) Does not arise.

Construction of schools on railway land

†3983. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is now contemplating a new scheme for opening of schools and colleges on the Railway land after it was announced that it will be used for the construction of hospitals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the norms set by Government for selecting land for the purpose of opening of schools;

(d) the details thereof; and

(e) whether participation of private sector has also been ensured in this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (e) Ministry of Railways have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) both with Ministry of Human Resource Development as well as Ministry of Health to develop educational facilities and construction of Hospitals by utilizing Railway land not required for immediate operational use. Separate strips of land are being identified for schools and for hospitals. Further details of implementing the MOU, norms for selecting land for the schools/colleges/hospitals and extent of private participation, if any, shall be worked out by a High Powered Working Group consisting of senior officers from Ministry of Railways and Ministry of Human Resource Development/Ministry of Health which has since been constituted.

Conversion of narrow gauge lines into broad gauge

†3984. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the kilometres length of narrow gauge and metre gauge rail lines in 1950 and 2010, State-wise;

(b) whether Government has any such plan or target under which all narrow gauge and metre gauge lines would be converted into broad gauge and the achievement thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.