

(v) stepping up renewal of aged track and replacement of worn out rolling stock and other equipment within resource constraints;

(vi) progressive manning of unmanned level crossings and providing interlocking, lifting barriers, etc. at busy manned level crossings gates;

(vii) liaison with State Governments for enforcement of Motor Vehicles Rules by the road users while passing level crossings;

(viii) wide publicity through posters and other media about hazards in carrying inflammable articles in compartments, caution to be exercised while negotiating the level crossings, etc.

Conversion of Madurai-Bodinayakanur rail line

*155. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: SHRI SATYAPAL MALIK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount allotted for the survey of the conversion of the Madurai-Bodinayakanur section:

(b) the amount spent till 31st January, 1984:

(c) the amount allotted for the construction of a new broad gauge line between Bodinayakanur and Cochin;

(d) the amount that has been spent till 31st January 1984 out of the above; and

(e) what is the progress of the construction and by when the line is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHURY): (a) to (e) The cost of survey for conversion of Madurai-Bodinayakanur section from MG to BG and construction of a new BG line between Bodinayakanur and Cochin is Rs. 3 lakhs. The expenditure incurred so far is Rs. 2.95 lakhs. The survey for the line is in progress.

As the survey is still in progress and is expected to be completed sometime in 1984, the work has not been approved for construction as yet and the question of progress or expenditure on construction, therefore, does not arise.

Strengthening of Public Distribution System

*156. SHRI RAMANAND YADAV:

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBA SIVA RAO:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a high level meeting was convened by the Union Finance Minister to find ways and means to strengthen the Public Distribution system in the country; and

(b) if so, what measures were decided upon at the meeting for strengthening the Public Distribution System?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) No meeting was convened by the Union Finance Minister to find ways and means to strengthen the Public Distribution System in the country.

(b) Question does not arise?

Opening of more fair price shops

*157. SHRI N. P. CHENGALRAYA NAIDU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up 350,000 fair price shops in the country to cover the country's entire population by the terminal year of the Sixth Plan;

(b) whether Government have also taken a decision upon a distribution system which envisages a target of one fair price shop for every 2000 people:

(c) what is the total number of fair price shops at present opening in the country; and

(d) to what extent opening of fair price shops has helped the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD);
(*)¹⁰ (d) The total number of fair price shops in the country as on 1-10-83 is 2,97 lakhs. All the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been requested to achieve a norm of one fair price shop for every 2000 persons. They have also been advised to open more fair price shops so that the target of 3.50 lakhs fair price shops can be achieved.

Rail Accidents

=458. SHRI ABDUL REHMAN SHEIKH;
SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHAWAHA;

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of accidents which occurred during the last three years due to (i) negligence and dereliction of duty on the part of railway employees; and (ii) ageing track and signalling equipment; and

(b) what action Government have taken against railway employees concerned for the negligence of their duty and also to replace the ageing track and signalling equipment?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURY):
(a) During the last three years, viz. 1981-82 to 1983-84 (upto Jan.) the number of train accidents due to negligence and dereliction of duty on the part of railway staff is as under:—

Year	No. of train accidents due to staff failure.
1981-82	761
1982-83	514
1983-84 (upto Jan.)	391

No accident was directly attributed to ageing track or worn out signalling equipment, but failure of track was a contributory cause in 26, 20 and 18 train accidents during 1981-82, 1982-83 and 1983-84 (upto Jan.) respectively.

(b) Punitive action including removal from service, compulsory retirement, reduction in pay and rank, withholding of annual increment and privileges has been taken under Discipline and Appeal Rules against the staff held responsible for causing the accidents. Field Inspections have been intensified. On the spot guidance and corrective action is being insured. On the job training and refresher courses are being arranged. The overaged track and signalling equipment are being replaced on a programmed basis within the funds available while simultaneously ensuring that the safety standards are not at all transgressed.

T. B- Deaths

*159. SHRIMATI USHA MALHOTRA;
SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item which appeared in the Statesman of 14th February, 1984 under the heading "500,000 die of T.B. in India annually"; and

(b) if so, what effective measures are being taken to control T.B.?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) Government has seen the news report relating to deaths due to tuberculosis in the country. The National Tuberculosis Policy has been specifically structured to provide the necessary case finding and curative facilities to those afflicted with the disease and reduce the mortality rate. Under this programme detection, treatment and preventive facilities in 354 district TB centres have been established. In addition, about 300 T.B. clinics are engaged in detection and domiciliary treatment of T.B. patients. Short