

(d) No time frame for implementation has been set.

Passenger train between Varanasi and Ballia

2753. SHRIMATI KUSUM RAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are aware that there is no passenger train from Varanasi to Ballia between 6 A.M. to 12 noon and general bogies of express trains passing during this period are usually heavily packed;

(b) whether Railways would start a pair of intercity trains from Ballia to Varanasi and from Varanasi to Ballia keeping in view large number of commuters on the route and inconvenience to passengers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (d) At present, 17 pairs of train services serve Ballia – Varanasi sector. Of these, 5 pairs of trains are available between 06.00 hours and 12.00 hours. Introduction of an additional intercity train service between Ballia and Varanasi is not feasible, at present, due to operational and resource constraints.

Surplus railway land given to employees

2754. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA:

SHRI BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether surplus railway land is being given to railway employees on lease for cultivation in order to protect it from encroachment;

(b) if so, the terms and conditions on which such land is being given;

(c) the details of surplus land given so far; and

(d) the criteria for selection of employees for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (d) Vacant Railway land not required for Railways operational usage in immediate future is licensed to permanent Railway employees in Group 'C' and 'D' category under Grow More Food Scheme (GMF) for a short duration to prevent encroachments. Preference given to gatemen, gangmen and staff belonging SC/ST/OBC category. Approximately, 9700 acres of Railway land has been given on license to Railway employees for cultivation in this regard.