

connectivity to Chennai was not available due to gauge conversion work on Villupuram-Kumbakonam section. To meet the demand of passengers for running Rockfort Express between Chennai and Tiruchirappalli, the train will revert to be terminated at Tiruchirappalli and in lieu a new direct service between Chennai and Thanjavur via Villupuram, Mayiladuturai, Kumbakonam has been announced in the Railway Budget 2013-14.

Late running of trains

†2321. SHRI BRIJLAL KHABRI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for trains running late in the country;
- (b) the number of trains running late everyday;
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by Government to run trains on time;
- (d) whether Government has ever contemplated upon the hardships faced by passengers on trains running late; and
- (e) if so, the Government's reaction thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.J. SURYA PRAKASH REDDY): (a) The reasons for which trains run late are miscreant activities, alarm chain pulling, dislocations due to accidents, natural calamities such as cyclonic storms, damage to track due to breaches, speed restrictions imposed due to law and order problems, agitations, bad weather, cattle run over, electricity grid failures, equipment failures, rescheduling of trains due to late arrival of incoming link rakes etc.

(b) (i) On an average 255 Mail and Express trains ran late out of the 1474 Mail/Express trains run per day on terminating basis in the current financial year till July 2013.

(ii) On an average 804 Passenger trains ran late out of the 3370 Passenger trains run per day on terminating basis in the current financial year till July 2013.

(c) The following steps are taken for running trains on time:

- (i) Monitoring of running of trains at Board, Zonal and Divisional

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

levels, on an almost real time basis through the Integrated Coaching Management System so that timely planning can be done to ensure punctual running of trains on run.

- (ii) Better time tabling to ensure that clear paths are available for running of trains. Providing scratch rakes to obviate rescheduling of trains owing to late arrival of link rakes.
- (iii) Improving Maintenance practices so that trains running late can be returned from platform after the mandatory safety and cleanliness inspections. Ensuring timely availability of blocks so that the fixed structures - Over Head Equipments, track signals etc. get their due maintenance and function more reliable.
- (iv) Monitoring equipment failures so that recurrence of failure may be avoided.
- (v) Close coordination with civil authorities so that advance action is taken to avoid law and order setbacks to the running of trains.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Steps enumerated in (c) above are being followed. Due to consistent efforts, the number of trains reaching their destination on time has improved. In July 2013, 5% improvement was registered for trains reaching within 15 minutes of scheduled time, as compared with corresponding period of previous year.

Railway connectivity of Ballia and Ghazipur districts of U.P.

2322. SHRI ARVIND KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Ballia and Ghazipur districts in U.P. are least railway connected districts in plains of northern part of the country;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government is actively considering to connect Ballia *via* Ghazipur to Mughalsarai by railway link;
- (d) if so, whether Government would connect Ghazipur to Mughalsarai by railway bridge on Ganga river;
- (e) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor; and