

Closing down of chola road railway crossing in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

1068. DR. CHANDAN MITRA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has closed down the Chola Road railway crossing in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is aware that the narrow underpass, provided as an alternative route, is unable to cater to the needs of the residents of this area and is causing a lot of inconvenience to the residents; and

(d) if so, the immediate steps taken by Government to re-open the crossing to ensure smooth flow of traffic at the crossing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY) : (a) Yes, Sir. Level Crossing (LC) No. 252A Bairagarh chord line and LC No. 252B on Bhopal-Bairagarh chord line (called Chhola road LCs) have been closed with effect from Feb 2013.

(b) These LCs were closed after construction of one Road Over Bridge (ROB) covering both level crossings and two subways (one at each level crossing) on cost sharing basis and as per consent given by State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.

(c) Subways have been provided for pedestrians and light vehicular traffic and for heavy vehicles, ROB has been constructed as per existing policy.

(d) One ROB and two subways have already been constructed on cost sharing basis in lieu of these two level crossings. LCs have been closed as per consent given by State Govt. before the start of the work. Hence, as per policies in vogue, these LCs cannot be reopened. Moreover, LCs are potential safety hazards for both road and rail users more so for road users. Hence, demand for reopening of LCs is not desirable.

Practice of travelling atop the trains

1069. SHRI N.K. SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a common practice for railway passengers to travel atop the trains;

- (b) if so, the penalties that can be imposed on such passengers;
- (c) the number of accidents that were caused due to overcrowding of trains in the last three years; and
- (d) the steps taken by Railways to prevent passengers from travelling atop the trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Travelling on roof is prohibited and is a punishable offence under Section 156 of the Railways Act, 1989. If a passenger persists travelling on roof after being warned, he may be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with both and may be removed from the railway by any railway servant.

(c) No consequential train accident is attributable to overcrowding of passengers in trains during the last three years.

(d) Following steps are being taken by Railways to prevent passengers from travelling atop the trains:

1. Frequent announcement through public address system at stations are made to educate the passengers not to travel on roof, steps or engine of a train.
2. Special awareness campaigns are also organized by Railways to sensitize the passengers about the dangers of rooftop travelling and foot board travelling.
3. Warning Boards cautioning people against climbing and touching Over Head Equipment are displayed at vantage points in station area.

Vacancies in Railways

1070. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of vacancies in Railways, Zone-wise, and by when these posts are going to be filled up;