

(b) and (c) A committee of Senior Officers from Railways has been constituted to examine, amongst other issues, the feasibility of creation of the new Railway Zone. The Terms of Reference of the Committee include holding of discussions with all concerned, including the State Government officials, before giving their recommendations. The Committee has not yet submitted its report.

Mechanism for rescue and relief operations

2558. SHRI GARIKAPATI MOHAN RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the mechanism in place for rescue and relief operations in Railways;
- (b) the details of response time in the aftermath of an accident;
- (c) whether Railways' disaster management plan presently lacks cohesiveness and is not fully prepared to handle disasters; and
- (d) if so, the corrective measures taken by Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) The Railways have a network of Accident Relief Trains and Accident Relief Medical Vans placed at identified locations, which cover the entire rail network of Indian Railways. The Accident Relief Medical Vans and Accident Relief Train are equipped with rescue and relief equipments required to be used at the accident site. On receiving information of an accident, the Accident Relief Medical Vans and Accident Relief Train are dispatched to the accident site along with personnel trained in rescue and relief operations.

(b) Immediately on receipt of information about an accident, involving or likely to involve injuries or deaths, Accident Relief Medical Vans (ARMVs) are rushed to the site of the accident. The target time for dispatch of ARMVs is a maximum of 30 minutes from their ordering. These ARMVs carry medical equipments, doctors, paramedics and other officials to the site of the accident for prompt medical relief. These also carry emergency tools for extricating the injured persons and the bodies from the debris, if required. Accident Relief Trains (ARTs) carrying equipments and staff to deal with relief, rescue and restoration are dispatched from the locations where these are stationed to the accident site. The target time for dispatch of ARTs is a maximum of 60 minutes from their ordering. ARMVs and ARTs are given precedence over all other trains while proceeding to the site of the accident. Many a times Railways doctors, paramedics and other officials reach the site of the accident by road depending upon accessibility of the site by road.

(c) No, Sir. Disaster Management Plan of Indian Railways is comprehensive and fully prepared to handle disasters. The Disaster Management Plans at Divisional level, Zonal level and at Railway Board level are dovetailed and integrated with each other.

(d) Does not arise.

Gauge conversion of Shencottah Punalur railway line

2559. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Shencottah-Punalur railway line has been awaiting gauge conversion work since 2010 and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the allocation made in the current Budget to complete this gauge conversion work; and

(c) by when would this work be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (c) Gauge conversion of Sengottai-Punalur section has been taken up as a part of Quilon-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur and Tenkasi-Virudhunagar gauge conversion project. On this project, Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur (61 Km), Tirunelveli-Tenkasi-Bhagvatipuram (86 Km), Virudhunagar-Tenkasi (122 Km) and Quilon-Edamann (52 Km) sections *i.e.* a total of 321 Km out of 357 Km have been completed. Earthwork and bridges and tunnels work in balance portion *i.e.* Bhagvatipuram-New Ariyankavu-Edamann (36 Km) have been taken up.

An outlay of ₹ 35 crore has been provided in Budget 2014-15.

Targets are fixed every year based on overall availability of funds. No specific target date for completion of this work has been fixed.

Railway projects in Telangana

2560. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway projects, *viz.*, new railway lines, gauge conversion, doubling and electrification under execution in Telangana;

(b) how many of these have surpassed their targeted date and are pending for more than ten years; and

(c) whether any plan has been chalked out by Railways to complete these projects on priority basis?