

(b) No definite dates for their introduction can be indicated as works are in progress.

Shortage of trackmen

†472. SHRIMATI KANAK LATA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the length of railway tracks in kilometres under supervision of a trackman;
- (b) the engineering code regarding maintenance of railway tracks and whether it is being observed by the Engineering Department;
- (c) the number of trackmen deployed in Indian Railways at present along with their sanctioned strength as well as the posts lying vacant; and
- (d) whether it is a fact that the maintenance of railway tracks cannot be done due to acute shortage of trackmen and other employees for maintenance of railway tracks thereby increasing the possibility of an accident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Maintenance of Railway track is being done with the help of track machines and trackmen as per guidelines contained in Indian Railway Permanent Way Manual (IRPWM).

Trackmen work in gangs under the supervision of Gang mate or Permanent Way Supervisor. Length of track with each gang varies from about 5 to 8 km.

(c) As on 30.04.2014, against a sanctioned strength of 2,72,486, a total of 2,17,761 Trackmen were in position and 54725 post were vacant.

(d) To overcome the shortage of trackmen till the vacancies are filled up, certain activities are outsourced to ensure safe running of trains.

Tatkal tickets

473. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether even with much fine-tuning and safeguards for the bonafide passengers, there still persists problems in Tatkal reservations along with much scope for misuse and manipulation by travel agents/touts;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.