

High-speed bullet trains

482. SHRI BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry intends to run high-speed Bullet trains in the country;
- (b) the sector in which these bullet trains would be run;
- (c) the cost of laying per kilometre track of Bullet train as compared to ordinary track for trains and metro tracks;
- (d) how the Ministry intends to arrange funds for these trains; and
- (e) whether there is any time line in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is planned to have a Diamond Quadrilateral Network of High Speed Rail, connecting major Metros and growth centres of the country. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad sector has been identified as the first corridor to start High Speed Trains.

(c) The cost of laying per kilometer track of Bullet Train (High Speed Train) is approx. Rs.80-120 crores, as compared to Rs. 10-12 crores for ordinary Track and Rs. 150 - 200 crores for metro tracks.

(d) The High Speed Rail project will have to be taken up through an appropriate mix of Government support, multilateral / bilateral funding and by alternative means of resource mobilization, including Public-Private-Partnership (PPP).

(e) No, Sir. The project is yet to be sanctioned.

Refund of waitlisted tickets

483. SHRI D.P. TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has issued guidelines for cancellation of waitlisted tickets within 2 hours of train departure;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a large number of passengers are unable to get the refund of waitlisted tickets due to short time and many a times system of Railways doesn't work;

(d) if so, whether Government will increase the time duration for cancellation of waitlisted tickets; and

- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) No, Sir. As per the revised refund rules which came into effect from 01.07.2013, unused waitlisted tickets can be cancelled upto three hours of the actual departure of the train and such refunds are granted from any Passenger reservation counter or designated current counters.

In the case of e-tickets, if all the passengers are waitlisted, refund of fare is automatically credited to the customer's account, immediately upon preparation of charts.

(b) The ticketing system of Indian Railways had undergone major changes during the last 15 years, which include: (i) Large scale proliferation of Computerized Passenger Reservation System and Computerized Unreserved Ticketing System; (ii) Expansion of Internet Based Ticketing System; and (iii) Availability of Integrated Train Enquiry System which facilitates instant information on train running and reservation status through telephone, SMS and internet.

The refund rules were revised in keeping with the above developments in the ticketing/enquiry systems.

(c) No, Sir. Passengers can avail refund of waitlisted tickets in accordance with the revised Rules.

(d) At present, there is no such proposal.

(e) The revision was carried out to meet the objectives of simplification, efficiency in processing refunds, discouraging last minute cancellations, checking bogus claims for refunds and reducing the misuse of refund process.

Anti-collision device project

484. SHRI BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the project of developing Anti-Collision Device to provide much desired safety to trains has been dropped by Railways;

(b) if so, the reasons for dropping the project;

(c) whether Railways intend to introduce some imported device or will introduce any indigenous one for the purpose; and