

Pending Railway projects in Bihar

*167. SHRI GULAM RASOOL BALYAWI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 36 railway projects pertaining to Bihar have been pending since long;

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

(c) the steps Government proposes to take to complete these projects without further delay?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) and (b) There are at present 62 ongoing Railway projects comprising 34 New Lines, 6 Doublings, 6 Gauge Conversions, 6 electrification projects and 10 workshop/factory which fall partly/fully in the State of Bihar. These projects have been taken up at a cost of Rs. 29857 crore. An expenditure of Rs. 11823 crore has been incurred on these projects upto 31.03.2014 and an outlay of Rs. 1231 crore has been provided during 2014-15.

Railways have a huge throwforward of ongoing projects and limited overall availability of funds. Therefore it is not possible to provide adequate funds to all the projects on regular basis which is a pre-requisite for firming up the time lines for any project.

(c) State Government of Bihar has been requested to come forward for participation in Railway projects in the form of cost sharing for their expeditious completion.

Hike in train fares

*168. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that train fares have been hiked two to three times during this year, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the plan/steps being taken by Government to provide better facilities and for the betterment of Railways?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) No, Sir. In current financial year 2014-15, fare revision has been effected only once with effect from 25th June 2014.

(b) A number of steps have been taken by the railways to improve the facilities available to its passengers. Some of these include:

- (i) Introduction of new coaches that are comfortable, safe and environment friendly.
- (ii) Providing basic minimum amenities at all station as per norms and their upgradation as per requirement.
- (iii) Introduction of new trains to meet the rising demand for travel.
- (iv) Use of Information Technology in passenger interface areas.

Further Railways are continuously striving to modernize, strengthen and, expand the network so that the rail service is available to larger sections of the population. Special focus has been placed in this Budget on improving Safety along with increased Budget allocation of 40% for Cleanliness of stations and trains.

Status of online booked waitlisted tickets

*169. SHRI JOY ABRAHAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of the situation when a group of passengers book their journey tickets online, often a few of the passengers get their tickets confirmed while the rest remain waitlisted; and

(b) if so, whether the passengers whose status remains waitlisted are permitted to board the train along with confirmed ticket holders or are allowed refund of their ticket fares?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) Confirmed reserved accommodation is provided subject to availability. However, when the available reserved accommodation nears exhaustion, it is possible that on a single e-ticket with more than one passenger, a few of the passengers get confirmed accommodation while the rest remain waitlisted.

(b) Wait-listed passengers cannot board the reserved coach without the permission of on-board ticket checking staff. Partially waitlisted passengers have the option of claiming refund as per procedure prescribed under the Railway Passengers (Cancellation of ticket and refund of fare) Amendment Rules, 2013. However, in case of fully waitlisted e-tickets, *i.e.*, e-tickets on which status of all the passengers is waiting