

Fuel adjustment component in passenger fare

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

(a) whether Government proposes to introduce variable Fuel Adjustment Component (FAC) in passenger fare;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with percentage component of FAC in passenger fare; and

(c) the time by which the Rail Tariff Authority is likely to be constituted in order to take an independent call at fixed intervals on increasing passenger fare and freight charges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA) : (a) As announced in the Railway Budget 2013-14, Fare and Freight revision linked to fuel cost are being done twice a year, in sync with movement in fuel cost, in either direction.

(b) So far, revision in passenger fares has been carried out two times. The first revision was done in October 2013 wherein passenger fares were revised by 2 percent. The last revision was done in June 2014 wherein passenger fares were revised by 4.2 per cent.

(c) Government has already approved setting up of Rail Tariff Authority (RTA) which will advise the Ministry of Railways on all matters related to fixation of tariffs. A Government Resolution dated 27.01.2014 to this effect was issued.

On 22.09.2014, Ministry of Railways has constituted a Committee under the chairmanship of Shri Bibek Debroy which will, *inter-alia*, examine and suggest modalities of implementing the existing Cabinet decision on setting up a Rail Tariff Authority and give recommendation, within one year.

Deaths of elephants and other wild animals

597. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the deaths of elephants and other wild animals under running trains/ rail tracks has been mounting up in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the Supreme Court has asked Government for evolving suitable measures to control such deaths, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA) : (a) No, Sir. The number of deaths caused to elephants and other wild animals on rail tracks was nine (5+4) in the year 2014 as against 26 in the year 2013. In the current year (upto Feb. 2015), only two elephants have reportedly died on railway tracks.

(b) The measures highlighted by the Supreme Court to control incidences of deaths of elephants on rail tracks are identification of path/corridors, which the elephants take to cross the railway tracks, by Ministry of Environment and Forest in coordination with Railways, provision of trenches and underpasses on the identified corridors, identification of areas where trains could be directed to move at low speeds.

Use of Modern Wireless Animal tracking devices to track the movement of elephants, Satellite Space Navigation Systems to pre warn drivers and Battlefield Surveillance Radar System to avoid accidents have also been advised.

Railway track from Bhagat-Ki-Kothi to Fedusar in Rajasthan

†598. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railway tracks have been laid from Bhagat-Ki-Kothi to Fedusar at Jodhpur city in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, whether that railway track and railway land has been illegally encroached upon; and

(c) if so, by when that railway track will be put to use, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA) : (a) to (c) There existed a Metre Gauge line from Bhagat-Ki-Kothi to Fedusar which was closed in the year 1997. Some of the Railway land & track has been encroached upon for which action has been initiated under Public Premises Eviction (PPE) Act, 1971.

The line is not proposed to be reopened.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.