

**Outlived railway bridges**

1408.SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of railway bridges in the country and how many of them are more than a century old and have outlived their life; and
- (b) the measures taken to maintain railway bridges regularly and to construct new bridges in place of outlived bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) There are a total of 1,38,912 bridges on Indian Railways out of which 35,437 bridges are more than 100 years old. However, the age of the bridge does not have any direct relevance on the physical condition of the bridge. There is a well established system of inspection of bridges on Indian Railways. All the bridges are inspected twice a year, one before the onset of monsoon and one detailed inspection after the monsoon. In addition, the detailed technical inspection of certain bridges is also carried out at specified periodicity by the designated officials. Repair / strengthening / rehabilitation / rebuilding of bridges is a continuous process and is undertaken whenever so warranted by their physical condition as ascertained during these inspections and not on the basis of age. If the corrective / remedial measures are expected to take a long duration due to the complexity of the site situation, etc., suitable safety measures like imposing speed restrictions and keeping such bridge under close watch are taken till the bridge is repaired / strengthened / rehabilitated / rebuilt. During the last five years, 4338 bridges have been repaired/strengthened/ rehabilitated/rebuilt on Indian Railways.

**Increasing railway network**

1409.SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the present railway network is overburdened and inadequate to meet the new challenges of a fast developing economy;
- (b) if so, the measures taken by Railways for the purpose;
- (c) whether some regions are beyond the reach of Railways due to unfavourable geographical conditions and if so, the steps taken to open these areas for removing regional inequalities in economic growth; and
- (d) whether Railways are facing stiff competition from road transport and thus its

share in passenger and goods traffic is declining and if so, the action taken by Railways to increase its share in passenger and goods traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Capacity enhancement works such as Doubling, New line, Gauge Conversion, Electrification and Traffic Facility works on busy and congested routes have been accorded high priority and funds have been increased in the Budget for 2015-16.

(c) Yes, Sir. Many remote hilly regions have remained devoid of railway connectivity. A number of network expansion projects, even though unremunerative, have been taken up by Railways to provide connectivity to such areas.

(d) Yes, Sir. To improve Railways' share in passenger traffic, various measures like introduction of new trains, enhancement of the composition of more popular trains, attachment of extra coaches in the existing trains etc have been taken. To increase Railways' share in freight traffic, various schemes like Liberalized Wagon Investment Scheme, Wagon Leasing Scheme, Special Freight Train Operators Scheme and Automobile Freight Train Operators Scheme have been introduced.

#### **Toilet facilities at all railway stations**

†1410. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that toilet facilities have not been extended to all the railway platforms in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the time by when Government will issue directions to provide toilet facilities at all railway stations along with the reasons for delay ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Toilets are provided at stations as per norms for provision of passenger amenities at stations subject to the type of station and technical feasibility. Provision/ improvement /augmentation of amenities, including provision of toilet facility on platform at stations is a continuous process and is undertaken depending upon category of station, subject to *inter-se-priority* and availability of funds. 650 Stations have been identified for provision of toilets facilities during 2015-16 to eliminate shortfall as per norms of Minimum Essential Amenities.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.