

railway projects. Apart from fund constraints, projects also got delayed due to factors like land acquisition, forestry clearances, law and order problems etc. which are beyond control of the Railways.

(b) and (c) The Chief Minister of Jharkhand requested in February 2015 to take all possible measures to augment existing railway network in Jharkhand. As regards direct connectivity of Dumka to Kolkata, this has been established with the commissioning of Dumka-Rampurhat New Line in June, 2015. As regards direct connectivity to Patna and Delhi, Dumka is already connected to these stations *via* Deoghar, Jasidih, Kiul. In addition, another connectivity work *via* Mandarhil, Bhagalpur is also at an advance stage of completion, and to complete this work expeditiously, an outlay of ₹ 201 crore has been provided in 2015-16.

Prevention of irregularities in Railway projects

1415. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have received any complaints regarding irregularities in the work relating to its projects, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the action taken by Railways to prevent such irregularities;

(c) the action taken by Railways on each of the recommendations/suggestions made by a High-level Committee for introducing reforms in Railways;

(d) whether Railways propose to establish an independent Regulatory Body;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the objective behind this move, including to check malpractices; and

(f) by when the Regulatory Body is likely to be established?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) The complaints regarding irregularities in the work relating to railway projects, whenever received, are investigated / inquired into and corrective action including disciplinary action against defaulting officials and system improvement, is taken as required.

(c) The action will be taken by Railways on the recommendations/suggestions made by the Committee only after their acceptance by the Ministry.

(d) to (f) In the Rail Budget 2015-16, Regulatory mechanism was proposed for orderly development of infrastructure services, enabling competition and protection of

customer interests. The Regulator would be entrusted with the task of making regulations, setting performance standards, determining tariff and adjudicate on disputes among private partners with Ministry of Railways. No time frame has been set for establishment of the Regulator.

Posting of Armed Rail Marshals in trains

1416. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are considering the possibility of posting armed Rail Marshals, similar to Air Marshals, in trains passing through areas affected by the Naxal insurgency; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is no proposal for posting of armed Marshals in trains, similar to Air Marshals, passing through Naxal affected areas. However, about 1300 trains are escorted by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) in addition to escorting of about 2200 trains by Government Railway Police (GRP) of concerned States to ensure security of passengers in vulnerable sections.

Prevention and detection of crime and maintenance of law and order in Railway premises as well as on running trains are the statutory responsibility of the State Governments, which they discharge through the GRP. RPF supplements efforts of States for better protection and security of Railway property, passengers and passenger area.

Implementation of recommendations of Bibek Debroy Committee

†1417. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large scale investment is required to be made in Railways and Government is not able to make investment on such a large scale;

(b) whether Government is contemplating to withdraw from running Railway schools and hospitals after recommendations of the Bibek Debroy Committee;

(c) the number of railway projects pending due to delay in land acquisition, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.