

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Agra Division of North Central Railway has closed down a total of 18 Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) as per provisions of Catering Policy 2010, out of which 13 have been closed down in October, 2016.

Electrification of railway routes in Rajasthan

†2840. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the plan to develop railway routes in Rajasthan important from the strategic point of view;
- (b) whether those railway routes will be electrified, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government of Rajasthan has given assurance of power supply to Railways, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Lines important for national security point of view are known as Strategic Lines and they are identified by Ministry of Defence to be executed by Indian Railways as deposit work. A total of 14 Strategic lines have been identified, out of which four Strategic Lines *viz.* (i) Missamari-Tenga-Tawang (378 km.), (ii) Bilaspur - Manali-Leh (498 km.), (iii) Pasighat-Tezu-Rupai (227 km.), and (iv) North Lakhimpur-Bame (Along)-Silapathar (249 km.) have been decided to be taken up in first phase. None of these projects has been sanctioned. However, Final Location Survey for these four lines has been taken up. None of these four projects falls in the State of Rajasthan.

Shortage of trackmen

†2841. SHRIMATI MISHA BHARTI:

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the length of railway lines in kilometers which has to be taken care of by a trackman;
- (b) the details of engineering codes for maintenance of railway lines and whether the Engineering department is following these codes;
- (c) the number of trackmen deployed in Railways at present, their sanctioned strength and the number of posts lying vacant; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether it is a fact that acute shortage of trackmen and other staff in Railways leads to improper maintenance of rail tracks which increases the possibility of a rail accident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Trackmen work in gangs under the supervision of Gang mate or Permanent Way Supervisor. Length of track with each gang varies from about 5 to 8 km.

(b) Maintenance of railway track is being done with the help of track machines and trackmen as per guidelines contained in Indian Railway Permanent Way Manual (IRPWM).

(c) As on 31.07.2016, against a sanctioned strength of 2,69,329, a total of 2,16,410 track maintainers were in position and 52,919 posts were vacant.

(d) To overcome the shortage of trackmen till the vacancies are filled up, certain activities are outsourced to ensure safe running of trains.

Investment in Railways

†2842. SHRI P.L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount invested in Railways during the past two years and the places where this amount has been invested;

(b) the amount spent to upgrade railway tracks during the past two years and the details of the percentage of railway tracks been upgraded; and

(c) the details of funds demanded and received by the Ministry for upgradation of railway tracks and for new technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The source-wise and plan head-wise expenditure incurred during the past two years *i.e.* 2014-15 and 2015-16 is given in the Statement-I and II, respectively (*See* below).

(b) There is no specific fund for upgradation of railway track. The amount spent for track renewal and the percentage of railway tracks upgraded during the past two years *i.e.* 2014-15 and 2015-16 is as under:-

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.