

Delay and cancellation of trains due to fog

†276. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has completely failed in addressing the problem of hundreds of trains getting cancelled and running late due to fog every year, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) if not, the efforts made by Government in this regard, so far, so as to deal with the above problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir. As of now, there is no permanent solution for avoiding delays of trains due to fog in winters. However, some temporary measures are taken to minimize the traffic congestion caused by reduced visibility during fog which includes cancellation, partial cancellation, diversion and frequency reduction of less patronized trains, inducting scratch rakes to avoid rescheduling etc.

(b) The following efforts are being made to check delay and accidents in operation of train in foggy weather during poor visibility condition:—

- (i) Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) has been developed to enhance safety and to minimize delay to the trains in fog affected areas. TPWS is based on proven European Train Control System (ETCS-LI) Technology for mitigating safety risk arising due to driver's error of Signal Passing at Danger (SPAD) or over speeding.

TPWS works have been sanctioned on 3300 Route Kms (RKM). In the first phase, work on suburban sections covering 1240 RKM on Eastern, South Eastern, Northern, Southern and South Central Railways have been taken up for implementation.

- (ii) A Global Positioning System (GPS) based 'Fog Safe Device' (FSD) has been developed based on RDSO (Signal Directorate) specification which displays the name and distance of approaching signals and other critical landmarks like Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) etc. in advance during poor visibility condition. The device is a portable device carried by the Loco Pilot. These are being used only in those zones of Indian Railways where the trains pass through fog affected region. It is expected to help reduce stress on Loco Pilots while running in foggy weather as well as ensuring safe train operations.

Fog Safe Devices are in use over Northern Railway, North Eastern Railway and North Western Railway which are the most fog affected Railways.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.