

running of trains. These include replacement of over-aged assets, elimination of unmanned level crossings, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signalling and interlocking systems, safety drives, greater emphasis on training of officials and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. Safety devices/systems used to prevent accidents include complete track circuiting, provision of Block Proving Axle Counters (BPAC), Train Protection Warning Systems (TPWS), Colour Light LED Signals, Vigilance Control Device (VCD), usage of 60 kg rails and Pre-stressed Concrete Sleepers, long rail panels, better welding technology, digital types of machines for ultrasonic flaw detection (USFD), electronic monitoring of tracks using track recording cars (TRC) and portable oscillation monitoring system (OMS), progressive use of Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) Coaches, Centre Buffer Coupler with Integral Coach Factory (ICF) Coaches, etc. Other measures include training of loco pilots and other safety category staff, improvement of their working conditions including proper rest and periodic medical examinations etc. Besides," periodic safety drives, inspections as per laid down schedules, patrolling of tracks, footplate inspections and safety reviews at various levels are regularly conducted to continuously monitor and improve safety aspects of the Railways. Because of the concerted effort, consequential train accidents have continuously decreased from 135 in 2014-15 to 107 in 2015-16 and further to 104 in 2016-17.

#### **Representation against circular of Railway Board**

781. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have received representations from Akhil Bhartiya Railway Khan-Pan Licensees Welfare Association against Railway Board circular No. 22/2017;

(b) if so, whether Association has drawn attention of Government towards unemployment caused/going to be caused to thousands of small catering vending licensees and their vendors as a result of implementation of circular;

(c) if so, whether Railways have received suggestions for withdrawal of circular No. 22/2017 so as to protect employment/livelihood of thousands of vendors and their dependent families working on different catering vending units of Railways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Representations/suggestions from Akhil Bhartiya Railway Khan-Pan Licensees Welfare Association have been received against Railway Board Commercial Circular number 22/2017. The Akhil Bhartiya Railway Khan-Pan Licensees Welfare Association has raised its objections and has demanded modification of the above Commercial Circular, which has been issued pursuant to Judgement delivered by Hon'ble Supreme Court on 29/01/2016. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, *vide* its Judgement dated 29/01/2016 has ordered that only those licensees shall be eligible for renewal of their licenses who can declare on affidavit that they do not have the license of more than one shop or kiosk in their name or benami license at the railway stations. One license will be renewed with periodical reasonable increase of license fee.

#### **Pending railway projects**

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

(a) whether it is a fact that many railway projects are pending due to lack of coordination between various State Governments and the Ministry; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to ensure that State Governments nominate their representatives to sort out different issues for speedy execution of railway projects in their respective States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Sometimes there are issues like alignment, land acquisition, forestry and wild life clearances, law and order problems, Road Over and Under Bridges, shifting of electrical lines, canal crossings, funding of projects, identification of interested parties etc., which are being resolved through coordination with respective State Governments.

To expedite the Railway Projects and to improve coordination with State Government for faster execution, Ministry of Railways had requested the State Governments for nomination of representatives of the States. Majority of the States have nominated their representatives to sort out different issues of mutual coordination and to monitor progress of Railway Projects in their respective State.

Railways have nominated Nodal Officers from Ministry of Railways as well as from Zonal Railways for each State with a defined role of identifying the projects, requiring coordination with State Government and arranging meetings of Railway Officials with the State Government.