

Revenue earned through flexi fare scheme

2193. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the revenue earned by Railways through flexi fare scheme since its inception;

(b) whether Government is planning to tweak flexi fare scheme, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has planned this move in the wake of travellers complaining of high fares, which was also leading to several seats going vacant due to the cost; and

(d) whether Government is planning to introduce flexi fare scheme in mail express and superfast express trains also, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Flexi fare system has been introduced in Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Duronto trains w.e.f. 09.09.2016. Upto November, 2017, additional earnings from the flexi fare trains in comparison to the same period of previous years is around ₹ 671 crore.

(b) to (d) A Committee has been constituted to review the flexi fare system in Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Duronto trains with a view to examining all other options and recommend the best option keeping in mind the interest of passengers and Railways.

Zero-accident mission

2194. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of accidents on railway tracks are on the rise, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Railways have launched a zero-accident mission envisaging renewal of railway tracks, more railway bridges, better signalling and rolling out of accident-proof coaches and engines, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Railways have prepared any plan to generate resources to implement the zero-accident mission, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) No, Sir. During the last three years, the number of consequential train accidents (including accidents at Unmanned Level Crossings) have decreased from 135 in 2014-15, to 107 in 2015-16 and further to 104 in 2016-17. In the current year (upto 15th December, 2017) the number of consequential train accidents have reduced to 52 as compared to 87 in the corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) Yes, Sir. In the Railway Budget 2016-17, Mission Zero Accident was one of the missions announced, comprising the two sub-missions:-

- (i) Elimination of Unmanned Level Crossings (UMLC) over broad gauge in the next 3-4 years.
- (ii) Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) to prevent collisions and signal passing at danger by the Loco Pilot.

As far as steps taken for improving tracks is concerned, railway tracks are replaced through track renewal works which is an ongoing process. Track renewal works are undertaken as and when a stretch of track becomes due for renewal on the basis of criteria laid down in Indian Railway Permanent Way Manual on age cum condition basis viz. traffic carried in terms of gross million tonnes and incidence of rail fracture/failure, wear of rails and maintainability of track as per standards etc. In case any stretch of track is not renewed in time due to various reasons including scarcity of funds, material etc., suitable speed restrictions, if required, are imposed to ensure safe running of trains.

In order to improve signaling, electrical/electronic interlocking system with centralized operation of points and signals are being provided to eliminate human failure and to replace old mechanical systems.

Superior and safer Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) Coaches having anti-climbing features have been progressively introduced on Indian Railways to reduce the fatalities in case of accidents.

(c) In the Budget 2017-18, an exclusive fund called "Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh" (RRSK) has been made with a corpus of ₹ 1 lakh crore over a period of 5 years for giving a major boost to safety related works over Indian Railways for improving safety of tracks, rolling stock and proliferation of other safety technologies and training of staff.