

Upkeep of railway infrastructure

1725. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of accidents has increased in the recent past due to accumulated deficit in upkeep of railway infrastructure as a result of decades of neglect;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor along with the number of such accidents occurred during the last three years, Zone-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to formulate an action plan for regular upkeep of railway infrastructure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Safety is given the top most priority. Assets are maintained as per standards codified in the various manuals. As a result, number of consequential train accidents (including accidents at Unmanned Level Crossings mainly caused due to negligence of road vehicle users) have decreased from 135 in 2014-15, to 107 in 2015-16 and further to 104 in 2016-17. In the current year (upto 28th February, 2018) the number of consequential train accidents have further reduced to 70 as compared to 99 in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Railway line from Tuni to Visakhapatnam

1726. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a long pending demand from the people and public representatives for a third railway line from Tuni to Visakhapatnam *via* Narsipatnam, Chodavaram, Madugula and Kothavalasa, as this is a safe route, particularly during monsoons, and the existing track is very near to seashore; and

(b) if so, the steps Ministry has taken on this proposal, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) A Survey for provision of a new BG single line from Tuni to Kothavalasa (155.34 Km) *via* Narsipatnam, Chodavaram, Madugula was sanctioned *vide* Blue Book 2016-17. Survey work of this new line from Kothavalasa to Tuni *via* Narsipatnam, Madugula has been completed at a cost of ₹ 3771.21 crore and ROR of (-) 4.14%. Survey report is under examination.