

- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) In the Railway Budget 2007-08, it had been announced that from the year 2007-08 every newly introduced train will have six unreserved second class coaches excluding fully air-conditioned and Jan Shatabdi trains. It had further been announced that efforts will be made to increase the number of unreserved second class coaches.

(b) to (e) The demand pattern of traffic is not uniform over Indian Railways. It varies from sector to sector and depends on various factors including route, timings, distance covered by the trains, the clientele, etc. There are several fully reserved Air-conditioned trains such as Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Garib Rath, Tejas, Humsafar Express services where it is not feasible to attach second class General coaches. However, to cater to the travelling needs of General Class passengers, Indian Railways operate fully unreserved services like Jan Sadharan, Janseva, Jan Nayak Express, Antyodaya Express and also augments trains with General Class coaches as per commercial viability and operational feasibility. At present, 726 pairs of Mail/Express trains, over Indian Railways, are running with less than six General Class (GS) coaches. Augmentation of trains with General Class coaches is an ongoing process on Indian Railways. Accordingly, during the years 2018-19, of the total 487 coaches that were utilized for permanent augmentation of the composition of existing trains, 123 coaches were General Class unreserved coaches.

Starting Vande Bharat Express from Ranchi to Madurai

†878. SHRI SAMIR ORAON: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that passengers of Darbhanga-Hyderabad Special Train have to wait from 9 PM in night to 5 AM in morning at Ranchi station in Jharkhand due to which the condition of women, children and elderly persons become miserable;
- (b) whether it is a fact that South India bound trains from Jharkhand are very important from medical and tourism perspective;
- (c) whether the problems of lakhs of passengers can be solved by starting ‘ Vande Bharat Express’ train from Ranchi via important stations to Madurai; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) to (d) Punctuality of trains is accorded very high priority by Indian Railways. However, trains do get delayed not only due to the factors related to its internal working but also due to external factors which are beyond the control of Railways. In addition to asset failures, train running and punctuality is affected by factors such as line capacity, terminal capacity, constraints on account of inadequate infrastructure, increasing passenger and freight traffic, adverse weather conditions (fog, rains, breaches), intermittent natural calamities such as floods, cyclones, heavy rains, heavy road traffic at level crossing gates, law & order problems, miscreant activities such as theft of Railway assets, mid-section run over cases involving cattle and humans, etc.

17007/17008 Darbhanga-Secunderabad Express had been cancelled due to closure of Dhanbad -Chandrapura section on the advise of Director General of Mines Safety. To cater to the needs of the sector, a special train service *viz.* 07007/07008 Darbhanga-Secunderabad Express was provided *via* a longer route. The train is being restored *w.e.f.* 01.07.2019, as 17007/17008 Darbhanga-Secundrabad Express (*via* Dhanbad - Chandrapura), as a regular service. The punctuality is likely to improve on running the train as a regular service.

Apart from the above, Ranchi is connected to South Indian by one pair daily train services connecting to Chennai and Alleppey and one bi-weekly and one tri-weekly train connecting to KSR Bengaluru and one weekly train to Eernakulam.

As regards, introduction of “Vande Bharat Express” train service from Ranchi to Madurai, it is stated that there is no proposal to introduce such a service, at present.

Development of railway stations

879. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of development of railway stations in the country and allocation of fund made there for during the last three years;

(b) whether private players are allowed to participate in the programme and if so, the extent to which they participated during the period; and

(c) whether Government has finalised any action plan for development of all the major railway stations in the country and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) Upgradation/modernization of stations on Indian Railways is a continuous and on-going process. Works