

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 53
ANSWERED ON 29.11.2024

PROTECTION OF RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AGAINST SABOTAGE

*53 SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of the initial investigation of National Investigation Agency(NIA) into reported sabotage attempts involving objects placed on railway tracks;
- (b) whether Government has identified any individuals or groups involved in these incidents;
- (c) whether there are any preliminary findings suggesting a coordinated sabotage effort;
- (d) the number of cases of potential sabotage on railway tracks reported in the last year;
- (e) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government for patrolling and surveillance of railway infrastructure; and
- (f) whether Government is considering stricter laws or policies regarding penalties for sabotage or intentional damage to railway property?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (f) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.53 BY SHRI SANJAY RAUT ANSWERED IN RAJYA SABHA ON 29.11.2024 REGARDING PROTECTION OF RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AGAINST SABOTAGE

(a) to (f) Indian Railway is focused on safety of passengers. Any unusual incident is thoroughly investigated. Wherever a non-technical reason is suspected, the help of State Police is taken. In some cases, the guidance of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and National Investigation Agency (NIA) is also considered. For example, in the case of Bahanaga Bazar train accident, the criminal investigation was done by CBI. However, the primary means of investigation is through the State Police. This is in line with the constitutional arrangements under which Law and Order is responsibility of the State Government.

Safety is accorded highest priority on Indian Railways. The various safety measures taken to enhance safety in train operation are as under :-

1. On Indian Railways, the expenditure on Safety related activities has increased over the years as under:

Expenditure on Safety related activities	(Rs. in Cr.)		
	2022-23 (Act.)	2023-24(Act.)	BE 2024-25
Maintenance of Permanent Way & Works	18,115	20,322	21,386
Maintenance of Motive Power and Rolling Stock	27,086	30,864	31,494
Maintenance of Machines	9,828	10,772	11,864
Road Safety LCs and ROBs/ RUBs	5,347	6,662	9,980
Track Renewals	16,326	17,850	17,652
Bridge Works	1,050	1,907	2,137
Signal & Telecom Works	2,456	3,751	4,647
Workshops Incl. PUs and Misc. expenditure on Safety	7,119	9,523	9,615
Total	87,327	1,01,651	1,08,776

2. Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation of points and signals have been provided at 6,608 stations up to 31.10.2024 to eliminate accident due to human failure.
3. Interlocking of Level Crossing (LC) Gates has been provided at 11,053 level Crossing Gates up to 31.10.2024 for enhancing safety at LC gates.

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4. Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verification of track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6,619 stations up to 31.10.2024.
5. Kavach is a highly technology intensive system, which requires safety certification of highest order. Kavach was adopted as a National ATP system in July 2020. Kavach is provided progressively in phased manner. Kavach has already been deployed on 1548 RKm on South Central Railway and North Central Railway. Presently, work is in progress on Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah corridors (approximately 3000 Route Km). Track side works on these routes have been completed on about 1081 RKm(705RKm on Delhi-Mumbai section and 376 RKm on Delhi-Howrah section). Regular trials are being done on these sections.
6. Detailed instructions on issues related with safety of Signalling e.g. mandatory correspondence check, alteration work protocol, preparation of completion drawing, etc. have been issued.
7. System of disconnection and reconnection for S&T equipment as per protocol has been re-emphasized.
8. All locomotives are equipped with Vigilance Control Devices (VCD) to improve alertness of Loco Pilots.
9. Retro-reflective sigma boards are provided on the mast which is located two OHE masts prior to the signals in electrified territories to alert the crew about the signal ahead when visibility is low due to foggy weather.
10. A GPS based Fog Safety Device (FSD) is provided to loco pilots in fog affected areas which enables loco pilots to know the distance of the approaching landmarks like signals, level crossing gates etc.
11. Modern track structure consisting of 60kg, 90 Ultimate Tensile Strength (UTS) rails, Prestressed Concrete Sleeper (PSC) Normal/Wide base sleepers with elastic fastening, fan shaped layout turnout on PSC sleepers, Steel Channel/H-beam Sleepers on girder bridges is used while carrying out primary track renewals.
12. Mechanisation of track laying activity through use of track machines like PQRS, TRT, T-28 etc. to reduce human errors.
13. Maximizing supply of 130m/260m long rail panels for increasing progress of rail renewal and avoiding welding of joints, thereby improving safety.
14. Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) testing of rails to detect flaws and timely removal of defective rails.
15. Laying of longer rails, minimizing the use of Alumino Thermic Welding and adoption of better welding technology for rails i.e. Flash Butt Welding.

16. Monitoring of track geometry by OMS (Oscillation Monitoring System) and TRC (Track Recording Cars).
17. Patrolling of railway tracks to look out for weld/rail fractures.
18. The use of Thick Web Switches and Weldable CMS Crossing in turnout renewal works.
19. Inspections at regular intervals are carried out to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices.
20. Web based online monitoring system of track assets viz. Track database and decision support system has been adopted to decide rationalized maintenance requirement and optimize inputs.
21. Detailed instructions on issues related to the safety of Track e.g. integrated block, corridor block, worksite safety, monsoon precautions etc. have been issued.
22. Preventive maintenance of railway assets (Coaches & Wagons) is undertaken to ensure safe train operations.
23. Replacement of conventional ICF design coaches with LHB design coaches is being done.
24. All unmanned level crossings (UMLCs) on Broad Gauge (BG) route have been eliminated by January 2019.
25. Safety of Railway Bridges is ensured through regular inspection of Bridges. The requirement of repair/rehabilitation of Bridges is taken up based upon the conditions assessed during these inspections.
26. Indian Railways has displayed Statutory “Fire Notices” for widespread passenger information in all coaches. Fire posters are provided in every coach so as to educate and alert passengers regarding various Do’s and Don’ts to prevent fire. These include messages regarding not carrying any inflammable material, explosives, prohibition of smoking inside the coaches, penalties etc.
27. Production Units are providing Fire detection and suppression system in newly manufactured Power Cars and Pantry Cars, Fire and Smoke detection system in newly manufactured coaches. Progressive fitment of the same in existing coaches is also underway by Zonal Railways in a phased manner.
28. Regular counselling and training of staff is undertaken.
29. Concept of Rolling Block introduced in Indian Railways (Open Lines) General Rules vide Gazette notification dated 30.11.2023, wherein work of integrated maintenance/ repair/ replacement of assets is planned up to 52 weeks in advance on rolling basis and executed as per plan.

Further, in order to prevent incident of any sabotage/attempted sabotage, following steps are being taken by railways:-

1. Regular State Level Security Committee of Railways (SLSCR) meetings are being conducted, which have been constituted in each State under the chairmanship of DGPs/Commissioner of police of respective States/Union territory with representatives of RPF, GRP and Intelligence units. Further close liaison is made by RPF with the State Police/GRP authorities at all levels to control Crime, registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of Law & Order in Railway premises as well as on running trains with focus on sabotage incidents, sharing of intelligence. Effective steps are being undertaken to prevent such incidents.
2. Besides Central & State Intelligence agencies, Intelligence unit of RPF i.e. Crime Intelligence Branch (CIB) & Special Intelligence Branch (SIB) have been sensitized and instructed to collect intelligence and take necessary action in coordination with Police authorities for detection and prevention of sabotage attempts.
3. Frequent patrolling of identified black spots and vulnerable sections are being done by Railwaymen, RPF, GRP & Civil Police.
4. Regular drives are conducted to remove material lying near to the railway tracks which can potentially be used by miscreant for putting obstructive those materials on track.
5. The people living near railway track are being sensitized about the consequences of putting foreign material on track, removing rail components etc. and are requested to keep watch and report any suspected activity immediately.
6. Special teams are formed to patrol high-risk areas, vulnerable sections and sharing of intelligence to mitigate threats effectively.

45 cases were registered for sabotage/attempted sabotage by GRP/Police during 2023.

Provisions contained in existing laws including Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and The Railways Act etc. are considered adequate.
