

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 242**  
**ANSWERED ON 11.08.2023**

**RECOMMENDATION ON DUTY HOURS OF RAILWAY STAFF**

\*242 SHRI VAIKO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the High Power Committee (HPC) recommended reducing duty hours of Running staff to 10 hours by 2020, considering the vast infrastructure development in Railways and also International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention;
- (b) if so, the reasons as to why the recommendation is not being implemented;
- (c) whether HPC also recommended for periodical rest for 40 hours for running staff as granted to other employees, and staying away from Headquarters for 48 hours; and
- (d) if so, the reasons as to why they are not being implemented keeping in view the safety in Railways and keeping the staff in alert mode?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, COMMUNICATIONS AND  
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

- (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.242 BY SHRI VAIKO ANSWERED IN RAJYA SABHA ON 11.08.2023 REGARDING RECOMMENDATION ON DUTY HOURS OF RAILWAY STAFF**

(a) to (d) Indian Railways has been continuously working for improving the working conditions of running staff. Some of the interventions made/measures taken, which have made the job of running staff less stressful are as follows: -

1. Improvement in running Rooms / lobbies: -

- i. Air conditioning of Running Rooms: All running rooms over Indian Railways are being air-conditioned for providing sound outstation rest to the running staff
- ii. Separate rooms for female crew are being provided in the running rooms.
- iii. Running rooms are being progressively provided with cubicles / rooms with two beds so that crew does not get disturbed during rest. 47% of the running rooms have so far been covered.
- iv. Good quality subsidized meals are provided to the crew at running rooms. Crew also has the option to get meals prepared of his choice by providing ingredients.
- v. Quality of drinking water has been improved by provision of RO in all running rooms.
- vi. Yoga room, meditation rooms, reading rooms with newspapers and magazine are being provided for the convenience of the crew during rest.
- vii. Facilities like foot massager etc. are also being provided progressively.
- viii. Over the last five years more than 45 numbers of Running Rooms have been constructed which has helped in designing appropriate running links for the running staff and also arranging comfortable stay for them away from their homes.

2. Improvement in locomotives:

- i. Most new locomotives are being manufactured/acquired with cab air conditioning. Cab Air conditioning is progressively being done on existing locomotives also.
- ii. Locomotive cabs have been modified with ergonomic crew friendly features like better seats and more space.
- iii. Waterless urinal has been provided on trial basis.

3. Fogsafe Device: It is an aid to Loco Pilots for locating the approaching signals and important landmarks during foggy weather conditions for reducing stress on the crew.

4. Sigma Board: The retro-reflective strip in sigma shape for easy identification of stop signal during foggy weather has been provided two masts prior to stop signal on all the Zonal Railways as an aid and for reducing stress.

5. Mobile Application named 'Chalak Dal' has been developed for the facilitation of crew. Through the App, crew can access all his details related to running duties, sign on/ sign off, loco trouble shooting directory and other documents required during train operation which otherwise were required to be carried in hard copy.

The working hours of running staff is constantly monitored and worked upon to ensure that they are deployed for running duty as per the laid down limits. 87.6% of the actual running duties of running staff (wheel move to wheel stop) is performed within 9 hours and 83.6% of the complete duty of running staff (sign on to sign off) is done within prescribed 11 hours.

For filling up vacancies of running staff, massive recruitment exercise has been concluded recently, as a result of which more than 34000 running staff have been inducted which helped in ensuring running duties within prescribed limit, to the extent possible.

The High-Power Committee which had been constituted to review the duty hours of running and other safety categories of staff submitted its report in August, 2013 making 89 recommendations, many of which have been implemented, bringing substantial improvement in the working condition of the running staff.

As regards the recommendation for Stay away from Headquarter to be restricted to 48 hours it is stated that about 96.00 % running staff are within 48 hours of Stay away from Headquarters, even though the present provision allows for upto 72 hours stay away from Headquarters. Further, regarding periodic rest it was decided to follow with existing pattern of 5 rests of 22 hours or 4 rests of 30 consecutive hours.

The above measures have contributed towards safety in train operations.

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