

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2510
ANSWERED ON 21.03.2025

ELEPHANTS KILLED ON RAILWAY TRACKS

2510 SHRI SUBHASISH KHUNTIA:

DR. SASMIT PATRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of elephants killed in accidents on railway tracks across the country during the last three years and the current year, zone-wise;
- (b) the number of elephants killed due to train accidents in East Coast Railways and South Eastern Railways, especially in Odisha, in the last three years;
- (c) whether the Railways has conducted any investigation into such incidents;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if not, the reasons for the same; and
- (f) the steps taken/being taken to prevent recurrence of such incidents?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (f) Indian Railways (IR) is committed for protection of elephants and other wild life animals. Several protection measures have been taken up by IR which are as under:

(i) One of the innovative measures taken is development of AI-enabled Intrusion Detection System (IDS) for detecting presence of elephants on Railway tracks using Distributed Acoustic

Sensors (DAS). The system components include Optical Fibre, hardware and pre-installed signatures of elephant locomotion. The system alerts loco pilots, station masters and Control Room about the movement of elephants on track's proximity, for taking preventive action timely.

Presently, IDS system is working over 141 Rkms on critical & vulnerable locations identified by forest department in Northeast Frontier Railway. This device has been reported to be very effective in protection of elephants.

Works of IDS have been sanctioned for identified corridors for a total length of 1158 Rkm at total cost of Rs. 208 Crore covering NFR, ECOR, SR, NR, SER, NER, WR and ECR. The installation of this system is in progress over ECOR (349.4 Rkm), SR (55.85 Rkm) and NER (36 Rkm) also.

(ii) In case of any hitting incidence of elephant with train, Zonal Railways investigate the matter in close coordination with Forest department and takes immediate steps accordingly. These include imposition of suitable speed restrictions at identified locations and alerting train crews as well as station masters. Regular meetings with concerned forest officials are conducted to update and sensitize the train crew.

(iii) Construction of underpasses and ramps for the movement of elephants at identified locations.

(iv) Provision of fencing along the track.

(v) Provision of signage boards at all identified elephant corridors to pre-warn the loco pilots.

(vi) Clearance of vegetation and edible items surrounding the track within railway land.

(vii) Providing LED lights with a solar system in forest area.

(viii) Deployment of elephant trackers engaged by Forest Department for timely action by alerting station master and loco pilots, are taken.

(ix) To prevent the movement of wild animals/ elephants near railway tracks, innovative Honey Bee buzzer devices have been installed at level crossings. The sound created by this device acts as a repellent to move elephants away from railway track.

(x) Thermal vision camera is also being tried for detecting presence of wild animals on straight track during night/poor visibility which alerts loco pilots for presence of wild animals.

As a consequence of above measures, elephant deaths have reduced from 26 nos. in 2013 to only 12 nos. in 2024 i.e. reduction of more than 50%.
