GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3309

ANSWERED ON 28.03.2025

VACANT POSTS IN SAFETY CATEGORIES IN EAST COAST RAILWAY & SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

3309. SHRI NIRANJAN BISHI:
SMT. SULATA DEO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacant positions in track maintenance, track fitness, senior and junior section engineers, gangman, and technicians in the safety category in East Coast Railway and South Eastern Railway, particularly in Odisha;

(b) the steps taken by Government to fill up these vacancies and any discussions with the Ministry of Finance regarding exemptions from the ban on new positions;

(c) whether these vacancies affect railway safety, and the measures taken to mitigate such risks; and

(d) whether any assessments have been made regarding the impact of these vacancies on passenger service quality?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (d): Occurrence and filling up of vacancies are continuous processes on Indian Railways considering its size, spatial distribution and criticality of operation. Adequate and

suitable manpower is provided to cater to the regular operations, maintaining and improving passenger services, changes in technology, mechanisations and innovative practices. The vacancies are filled up primarily by placement of indents by Railways with Recruitment agencies as per operational and technological requirements.

After easing of restrictions imposed on account of COVID 19, two major examinations involving more than 2.37 crore candidates have been conducted successfully.

Exam	Candidates	Cities	Centres	Days	Shifts
L2 - L6	1.26 cr	211	726	68	133
L1	1.1 cr	191	551	33	99

Based on these exams, 1,30,581 candidates have been recruited in Railways. This includes more than 40,000 Track Maintainers.

Recruitment done in Indian Railways during 2004-2005 to 2013-2014 vis-à-vis during 2014-2015 to 2023-2024 is given as under: -

Period	Recruitments
2004-2005 to 2013-2014	4.11 lakhs
2014-2015 to 2023-2024	5.02 lakhs

Further, as a system improvement, the Ministry of Railways has introduced a system of publishing annual calendar from 2024 for recruitment to various categories of Group 'C' posts. The introduction of annual calendar will benefit the aspirants in the following manner:

- More opportunities for candidates;
- Opportunities to those becoming eligible every year;
- Certainty of exams;
- Faster Recruitment process, Training and Appointments

Accordingly, ten Centralized Employment Notifications (CENs) for 92,116 vacancies have been notified during January to December 2024 for filling up of posts of Assistant Loco Pilots, Technicians, Sub-Inspectors, Constables in Railway Protection Force (RPF), Junior Engineers (JEs)/ Depot Material Superintendent (DMS)/ Chemical & Metallurgical Assistant (CMA), Paramedical Categories, Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate), Non-

Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate), Ministerial & Isolated Categories and Level-1 posts including 13,187 vacancies of Track Maintainers.

First stage Computer Based Tests for 45,708 posts has been completed in two phases from 25.11.2024 to 30.12.2024 and 02.03.2025 to 18.03.2025. Details are as under: -

Exam	Candidates	Cities	Centres	Days	Shifts
1st Stage CBT for the post of ALP (18,799 vacancies)	18,40,347	156	346	5	15
CBT for the post of RPF-SI (452 vacancies)	15,35,635	143	306	5	15
1st Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS/CMA (7,951 vacancies)	11,01,266	146	323	3	9
CBT for the post of Technician (14,298 vacancies)	26,99,892	139	312	9	27
CBT for the post of RPF-Constable (4,208 vacancies)	45,30,288	149	354	12	36

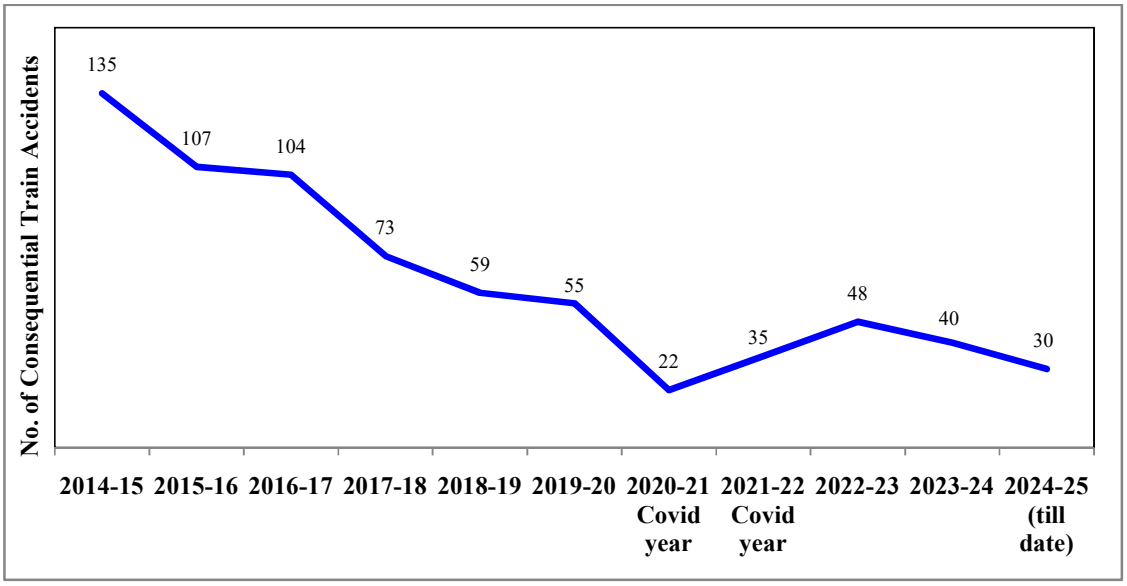
Ministry of Finance was approached by Railways to allow creation of posts. Ministry of Finance has delegated powers to Railways to create non-gazetted revenue posts of crew, as part of crew review exercise.

Safety is accorded the highest priority on Indian Railways. As a consequence of various safety measures taken over the years, there has been a steep decline in the number of accidents. Consequential Train Accidents have reduced from 135 in 2014-15 to 30 in 2024-25 (till date) as shown in the graph below.

It may be noted that the consequential train accidents during the period 2004-14 was 1711 (average 171 per annum), which has declined to 30 in 2024-25 (till date).

Another important index showing improved safety in train operations is Accidents Per Million Train Kilometer (APMTKM) which has reduced from 0.11 in 2014-15 to 0.03 in 2023-24, indicating an improvement of approx. 73% during the said period.

The number of consequential train accidents during the last five years are depicted in the graph below:-



The various safety measures, including track modernization, taken to enhance safety in train operations 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.)					
	2013-14 (Act)	**2022-23 (Act)**	**2023-24 (Act)**	**RE 2024-25**	**BE 2025-26**
Maintenance of Permanent Way & Works	9,172	18,115	20,322	21,800	23,316
Maintenance of Motive Power and Rolling Stock	14,796	27,086	30,864	31,540	30,666
Maintenance of Machines	5,406	9,828	10,772	12,112	12,880
Road Safety LCs and ROBs/ RUBs	1,986	5,347	6,662	8,184	7,706
Track Renewals	4,985	16,326	17,850	22,669	22,800
Bridge Works	390	1,050	1,907	2,130	2,169
Signal & Telecom Works	905	2,456	3,751	6,006	6,800
Workshops Incl. PUs and Misc. expenditure on Safety	1,823	7,119	9,523	9,581	10,134
Total	**39,463**	**87,327**	**1,01,651**	**1,14,022**	**1,16,470**

2. Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation of points and signals have been provided at 6,623 stations up to 28.02.2025 to eliminate accident due to human failure.
3. Interlocking of Level Crossing (LC) Gates has been provided at 11,089 level Crossing Gates up to 28.02.2025 for enhancing safety at LC gates.
4. Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verification of track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6,631 stations up to 28.02.2025.
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 1,548 RKm on South Central Railway and North Central Railway. Presently, the work is in progress on Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah corridors (approximately 3,000 Route Km). Track side works on these routes have been completed on about 2,066 RKm. 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. Mechanization 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 with 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.

The details of the Safety related works related to better maintenance practices, Technological improvements, better infrastructure and rolling stock etc. undertaken by Railways are tabulated below: -

SN	Item	2004-05 to 2013-14	2014-15 to 2024-25 (till Jan 25)	2014-25 Vs. 2004-14
	Technological improvements			
1	Use of high-quality rails (60 Kg) (Km)	57,450 km	1.4 lakh km	More than 2 times
2	Longer Rail Panels (260m) (Km)	9,917 km	76,000 km	More than 7 times
3	Electronic Interlocking (Stations)	837 stations	3,243 stations	4 times
4	Fog Pass Safety Devices (Nos.)	As on 31.03.14: 90 nos.	As on 31.01.25: 25,293	281 times
5	Thick Web Switches (Nos.)	Nil	27,079 nos.	
	Better maintenance practices			
1	Primary Rail Renewal (Track Km)	32,260 km	49,000 km	1.5 times
2	USFD (Ultra Sonic Flaw detection) Testing of Welds (Nos.)	79.43 lakh	1.9 crore	More than 2 times
3	Weld failures (Nos.)	In 2013-14: 3699 nos.	In 2024-25: 301 nos.	92 % reduction
4	Rail fractures (Nos.)	In 2013-14: 2548 nos.	In 2024-25: 243 nos.	91% reduction
	Better infrastructure and Rolling stock			
1	New Track KM added (Track km)	14,985 nos.	34,000 km	More than 2 times
2	Flyovers (RoBs)/ Underpasses (RUBs) (Nos.)	4,148 nos.	12,771 nos.	More than 3 times
3	Unmanned Level crossings (nos.) on BG	As on 31.03.14: 8948	As on 31.03.24: Nil (All eliminated by 31.01.19)	Removed
4	Manufacture of LHB Coaches (Nos.)	2,337 nos.	41,551	More than 17 times

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