

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.496
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.11.2019**

OPERATION DHANUSH

496. DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR:

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI:

SHRI RAJA AMARESHWARA NAIK:

SHRI BHAGWANTH KHUBA:

SHRI BHOLA SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has started many new trains during the year 2019 including increase in frequency of weekly train from Balurghat to Howrah and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) whether the Government has prepared any calendar for launch of new trains across various railway zones of India and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether the Indian Railways has carried out recently a pan India Operation Dhanush against ticket touts and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) whether the Indian Railways has been hit hard by the economic slowdown as crores of revenue loss is reported from passenger and freight fares;**
- (e) if so , the details thereof including the Government's reaction thereto; and**
- (f) the other steps being taken by the Government in this regard?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a) and (b) Increase in frequency of 13063/13064 Balurghat- Howrah Express has not been undertaken. This train is presently operating as a bi-weekly service. However, introduction of trains and increase in frequency of train services is an on-going process on Indian Railways, subject to operational feasibility, resource availability, commercial justification etc.

(c) No, Sir. No Pan India drive called "Operation Dhanush" has been launched against touts. However, two Pan India drives, "Operation

Storm” (2nd November, 2018) and “Operation Thunder” (13th June, 2019) have been conducted. In “operation storm”-211 touts were arrested and tickets worth ₹ 2.04 crores were seized and in “Operation Thunder” 464 touts were arrested and ticket worth ₹ 4.03 crores were seized. Railways carry out regular drives to prevent touting activities. A total of 2324 touts have been apprehended in the current financial year (up to September, 2019).

(d) and (e) To the end of October 2019, there has been a shortfall of 67.16 million in originating passengers and 10.55 million tonne in loading over the corresponding period of previous financial year (COPPY). During this period, while passenger earnings increased by ₹ 997 cr, freight earnings decreased by ₹ 2,389 cr over COPPY. The growth of earnings in both the segments has been less than the budgeted target. Despite continuously trying to enhance passenger and freight earnings and having taken a number of measures towards enhanced passenger booking and loading, certain factors beyond the control of Railways like intense competition from the low cost airlines, expanding road sector and the slowdown in the economy have adversely impacted the trend of earnings. However, the trends have been reviewed/ monitored regularly and the Zonal Railways have been instructed to act on various immediate and short-term measures to enhance the earnings.

(f) Some of the initiatives taken to improve passenger traffic and earnings are augmentation of on-board capacity, rationalization of Flexi fare scheme, extension of Alternate Train Accommodation VIKALP scheme, increase in number of RAC berths to provide additional accommodation, etc. The initiatives taken to increase the freight earnings through private participation schemes such as General Purpose Wagon Investment Scheme (GPWIS), Liberalised Wagon Investment Scheme (LWIS), Special Freight Train Operator (SFTO), and Automobiles Freight Train Operator (AFTO) have been launched.
