

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 232
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.12.2024**

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS IN TIRUVALLUR, TAMIL NADU

***232. SHRI SASIKANTH SENTHIL:**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken steps to address the frequent railway accidents in Tamil Nadu particularly in the Tiruvallur Parliamentary Constituency and if so, the specific actions being implemented to prevent such incidents in the future;**
- (b) the status of the installation and implementation of the 'Kavach' train protection system on railway lines within Tamil Nadu especially in high-risk zones and the expected timeline for its completion;**
- (c) whether any review of signal systems in the railway stations of the Tiruvallur Parliamentary Constituency has been conducted following the recent Kavaraipettai accident and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (d) the nature of immediate and long-term support provided by the Railways to the injured passengers and their families in the Kavaraipettai accident along with the plans proposed to improve emergency response times and medical assistance during the railway accidents in future?**

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

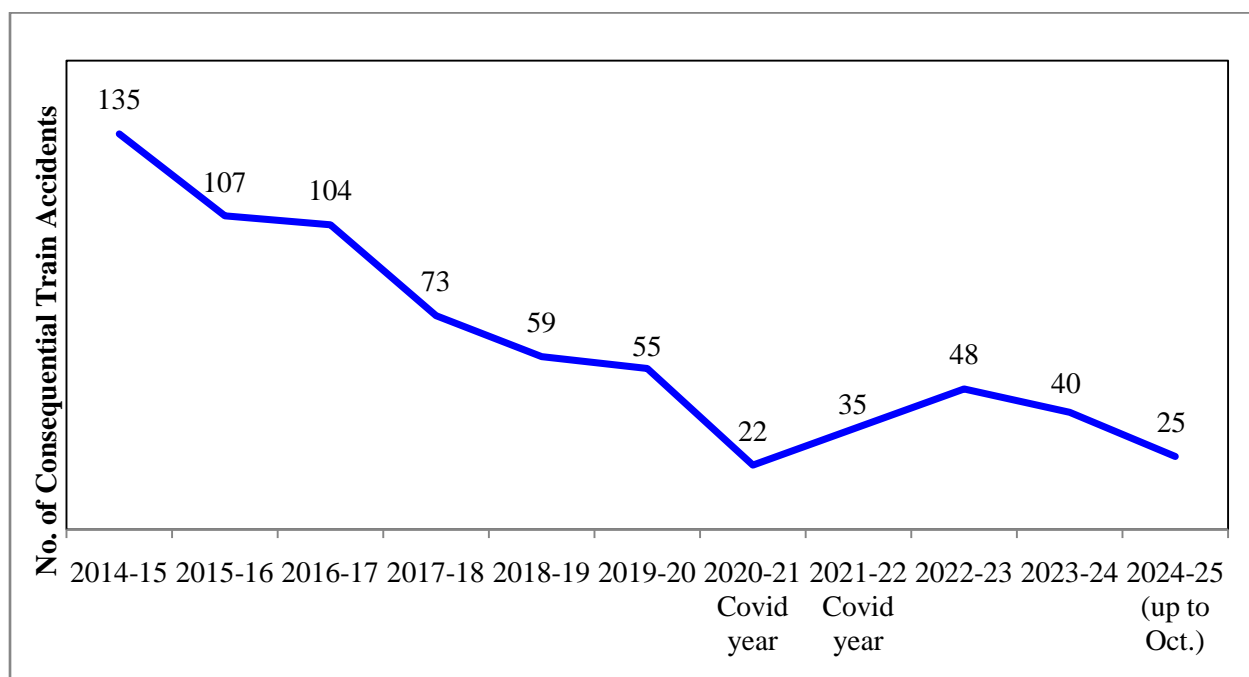
(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO 232 TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.12.2024.

(a) to (d): 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 including derailments, collisions, fire and level crossing accidents have reduced from 135 in 2014-15 to 40 in 2023-24 as shown in the graph below. The causes of these accidents broadly include track defects, loco/coach defects, equipment failures, human errors etc.

It may be noted that the consequential train accidents during the period 2004-14 was 1711 (average 171 per annum), which has declined to 678 during the period 2014-24 (average 68 per annum), i.e. reduction of 60%.

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.



Safety is accorded the highest priority on Indian Railways. The various safety measures 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.)		
	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.**

- 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, the 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, fanshaped 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 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 undertaken by Railways are tabulated below:-

SN	Item	2004-05 to 2013-14	2014-15 to 2023-24	2014-24 Vs. 2004-14
	Track Maintenance			
1.	Expenditure on Track Renewal (Rs. in Cr.)	47,038	1,09,577	2.33 times
2.	Rail Renewal Primary (Track Km)	32,260	43,335	1.34 times
3.	Use of high-quality rails (60 Kg) (Km)	57,450	1,23,717	2.15 times
4.	Longer Rail Panels (260m) (Km)	9,917	68,233	6.88 times
5.	USFD (Ultra Sonic Flaw detection) Testing of Rails (Track km)	20,19,630	26,52,291	1.31 times
6.	USFD (Ultra Sonic Flaw detection) Testing of Welds (Nos.)	79,43,940	1,73,06,046	2.17 times
7.	New Track KM added (Track km)	14,985	31,180	2.08 times
8.	Weld failures (Nos.)	In 2013-14: 3699	In 2023-24: 481	87% reduction
9.	Rail fractures (Nos.)	In 2013-14: 2548	In 2023-24: 383	85% reduction
10	Thick Web Switches (Nos.)	Nil	21,127	
11	Track Machines (Nos.)	As on 31.03.14 = 748	As on 31.03.24 = 1,661	122% increase

	Level Crossing Gate Elimination			
1.	Elimination of Unmanned Level Crossing Gates (Nos.)	As on 31.03.14: 8948	As on 31.03.24: Nil(All eliminated by 31.01.19)	100% reduction
2.	Elimination of Manned Level Crossing Gates (Nos.)	1,137	7,075	6.21 Times
3.	Road over Bridges (RoBs)/Road under Bridges (RUBs) (Nos.)	4,148	11,945	2.88 Times
4.	Expenditure on LC Elimination (LC+ROB+RUB)	8,825	41,957	4.75 Times
	Bridge Rehabilitation			
1.	Expenditure on Bridge Rehabilitation (Rs. in Cr.)	3,924	8,255	2.10 Times
	Signalling Works			
1.	Electronic Interlocking (Stations)	837	2,964	3.52 times
2.	Automatic Block Signaling (Km)	1,486	2,497	1.67 times
3.	Fog Pass Safety Devices (Nos.)	As on 31.03.14: 90	As on 31.03.24: 19,742	219 times
	Rolling Stock			
1.	Manufacture of LHB Coaches (Nos.)	2,337	36,933	15.80 times

2.	Provision of Fire and Smoke Detection System in AC coaches (Nos. of Coaches)	0	19,271	
3.	Provision of Fire Detection and Suppression System in Pantry and Power Cars (Nos. of Coaches)	0	2,991	
4.	Provision of Fire Extinguishers in Non -AC coaches (Nos. of Coaches)	0	66,840	

KAVACH

- 1. Kavach is an indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system. Kavach is a highly technology intensive system, which requires safety certification of highest order (SIL-4).**
- 2. Kavach aids the Loco Pilot in running of train within specified speed limits by automatic application of brakes in case Loco Pilot fails to do so and also helps the trains to run safely during inclement weather.**
- 3. The first field trials on the passenger trains were started in February 2016. Based on the experience gained and Independent Safety Assessment of the system by Independent Safety Assessor (ISA), three firms were approved in 2018-19, for supply of Kavach Ver 3.2.**
- 4. Kavach was adopted as National ATP system in July 2020.**

5. **Implementation of Kavach System involves following Key Activities:**
 - a. **Installation of Station Kavach at each and every station, block section.**
 - b. **Installation of RFID Tags throughout the track length.**
 - c. **Installation of telecom Towers throughout the section.**
 - d. **Laying of Optical Fibre Cable along the track.**
 - e. **Provision of Loco Kavach on each and every Locomotive running on Indian Railways.**

6. **Based on deployment of Kavach version 3.2 on 1465 RKm on south central Railway, lot of experience was gained. Using that further improvements were made. Finally, Kavach specification version 4.0 was approved by RDSO on 16.07.2024.**

7. **Kavach version 4.0 covers all the major features required for the diverse railway network. This is a significant milestone in safety for Indian Railways. Within a short period, IR has developed, tested and started deploying Automatic Train Protection System.**

8. **Major improvement in Version 4.0 includes increased Location Accuracy, Improved Information of Signal Aspects in bigger yard, Station to Station Kavach interface on OFC and Direct Interface to existing Electronic Interlocking System. With these improvements, Kavach Ver.4.0. is planned for large scale deployment over Indian Railways.**

9. **Progress of Key items comprising Kavach system on Indian Railways upto Oct' 2024 is as under: -**

SN.	Items	Progress
i	Laying of Optical Fibre Cable	5116 Km
ii	Installation of Telecom Towers	538 Nos.
iii	Provision of Kavach at Stations	521Nos.
iv	Provision of Kavach in Loco	687 Locos
v	Installation of Track side equipment	3413 Rkm

The above includes fully deployed Kavach System on 1548 Rkm.

10. **Next phase of Kavach implementation is planned as under:-**
- a. Project for equipping 10,000 Locomotives has been finalized.**
 - b. Bids for track side Works of Kavach for approximately 15000 RKm have been invited, out of which Bids for about 9000 Rkm have been opened. It covers all GQ, GD, HDN and Identified sections of Indian Railways.**
11. **Parts of the routes mentioned above is also passing through the state of Tamil Nadu.**
12. **Currently, 3 OEMs are approved for supply of Kavach System. To increase capacity and scale of implementation, trials and approval of more OEMs are at different stages.**
13. **Specialized training programme on Kavach are being conducted at centralized training institutes of Indian Railways to impart training to all concerned officials. By now more than 9000 technicians, operators and engineers have been trained on Kavach technology. Courses have been designed in collaboration with IRISSET.**

The accident that occurred at Kavaraipettai on 11.10.2024 in Southern Railway is being inquired into by the independent statutory body, Commission of Railway Safety (CRS) under Ministry of Civil Aviation.

09 passengers got injured in the said train accident. Injured passengers were provided first aid and emergency medical services at accident site as well as during transportation to hospitals by Railway Medical Teams.

Ex-Gratia @Rs.2.50 Lakh each to 04 grievously injured and Rs. 50,000/- each to 05 simple injured has been paid. Accordingly, a total amount of Rs. 12.50 Lakh (Grievously Injured-Rs.10 Lakh and Simple Injured-Rs.2.50 Lakh) has been paid as ex-gratia.

Compensation for death/injury of railway passengers in train accidents and untoward incidents as defined under Section 124 and Section 124-A (read with Section 123) of the Railways Act, 1989, is decided by Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) on the basis of a claim application filed by the victims/their dependents before RCT and it disposes of the cases after following the due judicial process. Railway Administration pays compensation when a decree is awarded by Hon'ble RCT in favour of the claimant and Railways decide to implement the decree.

Indian Railways is always prepared to respond in a quick and effective manner in case of any accident. In case of major train accidents the first responders are the railway staff on-board the train. They are trained in handling such emergencies. Immediately on receipt of information regarding a major train accident, Indian Railways responds immediately utilizing its own setup, equipment, doctors, and staff, also coordinating with the state

government and the district administration to start carrying out rescue and relief immediately. The initial focus is on saving lives, attending to the injured and providing succour to stranded passengers. Indian Railways has a network of 176 Accident Relief Trains(ARTs), 97 high capacity 140T Breakdown diesel-hydraulic cranes and 170 Accident Relief Medical Vans (ARMVs) placed at identified locations which cover the entire rail network. In addition, Portable Medical Kits for accidents have also been provided at identified locations to render immediate medical support. ARMVs are like hospital on wheels that are rushed to the site, fully equipped with medical equipment supplies and personnel. Additional equipment like road vehicles, earthmovers, ambulances etc are also requisitioned for attending to such accidents. Roles of every officer and staff in case of an accident are laid down and they are appropriately trained and empowered to discharge their duties.

Besides above, Zonal Railways regularly conduct Joint mock drills with NDRF and other agencies such as Civil Defence, Fire Brigade, City Police and Medical teams towards preparedness for immediate rescue and relief in the aftermath of accidents.

Medical teams are rushed to accident site for providing medical assistance to injured passengers. Injured passengers are admitted in available nearby Railway/State Government hospitals. Local hospital near the accident site are kept on alert mode to mobilize the medical team and ambulances to the site. A first aid booth is setup at accident site round the clock with the Doctors and Para Medical Staff till the restoration work is completed.
