

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 277
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2026**

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN KATIHAR RAILWAY DIVISION

†*277. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) appears to be lagging in infrastructure development and modernisation and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) the details of the budget allocated and actual expenditure made by the Government for the said division during the last five years along with the project completion rate in comparison to the national average;**
- (c) whether there is any specific and time-bound plan for the modernisation of old rolling stock, improvement in signalling system and upgradation of stations in the said Division and if so, the details thereof; and**
- (d) whether the Government has assessed the reported decline in rail connectivity and passenger amenities in the said region and if so, the details thereof including the action plan formulated to address the said issue?**

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 STARRED QUESTION NO.277 TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2026 IN LOK SABHA

(a) to (d): Katihar Division of Northeast Frontier Railway holds significant strategic and operational importance. Owing to its location, the Katihar Division handles substantial rail traffic and plays a key role in ensuring uninterrupted connectivity in the North-Eastern region. Accordingly, several projects have been taken up in Katihar Division for Infrastructure upgradations.

Projects recently commissioned falling fully/partly in Katihar Division are as under:-

S.No.	Project	Length (In Km)
1.	Araria – Galgalia New Line	111
2.	Eklakhi – Balurghat New Line	87
3.	Katihar – Jogbani – Barsoi – Radhikapur – Teznarayanpur Gauge Conversion	236

Some of the main projects falling fully/partly in the Katihar Division which have been taken up are as under:-

S.No.	Project	Length (In Km)
1.	Jogbani – Biratnagar New Line	19

Contd....2/-

2.	Balurghat – Hilli New Line	29
3.	Kaliaganj – Buniadpur New Line	34
4.	Jalalgarh – Kishanganj New Line	51
5.	Raiganj – Itahar, Gazole – Itahar, Itahar – Buniadpur New Line	76
6.	Raiganj – Dalkhola New Line	43
7.	Katihar – Kumedpur & Katihar – Mukuria Doubling	64

The status of some of the survey falling fully/partly in the Katihar Division are as under:-

S.No.	Name of the Project (Length)	Status
1.	Malda Town – Kumedpur 3rd & 4th Line (62 Km)	DPR has been prepared.
2.	Kumedpur – Aluabari Road 3rd & 4th Line (129 Km)	DPR has been prepared.
3.	Aluabari Road – New Jalpaiguri 3rd & 4th Line (57 Km)	Project has been sanctioned recently.
4.	Aluabari Road – Thakurganj Doubling (20 Km)	Project has been sanctioned recently.
5.	Thakurganj – Siliguri Doubling (56 Km)	DPR has been prepared.
6.	Siliguri – New Jalpaiguri Doubling (7 Km)	DPR has been prepared.

North East Region Railway Budget:

Budget allocation during the last five years has increased significantly. Budget allocation for infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/partly in North Eastern Region (NER) is as under:-

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹2,122 crore/year
2025-26	₹10,440 crore (about 5 times)

Track Construction:

The details of constructing new track falling fully/partly in North Eastern Region (NER) during 2009-14 and 2014-2025 is as under:-

Period	New track Commissioned	Average commissioning of new tracks
2009-14	333 Km	66.6 Km/year
2014-25	1,840 Km	167.27 Km/year (about 2.5 times)

Projects sanctioned:

As on 01.04.2025, 12 Railway projects (08 New Lines, 04 Doubling), of a total length of 777 Km, costing ₹69,342 crore falling fully/partly in North Eastern Region (NER) have been sanctioned. The summary is as under:-

-:4:-

Category	No. of sanctioned projects	Total Length (in Km)	Length Commissioned upto Mar'25 (in Km)	Exp. upto Mar'25 (₹ in Cr.)
New Lines	08	448	113	38,078
Doubling/ Multitracking	04	329	165	3,598
Total	12	777	278	41,676

Recently completed projects:

Projects commissioned falling fully/partly in North East Region, are as under:

S.No.	Project	Cost (₹ in crore)
1	Agartala - Sabroom new line (112 Km)	3,170
2	Agartala - Akhaura new line (5 Km)	865
3	Rangiya - Murkongselek gauge conversion (510 Km)	3,019
4	Kumarghat - Agartala gauge conversion (109 Km)	1,242
5	Lumding - Badarpur - Silchar & Badarpur - Kumarghat gauge conversion (412 Km)	6,500
6	Lumding - Hojai doubling (45 Km)	410
7	Digaru - Hojai doubling (102 Km)	1,873
8	New Bongaigaon - Agthori doubling (143 Km)	2,048
9	Bogibeel Bridge (92 Km)	5,820

Contd....5/-

Ongoing Projects:

Some of the main projects falling fully/partly in the North East Region which have been taken up are as under:-

S.No.	Name of the project	Cost (₹ In crore)
1	Jiribam - Imphal new line (111 Km)	21,886
2	Dimapur - Kohima new line (82 Km)	15,230
3	Murkongselek - Pasighat new line (27 Km)	1,249
4	New Bongaigaon - Goalpara - Guwahati (Kamakhya) doubling (176 Km)	4,962
5	Saraighat Bridge doubling (7 Km)	1,474
6	Kamkhya Guwahati 3rd line (6 Km)	395
7	Lumding – Furkating doubling (140 Km)	2,124
8	Furkating – Tinsukia doubling (194 Km)	3,634

Further, during the last three years i.e. 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and the current financial year 2025-26, 45 surveys (24 New Line, and 21 Doubling) of total length 3,590 Km falling in Northeast Frontier Railway including Katihar Division have been sanctioned.

Completion of Railway project/s depends on various factors which include the following:

-:6:-

- **Land acquisition by State Government**
- **Forest clearance**
- **Shifting of infringing utilities**
- **Statutory clearances from various authorities**
- **Geological and topographical conditions of area**
- **Law and order situation in the area of project site**
- **Number of working months in a year for particular project site etc.**

Various steps taken by the Government for effective and speedy implementation of rail projects include:

- **Substantial increase in allocation of funds.**
- **Delegation of powers at field level.**
- **Close monitoring of progress of project at various levels.**
- **Regular follow up with State Governments and concerned authorities for expeditious land acquisition, forestry and Wildlife clearances and for resolving other issues pertaining to projects.**

Modernization of Rolling stock:

Modernization and Improvement/up-gradation of Rolling Stock to enhance safety, convenience and comfort of passengers is a continuous and ongoing process on Indian Railways.

The work of replacement of earlier ICF coaches with safer and more modern LHB coaches has been taken up in a phased manner. Technologically superior LHB coaches have better riding, improved aesthetics and features like Lightweight design, Anti climbing, Air

Contd....7/-

-:7:-

suspension (Secondary) with failure indication system, stainless steel shell and disc brake system etc.

Production of LHB coaches during 2014-25 vis-à-vis 2004-14 is as under:

Period	LHB coaches manufactured
2004-14	2,337 nos.
2014-25	42,677 nos. (more than 18 times)

With a view to improve travel experience of the passengers, Indian Railways has introduced indigenously designed and manufactured Vande Bharat trains with modern coaches, advanced safety features and passenger amenities. Presently, 162 Vande Bharat Chair Car services are in operation on the Indian Railway network.

These new Vande Bharat Chair Car Trains have following features:

- **Jerk Free Semi-Permanent couplers.**
- **Fitted with KAVACH**
- **Centrally controlled Automatic Plug Doors and Fully Sealed wider gangways.**
- **Emergency Alarm Push buttons and Talk Back Units on all Coaches.**
- **Improved fire safety – Aerosol based fire detection and suppression system in electrical cabinets and lavatories.**
- **Higher acceleration with design/operating speed of 180/160 KMPH.**

Contd....8/-

- **Driver-Guard communication with voice recording facility & Crash hardened memory.**
- **Air conditioning units provided with indigenously developed UV-C lamp based disinfection system for deactivating 99% harmful bacteria from conditioned air to improve the hygiene standards inside the passenger area.**
- **Better Ride Comfort.**
- **CCTVs in all Coaches.**
- **For Divyangjan passengers special lavatory in the driving coaches on each end.**
- **Coach condition monitoring System (CCMS) display with remote monitoring**

Further, to cater to long distance travel, IR has introduced the sleeper variant of Vande Bharat Express. Presently, 2 Vande Bharat Sleeper services are in operation on the Indian Railway network.

Broad Technological advancements and safety features provided in these Vande Bharat Sleeper Trains are as below:

- **Jerk-Free Semi permanent couplers and Anti Climbers.**
- **Fitted with KAVACH.**
- **Higher acceleration with design/operating speed of 180/160 KMPH.**
- **Crashworthy Design of Car body complying with EN standards.**
- **Fire barrier doors at the end of each coach for compliance of Fire Safety standards.**

- **Aerosol based fire detection and suppression system in electrical cabinets and lavatories.**
- **Regenerative braking system for energy efficiency.**
- **Air conditioning units provided with indigenously developed UV-C lamp based disinfection system for deactivating 99% harmful bacteria from conditioned air to improve the hygiene standards inside the passenger area.**
- **Centrally controlled Automatic Plug Doors and Fully Sealed wider gangways.**
- **CCTVs in all coaches.**
- **Emergency talk-back unit for communication between Passenger and Train Manager/Loco Pilot in case of emergency.**
- **For Divyangjan passengers special lavatory in the driving coaches on each end.**
- **Centralized Coach Monitoring System for better condition monitoring of passenger amenities such as Air conditioning, Saloon Lighting etc.**
- **Ergonomically designed ladder for ease of climbing on to upper berths.**

Railways have developed fully non-AC modern train named as Amrit Bharat express. Presently, 54 services are in operation. These modern trains comprise of 11 General Class coaches, 8 Sleeper Class coaches, 01 Pantry car and 02 Luggage cum Divyangjan coaches.

These trains have following enhanced features and amenities:

- **Better aesthetics of seat and berths with enhanced look & feel on the lines of Vande Bharat Sleeper.**
- **Jerk Free Semi-Automatic Couplers.**
- **Improved Crashworthiness in coaches by provision of crash tube.**
- **Provision of CCTV system in all coaches.**
- **Improved designs of toilets.**
- **Improved design of Ladder for ease of climbing on to the berth.**
- **Improved LED Light fitting & Charging Sockets.**
- **Provision of EP assisted braking system.**
- **Aerosol based fire suppression system in toilets and electrical cubicles.**
- **USB Type-A and Type-C mobile charging sockets.**
- **Emergency Talk Back system for two-way communication between Passenger and Guard/Train Manager.**
- **Non-AC pantry with enhanced heating capacity.**
- **Fully sealed gangways with quick release mechanism for easy attachment and detachment.**

Namo Bharat Rapid Rail has been introduced to enhance the travelling experience of suburban and regional commuters for inter-city short distance movement by harnessing the features of Vande Bharat Trains. Presently, 4 Namo Bharat Rapid Rail services are in operation on the Indian Railway network.

The prominent features of Namo Bharat Rapid Rail are as follows:

-:11:-

- **Centrally controlled Double Leaf Automatic Sliding Doors.**
- **CCTVs for safety and passenger surveillance.**
- **Modular interior with Cushioned Seats and Sealed Flexible Gangway.**
- **Emergency Talk back System.**
- **Continuous LED lighting with Energy Efficient Lighting system.**
- **FRP Modular Toilets with vacuum evacuation.**
- **Fully Air-Conditioned trains with AC Driver cab**

Improvement of signalling system:

Indian Railway is continuously modernizing current infrastructure of its signalling system as under:

- 1. Electrical/Electronic Interlocking Systems with centralized operation points and signals in place of old mechanical signalling have been provided at 6665 stations as on 28.02.2026, out of which Electronic Interlocking have been provided at 3870 stations.**
- 2. Interlocking of Level Crossing Gates (LC) has been provided at 10153 Level Crossing Gates upto 28.02.2026 for enhancing safety at LC Gate.**
- 3. Complete Track Circuiting of stations to enhance safety by verification of track occupancy by electrical means has been provided at 6,669 stations up to 28.02.2026.**
- 4. Axle counters for automatic clearance of Block Section, BPAC (Block Proving Axle Counter) are provided to ensure complete arrival of train without manual intervention before granting line clear to receive next train and to reduce human element. These systems have been provided on 6149 Block Sections up to 28.02.2026.**

Contd....12/-

5. Automatic Block Signalling (ABS) that enhances line capacity within existing track infrastructure has been provided at 6897 Route km upto 28.02.2026.

6. Indian Railways has gone for implementation of indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system, which required safety certification of highest order (SIL 4). Kavach has been adopted as a National ATP system in July 2020.

After extensive and elaborate trials, Kavach Version 4.0 has been successfully commissioned on 1452 Route Kilometres, covering the high density Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Howrah routes. On the Delhi-Mumbai route Kavach ver. 4.0 has been commissioned on Junction cabin-Palwal-Mathura-Nagda section (667 Rkm) & Vadodara-Virar section (336 Rkm), and Vadodara-Ahmedabad section (96 Rkm) and on the Delhi-Howrah route Kavach ver. 4.0 has been commissioned on Gaya Sarmatanr section (93 Rkm) and Chota Ambana-Bardhaman-Howrah section (260 Rkm).

Further, track side Kavach implementation work has been taken up on 24,427 RKM covering all GQ, GD, HDN and identified sections of Indian Railways.

Amrit Bharat Stations:

Ministry of Railways has launched Amrit Bharat Station Scheme for redevelopment of stations with a long-term approach.

The scheme involves preparation of master plans and their implementation in phases to improve the stations. The master planning includes:

- **Improvement of access to station and circulating areas**
- **Integration of station with both sides of city**

- **Improvement of station building**
- **Improvement of waiting halls, toilets, sitting arrangement, water booths**
- **Provision of wider foot over bridge/air concourse commensurate with passenger traffic**
- **Provision of lift/escalators/ramp**
- **Improvement /Provision of platform surface and cover over platforms**
- **Provision of kiosks for local products through schemes like 'One Station One Product'**
- **Parking areas, Multimodal integration**
- **Amenities for Divyangjans**
- **Better passenger information systems**
- **Provision of executive lounges, nominated spaces for business meetings, landscaping, etc. keeping in view the necessity at each station.**

The scheme also envisages sustainable and environment friendly solutions, provision of ballastless tracks etc. as per necessity, phasing and feasibility and creation of city centre at the station in the long term.

So far, 1337 stations have been identified for development under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, out of which 20 stations (Aluabari Road, Arariya Court, Balurghat, Barsoi Jn, Bhaluka Road, Dalkhola, Haldibari, Harishchandrapur, Jalpaiguri, Kaliyaganj, Katihar Jn, Kishanganj, Kumedpur Jn, Labha, Malda Court, New Jalpaiguri Jn, Salmari, Samsi, Siliguri Jn. And Thakurganj) of Katihar division, Northeast Frontier Railway, are located in Bihar and West Bengal.

The names of stations identified for development under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme in Bihar and West Bengal are as following:

State	No. of Stations	Name of Stations
Bihar	98	Anugraha Narayan Road, Ara, Arariya Court, Bakhtiyarpur, Banka, Banmankhi, BapudhamMotihari, Barahiya, Barauni, Barh, Barsoi Jn, Begusarai, Bettiah, Bhabua Road, Bhagalpur, Bhagwanpur, Bihar Sharif, Bihiya, Bikramganj, Buxar, Chakia, Chausa, Chhapra, Dalsingh Sarai, Darbhanga, Dauram Madhepura, Dehri On Sone, Dholi, Dighwara, Dumraon, Durgauti, Ekma, Fatuha, Gaya, Ghorasahan, Guraru, Hajipur Jn, Jamalpur Jn, Jamui, Janakpur Road, Jaynagar, Jehanabad, Jhanjharpur, Kahalgaon, Karhagola Road, Katihar Jn, Khagaria Jn, Kishanganj, Kudra, Labha, Laheria Sarai, Lakhminia, Luckeesarai Jn, Madhubani, Maheshkhunt, Mairwa, Mansi Jn, Masrakh, Mokama, Motipur, Munger (Monghyr), Muzaffarpur Jn, Nabinagar Road, Narkatiaganj Jn, Naugachia, Nawadah, Paharpur, Patliputra, Patna Jn, Piro, Pirpainti, Rafiganj, Raghunathpur, Rajendra Nagar Terminal (Patna), Rajgir, Ram Dayalu Nagar, Raxaul, Sabaur, Sagauli, Saharsa, Sahibpur Kamal, Sakri, Salauna, Salmari, Samastipur, Sasaram, Shahpur Patoree, Shivanarayanpur, Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Simultala, Sitamarhi, Siwan, Sonpur Jn., Sultanganj, Supaul, Taregna, Thakurganj, Thawe

West Bengal	101	Adra, Alipurduar Jn., Aluabari Road, Ambika kalna, Anara, Andal Jn., Andul, Asansol Jn., Azimganj, Bagnan, Bally, Balurghat, Bandel Jn., Bangaon Jn., Bankura, Barabhum, Barasat, Barddhaman, Barrackpore, Belda, Berhampore court, Bethuadahari, Bhaluka Road, Binnaguri, Bishnupur, Bolpur Shantiniketan, Burnpur, Canning, Chandan nagar, Chandpara, Chandrakona Road, Dalgaon, Dalkhola, Dankuni, Dhulian Ganga, Dhupguri, Digha, Dinhata, Dum Dum Jn., Falakata, Garbeta, Gede, Haldia, Haldibari, Harishchandrapur, Hasimara, Hijli, Howrah Jn, Jalpaiguri, Jalpaiguri Road, Jangipur Road, Jhalida, Jhargram, Joychandi Pahar Jn, Kaliyaganj, Kalyani, Kalyani Ghoshpara, Kamakhyaguri, Katwa Jn, Khagraghat Road, Kharagpur Jn, Kolkata, Krishnanagar City Jn, Kumedpur Jn, Madhukunda, Madhyamgram, Malda Court, Malda Town, Mecheda, Medinipur (Midnapore), Nabadwip Dham, Naihati Jn, New Alipurduar, New Cooch Behar, New Farakka Jn, New Jalpaiguri Jn, New Mal Jn, Ondagram, Panagarh, Pandabeswar, Panskura Jn, Purulia Jn, Rampurhat Jn, Ranaghat, Sainthia Jn, Salboni, Samsi, Santragachi, Sealdah, Shalimar, Shantipur, Sheoraphuli Jn., Siliguri Jn., Sitarampur, Siuri, Sonarpur Jn., Suisa, Tamluk, Tarakeswar, Tulin, Uluberia
--------------------	------------	--

Development works at railway stations under Amrit Bharat Station Scheme in Bihar and West Bengal have been taken up at a good pace and the works have been completed at Anara, Barabhum, Haldia, Joychandi Pahar Jn, Kalyani Ghoshpara, Kamakhyaguri, Panagarh, Pirpainti, Siuri, Tamluk and Thawe.

The activities for development at other stations have also been taken up at good pace and progress of some of the stations is as given below:

Bihar:

- **Arariya Court station: The structural work of new station building, platform shelter at platform no. 1, approach road and boundary wall have been completed. The works of lift, circulating area, 12 m Foot Over Bridge and finishing work of new station building have been taken up.**
- **Barsoi Junction station: The works of dismantling of old quarters and shifting of utilities have been completed. The works of station building, circulating area and 12 m Foot Over Bridge have been taken up.**
- **Kishanganj station: The works of platform surfacing at platform no. 1&2, drinking water taps at platform no. 1&2, improvement of circulating area, parking at second entry, approach road and boundary wall have been completed. The works of horticulture and 12 m Foot Over Bridge have been taken up.**
- **Salmari station: The works of improvement of station building, extension and raising of platform no. 1 and platform shelter at platform**

no. 1 have been completed. The works of circulating area and 3 m Foot Over Bridge have been taken up.

- **Thakurganj station: The works of raising of platform no. 1, platform surfacing at platform no. 2, platform shelter at platform no. 1 & 2 and 12 m Foot Over Bridge have been completed. The works of platform surfacing at platform no. 1, toilet at platform no. 2, coach indication board and train indication board have been taken up.**

West Bengal:

- **Balurghat station: The works of improvement of station building, portico, extension of platform, waiting room, circulating area and approach road have been completed. The works of lift and 12 m Foot Over Bridge have been taken up.**
- **Haldibari station: The works of extension of platform, platform surfacing at platform no. 1, platform shelter, improvement of waiting room, toilet, circulating area, parking, boundary wall and 12 m Foot Over Bridge have been completed. The works of portico have been taken up.**
- **Jalpaiguri station: The works of extension and platform surfacing of platform no. 1, platform shelter, boundary wall and 12 m Foot Over Bridge have been completed. The works of circulating area, lift and escalator have been taken up.**

- **New Jalpaiguri station: The works of parcel/Rail Mail Service office, structural work of departure building up to fourth floor, arrival-01 building and arrival-02 building, podium parking-01 have been completed. The structural work of departure building of fifth and sixth floor, elevated road, podium parking-02, air concourse and finishing work of arrival-01 building have been taken up.**

Further, development / redevelopment / upgradation / modernisation of stations on Indian Railways is a continuous and ongoing process and works in this regard are undertaken as per requirement, subject to inter-se priority and availability of funds. Development / redevelopment / upgradation / modernisation of a station is carried out based on category of station/condition/traffic handled etc.

Development / Upgradation of railway stations is complex in nature involving safety of passengers & trains and requires various statutory clearances such as fire clearance, heritage, tree cutting, airport clearance etc. The progress also gets affected due to brownfield related challenges such as shifting of utilities (involving water/sewage lines, optical fibre cables, gas pipe lines, power/signal cables, etc.), infringements, operation of trains without hindering passenger movement, speed restrictions due to works carried out in close proximity of tracks and high voltage power lines, etc. and these factors affect the completion time.

Development / Upgradation / Modernization of stations including Amrit Bharat Station Scheme is generally funded under Plan Head-53 'Customer Amenities'. The details of allocation and expenditure under Plan Head-53 are maintained Zonal Railway-wise and not work-wise or station-wise or state-wise.

Bihar is covered under the jurisdiction of four railway zones, namely, Eastern Railway, Northeast Frontier Railway, North Eastern Railway and East Central Railway. These zones have been allocated ₹ 6,599 crore under Plan Head-53 for the last four years and the current year. The expenditure incurred under Plan Head-53 by these zones for the last four years and current year (up to January, 2026) is ₹6,051 crore.

West Bengal is covered under the jurisdiction of four railway zones, namely, Eastern Railway, Northeast Frontier Railway, South Eastern Railway and Metro Railway. These zones have been allocated ₹4,458 crore under Plan Head-53 for the last four years and the current year. The expenditure incurred under Plan Head-53 by these zones for the last four years and current year (up to January, 2026) is ₹4,150 crore.
