

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 476
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.03.2026**

**MASS VOLUNTARY RETIREMENT APPLICATIONS BY CENTRAL RAILWAY
LOCO PILOTS**

***476. SHRI ARVIND GANPAT SAWANT:**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that some Loco Pilots (Mail) from the Mumbai Division of Central Railway have recently submitted a joint application for voluntary retirement from service and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) whether the Government is aware of the specific grievances cited by these pilots, including unbearable mental and physical stress, administrative harassment and an insensitive working environment and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether there have been reports of sub-standard food, lack of cleanliness and a dearth of basic amenities in the lobbies, trip sheds and running rooms provided to these personnel and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) whether the lack of adequate rest and deteriorating work-life balance among Loco Pilots is impacting railway safety and if so, the details thereof;**
- (e) the reasons for previous oral and written representations to senior officials failing to address these issues, leading to this mass resignation move; and**
- (f) whether the Government has initiated to resolve their grievances and if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.476 TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.03.2026 IN LOK SABHA

(a) to (f) : Loco Pilots are important members of Indian Railway family who play pivotal role for moving passenger and goods traffic in safe and efficient manner. Indian Railways is committed to ensure proper working conditions for loco pilots.

The details of filling up vacancies of Assistant Loco Pilots are as follows:

Year	Details regarding recruitment for the post of Assistant Loco Pilots
2024	18,799 vacancies were notified. Selection process already completed and 15,873 candidates empanelled till date.
2025	9,970 vacancies were notified; First stage Computer Based Tests (CBTs) have been completed.
2026	11,127 vacancies have been notified.

Recruitment done in Indian Railways during 2004-05 to 2013-14 vis-à-vis during 2014-15 to 2025-26 is given as under: -

Period	Recruitments
2004-2005 to 2013-2014	4.11 lakh
2014-2015 to 2024-2025	5.08 lakh
2025-26 - till date	43,230

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, 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.

The RRB examinations are quite technical in nature entailing large scale mobilization of men and resources and training of manpower. Railway overcame all these challenges and successfully conducted the recruitment in a transparent manner following all laid down guidelines. No instance of paper leakage or similar malpractice has occurred during the entire process.

Further, as system improvement, the Ministry of Railways has introduced a system of publishing the Annual Calendar from 2024 for recruitment to various categories of Group 'C' posts. The introduction of the Annual Calendar is benefitting 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**

Presently, recruitment against 1,54,213 vacancies of non-gazetted personnel has been taken up on Indian Railways as per Annual Calendar 2024, 2025 and 2026.

During January to December 2024, ten Centralized Employment Notifications (CENs) for 92,116 vacancies were notified for filling up of posts of Assistant Loco Pilots (ALPs), 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 categories such as Assistants, Track Maintainers and Pointsman.

First Stage/Single stage Computer Based Tests (CBTs) for 92,116 posts have been completed. Details are as under: -

Exam	Candidates	Cities	Languages
1st Stage CBT for the post of ALP (18,799 vacancies)	18,40,347	156	15
CBT for the post of Technician (14,298 vacancies)	26,99,892	139	15
1st Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS/CMA (7,951 vacancies)	11,01,266	146	15
CBT for the post of RPF-SI (452 vacancies)	15,35,635	143	15
CBT for the post of RPF-Constable (4,208 vacancies)	45,30,288	147	15
CBT for Paramedical Categories (1,376 vacancies)	7,08,321	143	15
1st Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) (8,113 vacancies)	58,41,774	141	15
1st Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under Graduate) (3,445 vacancies)	63,27,473	157	15
CBT for Ministerial & Isolated categories (1,036 vacancies)	4,46,013	139	15
CBT for level-1 posts (32438 vacancies)	1,08,28,261	152	15
Total Candidates	3,58,59,270		

2nd stage CBTs for the posts of ALP, JE/DMS/CMA and Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate & Under-Graduate) have also been completed. Details are as under: -

Exam	Candidates	Cities	Languages
2nd Stage CBT for the post of ALP (18,799 vacancies)	2,66,363	112	15
2nd Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS/CMA (7,951 vacancies)	1,17,339	118	15
2nd Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) (8,113 vacancies)	1,21,931	129	15
2nd Stage CBT for Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate) (3,445 vacancies)	51,978	79	15
Total Candidates	5,57,611		

Computer Based Aptitude Test (CBAT) for the post of ALP and Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate) and Computer based Skill Test for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate and Under Graduate) and Ministerial & Isolated Categories have also been completed.

Details are as under:

Exam	Candidates	Cities	Languages
CBAT for the post of ALP	1,32,044	84	2
Translation Test for Ministerial and Isolated Categories	1,233	8	2
CBAT for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	13,616	38	2
Computer Based Typing Skill Test (CBTST) for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate-level)	30,341	58	2
Computer Based Typing Skill Test (CBTST) for the post of Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate-level)	13,145	44	2
Total Candidates	1,90,379		

Panels for more than 42,000 candidates for various posts including the posts of Technicians, Junior Engineers, Paramedical Categories, Sub-Inspectors & Constable (RPF) and Assistant Loco Pilots have been finalised. Majority of them are in safety categories.

In addition, as per Annual Calendar for the year 2025, nine Centralized Employment Notifications (CENs) for 50,970 vacancies have also been issued. Details are as under:

CEN No.	Post Name	No. of Vacancies notified	Month of Notification
01/2025	Assistant Loco Pilots	9,970	March 2025
02/2025	Technician	6,238	June 2025
03/2025	Paramedical categories	434	July 2025
04/2025	Section Controller	368	August 2025
05/2025	Junior Engineer (JE)/ Depot Material Superintendent/Chemical & Metallurgical Assistant	2,585	October 2025
06/2025	Non-Technical Popular Categories (Graduate)	5,810	October 2025
07/2025	Non-Technical Popular Categories (Under-Graduate)	3,058	October 2025
08/2025	Isolated Categories	312	December 2025
09/2025	Level-1 posts	22,195	December 2025
Total		50,970	

First stage/Single stage Computer Based Tests (CBTs) for 19,595 posts have been completed. Details are as under: -

Exam	Candidates	Cities	Languages
1st Stage CBT for the post of ALP (9970 vacancies)	10,03,719	141	15
CBT for the post of Section Controller (368 vacancies)	4,33,748	131	15
1st Stage CBT for the post of JE/DMS/CMA (2585 vacancies)	5,74,351	133	15
CBT for the post of Technician (6238 vacancies)	8,41,525	117	15
CBT for the post of Paramedical Categories (434 vacancies)	3,19,396	106	15
Total Candidates	31,72,739		

11,127 vacancies of Assistant Loco Pilots have been notified in March 2026 for the year 2026.

Further, grievances / representations received from employees are examined and necessary action to address the issues is promptly taken. Complaints received from Loco Pilots are examined on regular basis to resolve the issues and feedback given to the Loco Pilots.

Recently rates of Kilometreage Allowance (KMA) and Allowance in lieu of Kilometreage (ALK) for running staff have been enhanced with effect from 01.01.2024 consequent upon Dearness Allowance reaching 50%.

Duty hours of Loco Pilots are governed by Hours of Employment Rules (HOER) according to which loco running staff are required to work 104 hours in a fortnight. The running hours of Loco Pilots are meticulously monitored. The running hours are maintained, except for exigencies.

The quality and hygiene of food being provided and other amenities in the running Rooms are ensured by regular inspection at senior level.

For improvement of working conditions and to ensure adequate quality rest to loco running staff, several measures have been taken such as:

- **All running rooms have been air-conditioned.**
- **Running staff are provided with Yoga and meditation room, reading room with newspaper and magazines for relaxing in accordance with their requirements.**
- **Provision for good quality subsidized meals in running rooms.**
- **Availability of RO water filters in running rooms.**
- **Special drives are launched regularly to counsel running staff to boost their morale and confidence.**
