

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3124
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2026**

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND RAILWAY PROJECTS

3124. SHRI IMRAN MASOOD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to ensure environmental oversight on projects given that the Environment (Protection) Act does not apply to work under Section 11 of the Railway Act, 1989;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the internal mechanisms for preventing ecological damage during construction; and**
- (c) whether there are any plans to align railway expansion with the National Forest Policy and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?**

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (c): Railways are environment friendly and energy-efficient mode of transportation, yielding substantially lower CO2 emissions. Reduction in CO2 emissions in transportation by railways as compared to transportation by road is as under (Ref:- NITI Aayog Report titled “Fast Tracking Freight in India, June 2021”):

Mode of transportation	CO2 emission for transportation of 1 tonne for 1 Km
Road	101 gm
Rail	11.5 gm (about 89% less)

..P/2

Shifting of one MT of freight from road to rail reduces the carbon emission by about 5.37 Crore Kg. During the period from 2014 to 2025, about 562 MT freight has shifted to railways which corresponds to reduction in carbon emission amounting to 3,018 crore kg.

As per the extant policy guidelines, Railway projects are exempted from environmental clearance. However, forestry/wild life clearances are taken from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), wherever the diversion of forest land is involved.

Electric traction is more environment friendly and energy efficient. Accordingly, electrification of railway network on Indian Railways has been taken up in mission mode. So far, 99.4% of Broad Gauge (BG) network has been electrified. The electrification in remaining network has been taken up. Electrification carried out during 2014-25 and before 2014 is as under:

Period	Route Kilometre
Before 2014 (about 60 years)	21,801
2014-25	46,900

Further, Indian Railways has instituted several mechanisms to minimize ecological impacts during construction and operation of projects, which inter alia include: Afforestation in coordination with State Forest Departments where forest land is involved, adoption of eco-friendly construction practices, including proper disposal of construction debris, slope stabilization, and protection of natural drainage, provision of wildlife crossings, animal underpasses/overpasses and other mitigation measures in environmentally sensitive areas, wherever required and continuous monitoring of environmental safeguards during project implementation by concerned railway authorities.
