GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3125
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2026

FAILURES IN DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES AND OVER HEAD ELECTRIFICATION

†3125. SHRI BHUMARE SANDIPANRAO ASARAM:
　　　　DR. SHIVAJI BANDAPPA KALGE:

　　　Will the Minister of **RAILWAYS** be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of data regarding non-compliance of train schedules and punctuality due to failures in diesel locomotives/engines and Over Head Electrification (OHE) across the country during the last three years, zone-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that critical track maintenance process (deep screening) is pending for twenty years and if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government particularly in the State of Maharashtra to clear this pending work;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to clear the pending work of track maintenance and deep screening work particularly in the State of Maharashtra;

(d) the updated data of delays of trains in the State due to signal failures, damages to tracks, congestion and issues related to rolling stock in various States particularly in the State of Maharashtra; and

(e) the details of the measures taken by the Government to fix accountability for redressal of these persistent problems?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (e) Indian Railways makes all possible efforts to run trains on time. Indian Railways punctuality is affected due to several factors which include foggy weather, path constraints, asset maintenance and other issues, alarm chain pulling, agitations, cattle run over and other unforeseen circumstances.

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To improve the punctuality of trains, several steps have been taken by Indian Railways. These include rigorous monitoring of running of passenger carrying trains at divisional, zonal and Railway Board levels, introduction of rolling block system for maintenance of assets to increase their reliability, removal of infrastructure bottlenecks in a planned manner and rationalization of Time Table in a scientific manner.

Further, to ensure real time and realistic reporting of arrival/departure of passenger trains, data loggers are being used.

The sustained focus on improvement has helped in improvement of asset reliability and better punctuality performance as below:

Year	Punctuality
2023-24	73.62 %
2024-25	77.12 %
2025-26 (Up to Feb'2026)	77.24 %

Indian Railways operate about 25,000 trains daily and the asset failure incidences are only about 2 % including those of Locos/OHE. The unusual incidences are analysed, and suitable corrective measures are taken accordingly.

Regular inspection and maintenance of all railway assets including Track, rolling stock, OHE, signalling etc is carried out as per laid down norms to ensure safe operation of trains. These are regularly monitored through designated officials in divisions/depots & workshops etc across zonal railways. Preventive maintenance is also undertaken to ensure safe train operations. Staff are regularly counselled and trained to improve these parameters.

Indian railways have identified and implemented long-term and short-term measures for improving the asset reliability. Further, Railways have initiated various measures such as launching of special punctuality drives and sensitizing staff involved in train operations.

The punctuality loss incidences on account of maintenance of assets such as diesel locomotives, over head equipment (OHE) failures, signal failures, track, congestion, and rolling stock issues are monitored and analysis is done promptly to identify the root causes and the corrective and improvement actions.

A number of improvement measures have been taken for improving the reliability of Diesel Locomotives and OHE as under:

Diesel Locomotives:

Diesel Locomotives are crucial to the crisis management plan of Indian Railways. Quality focus is being given for maintenance of this important asset for maintaining and improving the reliability by way of actions such as:

- Provision of Remote monitoring and Management of Locomotives and Trains (REMMLOT) in diesel locomotives.
- Deployment of Prompt Response Team across India for quick resolution of problems in WDG4G/6G locomotives.
- Improvement of maintenance periodicity of components such as Computer controlled Brake system for better reliability.

Over Head Equipment (OHE): OHE is crucial for reliable train operations. Indian Railways has improved OHE reliability through regular periodic maintenance and special drives. Scheduled foot patrolling, regular tower-wagon inspections, TrD audits and systematic replacement of overaged assets have strengthened system performance. Continuous reduction has been achieved in the failures in the last 02 years. Several good practices have been adopted such as:

- Survey for identification of trees along the track, which could be potential for OHE failure and their trimming/cutting.
- Frequent cleaning of insulators in polluted areas.
- To minimise the impact of changes in weather, ensuring free movement and adjustment of parameters of Auto Tensioning Devices (ATD) in every season.
- Special drive to check crossover and turnouts, OHE parameters and its adjustment.
- Regular counselling sessions at the depot level to reinforce adherence to prescribed maintenance practices.
- Cross audits of maintenance depots by other depots for identification of deficiencies and gaps with reference to standard practices.
- Regular training for maintenance personnel.
- Timely replacement of old assets and replacement on condition basis of catenary and contact wire.
- Identification of broken and flashed insulators and their replacement in special drive.

Track maintenance (Deep screening):

Deep screening of ballast is undertaken as a key mechanised maintenance activity to enhance track resilience, stability and drainage. The work is executed using Ballast Cleaning Machines (BCMs), including High Output

Ballast Cleaning Machines (HOBCMs) ensuring efficient and uniform cleaning of the ballast bed with minimal manual intervention.

Earlier, until 2021, deep screening was carried out based on age basis. This approach has now been revised to a clean ballast cushion-based criterion, making the process scientific and reflective of actual field conditions. As per the revised norms, deep screening of main-line track is scheduled when the clean ballast cushion reduces below 200 mm. Mechanised capacity has also been significantly strengthened with the induction of 65 BCMs, including HOBCMs during the last five years which has enhanced the overall capacity of Indian Railways for deep screening.

To support uniform implementation and quality control, detailed guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) have been issued to enhance the efficiency and quality of deep screening. Improvements in operational planning, including advance arrangement of ballast, tools, equipment, and trained manpower along with better sequencing and scheduling have led to faster execution and better utilisation of resources. Special priority has also been accorded to points and crossings, considering their operational sensitivity. Special guidelines and a Joint Procedure Order (JPO) have been issued to facilitate safe and coordinated execution at these locations.

The transition from an age-based to a condition-based deep screening approach supported by enhanced mechanisation and structured implementation procedures have significantly improved the pace, efficiency and quality of deep screening.

Total progress of deep screening has been increasing progressively which is given as under:

SN	Year	Progress (in Tkm)
1	2020-21	9985
2	2021-22	10056
3	2022-23	10766
4	2023-24	14935
5	2024-25	15433

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