GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4084
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.12.2015

REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY OF TRAINS

4084. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRI DHANANJAY MAHADIK:
DR. HEENA VIJAY KUMAR GAVIT:
SHRI SATAV RAJEEV:
DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to reduce the frequency of more than 450 trains including Rajdhani and Duronto express during the January-February period next year due to foggy weather which is expected to hit North India and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the estimated loss that Railways will suffer on account of this move;

(c) the number of reserved and unreserved passengers to be affected due to reduced frequency and the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to gear up for foggy conditions during the winter?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) Fog severely reduces mobility of trains owing to reduced visibility and safety protocol (speed restriction) put in place. This reduces the capacity of already saturated rail corridors running through fog affected areas. Abnormal late running of trains result into unmanageable rake imbalances, heavy crew shortage due to increased working hours of drivers and guards and complete disorientation of time table, train berthing plans, maintenance slot at washing line complexes catering difficulties etc. due to late arrival of trains during fog.

To handle the above situation, Railways have resorted to cancellation and reduction of frequency of trains during foggy season from 08.01.2016 to 29.02.2016.

Frequency of the 470 Mail/Express trains (235 pairs) including Rajdhani and Duronto express traversing through dense fog affected area have been reduced by 1 to 2 trips in a week and frequency of 12 (6 pairs) Mail/Express trains have been reduced by 3 trips in a week from 08.01.2016 to 29.02.2016.

(b) Train wise figures of profitability, earnings and expenditure are not separately maintained. Therefore, estimated loss that Railways will suffer on account of reduction in frequency of trains are not available.

(c) It is not feasible to accurately assess the total number of passengers likely to be affected due to reduced frequency of trains as all the services have not been cancelled and it is possible for the passengers to travel by alternate trains/services.

(d) Steps taken by Indian Railways to gear up for foggy condition during winter are as under:

(i) To enhance the level of safety during fog in Automatic Block Signaling territories, Modified Automatic Signaling has been introduced which restricts the number of trains to two between two stations.

(ii) Reduce the speed of trains.

(iii) Deputing additional staff to alert the loco Pilot through placement of detonators before the First Stop signal.

(iv) Improving the visibility of signals.

(v) Loco Pilot to take precautions, be vigilant and alert and to observe Special Rules and instructions regarding speed limit under foggy conditions.

Technology options are being pursued by Indian Railways for prevention of accidents during conditions of poor visibility by installing notably Fog Safe Device, which is a Global Positioning System (GPS) based device installed to assist the Loco Pilot during poor visibility condition. Currently, a total of 1381 Fog Safe Devices are under trial on Northern, North Eastern and North Western Railways in fog prone areas. In addition, Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) are also under various stages of trial.

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