

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1831
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2026**

GAUGE CONVERSION IN VIDHARBHA

1831. SHRI ANUP SANJAY DHOTRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the narrow gauge railway routes in Akola, Buldhana, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha districts of Vidarbha that were operational about twenty-five years ago but are not operational as on date including the route and frequency of train operation, dates of commencement and discontinuation, reason for discontinuation and current status of Land/asset and their utilisation;**
- (b) the details of projects sanctioned for gauge conversion, revival, reconstruction or restoration of these routes including the date of sanction, project cost, scheduled completion, time overrun, cost escalation and reasons therefor;**
- (c) whether any performance audit or asset utilisation study has been conducted and if so, the details thereof including findings, recommendations, action taken and implementation status thereof; and**
- (d) whether the Government has assessed the impact of delays in commencement of railway service on farmers livelihoods, Obstacles in farming, regional development and if so, the details thereof including the findings and remedial measures taken or proposed?**

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (d): The status of Meter/Narrow Gauge sections passing through districts of Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha is stated as below:

SN	Name of the section	Status
1.	Ratlam – Mhow – Khandwa – Akola (473 Km) Metre gauge section	This section has been sanctioned for Gauge conversion. Ratlam – Patalpani (144 Km), Omkareshwar Road – Tukaithad (132 Km) and Akola – Akot Section (43 Km) i.e. total 319 Km have been commissioned. Details of work in balance section is as under:- 242 Ha Land has been acquired out of a total scope of 320 Ha. 5 out of 41 Major Bridges (including 1 important bridge) have been completed and work has been taken up in the balance bridges. Work of Earthwork and Formation has been taken up. Station Buildings' work has been taken up in 7 Stations.
2.	Murtizapur – Yavatmal NG Section (112 Km)	The narrow gauge railway line was constructed in 1916-17 and was operational till 2017. At present, trains are not operated on this Section. DPR has been prepared for gauge conversion.

3.	Murtizapur – Achalpur NG Section (77 Km)	The narrow gauge railway line was constructed in 1916-17 and was operational till 2019. At present, trains are not operated on this Section. DPR has been prepared for gauge conversion.
4.	Pulgaon – Arvi NG Section (35 Km)	The narrow-gauge railway line was constructed in 1916-17 and was operational till 2008. At present, trains are not operated on this Section. Final Location Survey (FLS) for gauge conversion has been sanctioned for preparation of DPR.

The sections of Murtizapur – Yavatmal, Murtizapur – Achalpur and Pulgaon – Arvi lines are more than 100 years old and condition of assets and infrastructure is badly deteriorated. Operation of these Narrow Gauge lines was closed due to safety considerations and renewal of overaged assets.

These three Narrow gauge lines were constructed by M/s Central Province Railway Company Limited i.e. CPRCL and were under operation through two agreements executed on 27.03.1916 & 03.10.1917 between Indian Railways (represented by the then Secretary of State) and CPRCL.

The land ownership lies with Railways as per clause 5 of the contract and planned to be used for gauge conversion. Central Railway has approved determination of contract in 2022 as CPRCL failed to maintain/provide funds for rehabilitation of the badly deteriorated infrastructure. The determination of the contract has been challenged by CPRCL. Hon'ble High Court has appointed the Arbitrator on 28.03.2024 and Arbitration proceedings are in progress at present.

To further improve connectivity in Akola, Buldhana, Amravati, Yavatmal and Wardha districts of Vidharbha region, following works/survey have been taken up:-

SN	Name of the Project	Status
1.	Wardha – Nanded New Line (284 Km)	The Project has been sanctioned at a cost of ₹5,248 crore. Wardha – Deoli – Kalamb Section (38 Km) has been commissioned. Work has been taken up in the balance section. 1338 Ha Land acquisition has been completed out of a total scope of 1974 Ha. 93 Major Bridges (including 2 important Bridge) have been completed out of a total scope of 136 Bridges. 25 ROBs have been completed out of a total scope of 50 ROBs. An expenditure of ₹4,802 crore has been incurred upto March, 2026 with an Outlay of ₹820 crore for the year 2026-27.
2.	Bhusawal – Wardha 3rd & 4th Line (314 Km)	The project has been sanctioned recently at a cost of ₹9,197.
3.	Wardha – Balharshah 4th Line (135 Km)	The project has been sanctioned recently at a cost of ₹2,226.
4	Jalna – Khamgaon New Line (162 Km)	DPR has been prepared.

After preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR), sanctioning of project requires consultation with various stake-holders including State Governments and necessary approvals viz. appraisal of NITI Aayog, Ministry of Finance etc. As sanctioning of projects is a continuous and dynamic process, exact timelines depend upon appraisals and approvals by various stakeholders.

Maharashtra

Railway Budget:

Budget allocation during the last five years has increased significantly. Budget allocation for infrastructure projects and safety works, falling fully/partly in the State of Maharashtra is as under:

Period	Outlay
2009-14	₹1,171 crore/year
2026-27	₹23,926 crore (More than 20 times)

Track Construction:

The details of constructing new track falling fully/partly in the State of Maharashtra during 2009-14 and 2014-26 is as under:

Period	New track Commissioned	Average commissioning of new tracks
2009-14	292 Km	58.4 Km/year
2014-26	2,585 Km	215.4 Km/year (Nearly 4 times)

Projects sanctioned:

As on 01.04.2026, 52 projects (13 New Lines, 02 Gauge Conversion and 37 Doubling), of a total length of 5,956 km, costing ₹1,42,635 crore, falling fully/partly in Maharashtra are sanctioned. The summary is as under:-

Category	No. of sanctioned Projects	Total Length (in Km)	Length Commissioned Upto Mar'26 (in Km)	Exp. upto Mar'26 (₹ in Cr.)
New Line	13	1,399	266	13,065
Gauge Conversion	02	609	334	5,013
Doubling/ Multitracking	37	3,948	998	16,704
Total	52	5,956	1,598	34,782

Recently completed projects:

Details of some of the recently completed projects falling fully/partly in Maharashtra are as under:

S.No.	Project	Cost (₹ in crore)
1	Pune-Miraj-Londa Doubling (467 Km)	6,463
2	Hotgi-Kudgi-Gadag Doubling (284 Km)	2,459
3	Manmad-Jalgaon 3rd Line (160 Km)	1,677
4	Jabalpur-Gondia Gauge Conversion (300 Km)	2,005
5	Chhindwara-Nagpur Gauge Conversion (150 Km)	1,512

6	Panvel-Pen Doubling (35 Km)	263
7	Pen-Roha Doubling (40 Km)	330
8	Udhna-Jalgaon Doubling (307 Km)	2,448
9	Mudkhed-Parbhani Doubling (81 Km)	673
10	Bhusawal-Jalgaon 3rd Line (24 Km)	325
11	Jalgaon-Bhusawal 4th Line (24 Km)	261
12	Daund-Gulbarga Doubling (225 Km)	3,182
13	Daund-Manmad Doubling (236 Km)	3,426

Ongoing Projects:

To further improve the Railway Infrastructure in the state of Maharashtra, following works have been taken up:-

S.No.	Name of the project	Cost (₹ In crore)
1	Ahilyanagar - Parli Vaijnath New Line (261 Km)	5,800
2	Baramati - Lonand New Line (64 Km)	1,844
3	Wardha - Nanded New Line (284 Km)	5,248
4	Indore - Manmad New Line (360 Km)	18,529
5	Wadsa - Gadchiroli New Line (52 Km)	1,886
6	Jalna - Jalgaon New Line (174 Km)	5,804
7	Wardha - Nagpur 3rd Line (76 Km)	917
8	Wardha - Ballarshah 3rd Line (132 Km)	1,755
9	Itarsi - Nagpur 3rd Line (280 Km)	2,607
10	Rajnandgaon - Nagpur 3rd Line (228 Km)	3,545
11	Wardha - Nagpur 4th Line (79 Km)	1,215
12	Jalgaon - Manmad 4th Line (160 Km)	2,574

13	Bhusawal - Khandwa 3rd & 4th Line (131 Km)	3,285
14	Solapur - Tuljapur-Osmanabad New Line (84 Km)	3,296
15	Panvel - Chowk Double Line (17 Km)	491
16	Wardha - Balharshah 4th Line (135 Km)	2,226
17	Itarsi - Nagpur 4th Line (297 Km)	5,010
18	Wardha - Bhusawal 3rd & 4th Line (314 Km)	9,197
19	Gondia - Dongargarh 4th Line (84 Km)	2,223
20	Gondia - Balharshah Doubling (240 Km)	4,819
21	Kalyan - Kasara 3rd Line (68 Km)	1,433
22	Naigaon - Juichendra Double Chord Line (5 Km)	176
23	Nilje - Kopar Double Chord Line (5 Km)	338
24	Badlapur - Karjat 3rd & 4th Line (32 Km)	1,324
25	Asangaon - Kasara 4th Line (35 Km)	794
26	Kasara - Manmad 3rd & 4th Line (131 Km)	10,154
27	Gondia - Jabalpur Doubling (231 Km)	5,236
28	Chalisgaon Rail Over Rail Flyover (11 Km)	264
29	Chord line between Chikhli and Somtane (4 Km)	172
30	Puntamba - Sainagar Shirdi Doubling (17 Km)	227

Sanction of any railway project depends upon many parameters/factors which include the following:

- **Anticipated traffic projections and Remunerativeness of the proposed route**
- **First and last mile connectivity provided by the project**
- **Connection of missing links and providing additional route**
- **Augmentation of congested/saturated lines**
- **Demands raised by State Governments/Central Ministries/Public representatives,**
- **Railway's own operational requirements**

- **Socio-economic considerations**
- **Overall availability of funds**

Bullet Train project:

Presently, the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) Project (508 km) is under execution. The Project is passing through the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli with 12 stations planned at Mumbai, Thane, Virar, Boisar, Vapi, Billimora, Surat, Bharuch, Vadodara, Anand, Ahmedabad and Sabarmati.

Entire land (1389.5 Ha.) for the MAHSR project has been acquired. All Statutory Clearances have been obtained. All 1651 utilities have been shifted. The delay in land acquisition in the State of Maharashtra has impacted the project till 2021. The land acquisition picked up in 2022 in Maharashtra.

The progress of various major items so far is as under:

Item	Progress
Piers	452 kms.
Girder	356 kms.
Track Bed	209 kms.
OHE Masts	190 kms.

The progress of stations is given below:-

S. No.	Station	Status
1	Sabarmati	Foundation works completed, Platform slab & roof structural works and finishing works are in

		progress
2	Ahmedabad	Structural works completed and finishing works have been taken up.
3	Anand/Nadiad	
4	Vadodara	Foundation work completed, structural works and finishing works have been taken up.
5	Bharuch	Structural works completed and finishing works have been taken up.
6	Surat	
7	Bilimora	
8	Vapi	
9	Boisar	Foundation works have been taken up and in an advanced stage. Structural works have been taken up.
10	Virar	
11	Thane	
12	BKC (Mumbai)	This is an underground station. Foundation works almost completed and Base Slab has been taken up.

The progress on the River Bridges is as under:-

S. No.	River Name	Status
1	Sabarmati River (480m)	Sub-Structure work completed, Superstructure work has been taken up.
2	Meshwa River (120m)	Bridge construction completed.
3	Vatrak River (280m)	
4	Mohar (Shedhi) River (160m)	
5	Mahi River (720m)	11 out of 12 wells completed; 5 spans launched

6	Vishwamitri River (80m)	Bridge construction completed.
7	Dhadhar River (120m)	
8	Narmada River (1366m)	21 out of 25 wells completed; 4 spans launched
9	Kim River (120m)	Bridge construction completed.
10	Tapi River (720m)	Foundation work has been taken up, 10 out of 12 wells completed
11	Mindhola River (240m)	Bridge construction completed.
12	Purna River (360m)	
13	Ambika River (200m)	
14	Venganiya River (200m)	
15	Kaveri River (120m)	
16	Kharera River (120m)	
17	Auranga River (320m)	
18	Par River (320m)	
19	Kolak River (160m)	
20	Daman Ganga River (360m)	

21	Darotha River (80m)	
22	Jagani River (360m)	Foundation works have been completed
23	Vaitarna River (2320m)	12 Pile Cap and 11 Pier (out of 58) completed.
24	Ulhas River Branch (120m)	Temporary Access Bridge (TAB) completed to start the foundation work.
25	Desai Khadi River Bridge (400m)	Geo-technical Investigation (GTI) has been completed and Design work has been taken up.

The work of the under-sea tunnel (approximately 21 km) has commenced, out of which 4.8 km of tunnel between Ghansoli and Shilphata in Maharashtra has been completed.

On the Surat–Vapi section (97 km) entire civil works including river bridge construction, have been completed and 87% of the track bed has been laid.

However, Bullet train project is a very complex and technology intensive project. Exact timelines for the completion of the entire project can be reasonably ascertained after the completion of all associated works of Civil Structures, Track, Electrical, Signaling & Telecommunication and supply of Trainsets.

Further, to strengthen national transport infrastructure, provide a fillip to regional connectivity, economic growth, tourism, investment and employment generation, and encourage modal shift from road and air transport to rail, the Government has announced the development of the

following seven new High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridors in the Union Budget 2026-27:-

- (i) Mumbai–Pune**
- (ii) Pune–Hyderabad**
- (iii) Hyderabad–Bengaluru**
- (iv) Hyderabad–Chennai**
- (v) Chennai–Bengaluru**
- (vi) Delhi–Varanasi**
- (vii) Varanasi–Siliguri**

Being highly capital intensive, the decision to sanction any HSR Corridor/Project depends on many factors such as outcome of DPR, techno-economic feasibility studies and availability of resources such as financing options etc.

Dedicated freight corridor:

Ministry of Railways has taken construction of two Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) viz. Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) from Ludhiana to Sonnagar (1337 Km) and the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) from Jawaharlal Nehru Port Terminal (JNPT) to Dadri (1506 Km).

The work on EDFC & WDFC has been completed and commissioned. On an average more than 443 trains are operated per day on DFCs. The fully commissioned sections of the Eastern and Western Dedicated Freight Corridors (EDFC & WDFC) have demonstrated robust operational performance. Freight volumes have steadily increased, with higher average speeds, faster turnarounds, and enhanced reliability. The corridors are

witnessing consistent growth in container, coal, and bulk cargo movement, contributing significantly to capacity augmentation in freight transportation.

DFC has contributed to creating additional paths on the conventional network by diverting freight traffic to EDFC and WDFC. As a result, Railways have been able to run additional goods and coaching services over its network. The DFCs have enabled faster transit times, higher throughput, and double-stack container operations (especially on the Western DFC). These improvements have contributed to lowering overall logistics costs, improving supply chain efficiency, and enhancing competitiveness of Indian industries.

A new Dedicated Freight Corridor connecting Dankuni in East to Surat in West, has been announced in the Union Budget 2026. The work of preparation/ updation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for this corridor has been taken up.
