

Regarding need to formulate a rehabilitation policy in coordination with State Government to reclaim the encroached railway land in Maharashtra- Laid

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE (KALYAN): The work of railway station redevelopment and modernization is being severely hampered nationwide due to encroachment of railway land. A striking example is the situation in states like Maharashtra, where millions of families have been residing in unauthorized structures on railway land for years, and are now receiving eviction notices, as mandated by orders from the Hon'ble Supreme Court. This problem is not limited to station upgrades. Crucial railway expansion projects, including the 5th and 6th lines, have also been put in cold storage owing to encroachment on railway land. The railways are unable to reclaim their land, leading to significant delays in essential infrastructure projects. Given that these poor families have been residing in these locations for a long time and often lack valid documentation regarding their housing, forcibly evicting such a large number of people is not only an immense socio-economic challenge but also a human rights issue. Therefore, I request the Central Government in consultation with the State Government of Maharashtra formulate a plan, on the lines of slum rehabilitation policy, to find a permanent solution to this humanitarian and developmental challenge. This joint policy must be framed to allow the Railways to reclaim its land and resolve the hindrance to station redevelopment work caused by encroachment.