

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:42
ANSWERED ON:21.11.2002
REPLACEMENT OF OLD BRIDGES
A.K. PREMAJAM;BASUDEB ACHARIA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Justice H.R. Khanna Report on Railway Safety Review (1999) had identified some 262 railway bridges as 'distressed' needing immediate repairs;
- (b) whether more than 40% of the bridges in Indian Railway Network were built during pre-independence period, with many of them being more than 90 years old;
- (c) whether any visual inspection/structural tests were carried out on these bridges as called for in the reports of Kunzru Committee (1962), Wanchoo Committee (1968), Sikri Committee (1978) and Khanna Committee (1999);
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if not, the reasons for not adhering to the recommendations of the expert committees; and
- (f) the steps taken / being taken by the Government to repair / reconstruct these bridges alongwith the expenditure incurred / likely to be incurred thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR)

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.42 BY SHRI BASUDEB ACHARI AND PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 21.11.02 REGARDING REPLACEMENT OF OLD BRIDGES

(a) There were 262 distressed railway bridges as on 01.04.99 which the Railway Safety Review Committee recommended should be rehabilitated within a time span of 5 years.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c), (d) & (e) Yes Sir. All the bridges including old and distressed bridges are inspected thoroughly once a year at various levels as laid down in Railway Codes and Manuals. For distressed bridges an increased frequency of inspections has been laid down in the Manuals. The steel superstructures of all bridges are subject to detailed technical checks once every five years and once a year for the floor system of early steel girders. The inspection of substructures of bridges is done by close visual inspection and hammer tapping to check for any cracks or hollowness of masonry. No specific recommendations for visual inspections / structural tests for 100 year old bridges / early steel girders or distressed bridges were made in Kunzru Committee (1962), Wanchoo Committee (1968), Sikri Committee (1978). Khanna Committee (1999) had recommended that distressed bridges and bridges over 100 years in age or of early steel should be further inspected at Senior Administrative Grade level with State of Art Non-destructive equipment and project coordinated by RDSO. In pursuance of this recommendation, all the distressed bridges as identified in part (a) of the question were got inspected by the territorial Chief Engineers of the Railways. For other bridges i.e. 100 years old and early steel girders, the existing system as enumerated above was considered satisfactory and these bridges are inspected at higher levels when referred to in view of any distress noticed. The results of Non Destructive Testing equipment mentioned in the recommendation are indicative and require detailed evaluation, testing and trials before detailed guidelines are issued for their large scale use over Indian Railway system. One set of some of the Non-Destructive Testing Equipment has been procured for the Research Design & Standards Organisation (RDSO) and is under detailed evaluation, trials and testing for consideration of adoption on large scale over the Railways.

(f) The steps taken / being taken are enumerated as :

1. All the Cast Iron Pile Bridges have been sanctioned for rebuilding within the next three to four years.
2. All the distressed bridges are sanctioned for rehabilitation / rebuilding on priority.

3. During the 9th Plan period Rs. 410 Cr. were spent for rebuilding / strengthening of 3400 bridges.

4. Outlays for bridge rehabilitation / rebuilding have been increased substantially Rs.1530 Cr. has been earmarked for rehabilitation / rebuilding of bridges out of Special Railway Safety Fund in the next 5 to6 years. In addition, bridges are also sanctioned for rehabilitation / rebuilding every year chargeable to Railways Annual Works Programme.

5. During the year 2002-03, a sum of Rs.209 Cr (Rs.143 Cr. out of SRSF and Rs.66 Cr. out of DRF) has been allotted for rehabilitation / rebuilding of bridges.