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Title: Need to man the level crossings in Kancheepuram parliamentary constituency, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI P. VISWANATHAN (KANCHEEPURAM): Out of the total 60 unmanned level crossings in Chennai Division of Southern Railway, 9 unmanned level crossings are in Kancheepuram parliamentary constituency which require immediate attention of the Railway authorities to avoid any kind of human casualty in future.

The passenger volume on the suburban network has increased to around 1 million per day from around 7 lakh passengers per day, two years ago. While the EMU services operated between Chennai Beach and Tambaram caters to the need of 4.50 lakh passengers per day, 2.75 lakh passengers depend on the suburban services operated between Chennai Central and Arakonam; one lakh passengers use the EMU services operated between Chennai Central and Gummidipoondi and between Tambaram and Chengalpattu. The Mass Rapid Transport System caters to day-to-day transportation of around 1 lakh commuters. This resulted in running more number of trains blocking the passageway of the unmanned level crossing.

On April 16, 2007 at least 11 people were killed when a train hit a minibus at an unmanned level crossing near Thirumalpur in Tamil Nadu's Kanchipuram district. The minibus was dragged by the train for nearly a kilometer before coming to a halt. The Union Railway Minister for States directed the railway administration to install a warning facility with fluorescent lighting near unmanned crossings.

Mere warning is not sufficient to save the lives of the people. Railway Ministry should take immediate steps to convert these unmanned level crossings into manned level crossing or provide any kind of bridge in the interest of the public.