

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** That was fixed by Mr. Shankaranand. Now you should increase it.

**SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR :** The village health guide is being given medicines and other things to distribute. We want to develop it as a voluntary force and we do not want to give a Government service connotation to this scheme.

**SHRI ATISH CHANDRA SINHA :** A small amount of Rs. 50 is given to the village volunteers. That also is not paid regularly. Once in five months or six months this is paid. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether he can make arrangements so that this small amount of Rs. 50 is paid regularly.

**SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR :** We shall definitely see that the disbursement is streamlined.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Now, we take up next question. Q, No. 456.

#### Unmanned Railway Crossings

\*456. **SHRI AMARSINH RATHAWA :**†

**SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :**

Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of unmanned railway crossings on Indian Railways at present Zone-wise; and

(b) the number of unmanned railway crossings which have been manned during the last three years, year-wise and zone-wise ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) :** Sir, actually the answer to this question should have been that a statement is laid on the Table of the House. If you like, I may read it out.

**MR. SPEAKER :** You need not read out the whole thing.

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE :** At least the total number should be read out.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** (a) Zone-wise position of unmanned level crossings (other than cattle crossings) is as follows :

Zonal Railway	Unmanned level crossings
Central	1,219
Eastern	747
Northern	3,512
Noth Eastern	2,756
Northeast Frontier	1,342
Southern	2,710
South Central	2,105
South Eastern	3,469
Western	4,700
	22,560

(b) Manning of unmanned level crossings zone-wise is as follows :

Zonal Railway	During 82-83	During 83-84	During 84-85
Central	35	32	17
Eastern	11	12	3
Northern	5	64	30
North Eastern	24	30	10
Northeast Frontier	—	17	17
Southern	12	51	1
South Central	93	35	103
South Eastern	21	43	6
Western	50	90	68
	Total 251	374	255

[*Translation*]

**SHRI AMARSINH RATHAWA :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Minister for giving correct figures, but there is something wrong with the progress.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Should there be no progress ?

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** The speed is slow.

**SHRI AMARSINH RATHAWA :** Only 880 crossings have been manned during the last three years and the number of total unmanned crossings is 22,560. Thus, 21,680 railway crossings are still unmanned. Therefore, the speed of manning the crossings is rather slow.

**MR. SPEAKER :** You have slowed down the speed of your question also.

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** At what speed are the Railways running ? The speed of the trains today is also the same.

**SHRI AMARSINH RATHAWA :** Are any steps proposed to be taken during the Seventh Five Year Plan to man the unmanned railway crossings ?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** There are about 22,000 unmanned crossings and we take up manning of about 300 to 400 crossings per year.

**AN HON. MEMBER :** 22 lakhs or 22 thousand ?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** 22 thousand. Of these, we take up 300 to 400 crossings for manning annually and employ gatekeepers there. The submission of the hon. Member that judging from the figures, the speed of employing gatekeepers is slow.....

**MR. SPEAKER :** He believes that 'slow and steady wins the race'.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** I want to make it clear that we attach considerable importance to this matter. The

speed has picked up as compared to the previous years. If you see it statistically, about 30 to 35 level crossings used to be manned between 1977 and 1980 and the target for the current year is 300, i.e. ten times more.

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** It is commendable.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** Special attention is being given to this programme and it is our endeavour to get these level crossings manned. Not only that, we also see to it that the level crossings so manned have trained gatekeepers with latest equipments.

[*English*]

**SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :** The demand of new manned and unmanned level crossings is a continuous thing because every year our villages and cities are developing very fast. Sir, in my constituency, we had applied for one new manned level crossing in 1980. Then the whole term of Lok Sabha has passed. Now, in the present Lok Sabha, one year has already passed. But we have not been able to get the level crossing till now. It is a very important level crossing. I have to say that the procedure for sanctioning a new level crossing is so long. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will consider that if the demand is genuine, the matter should be decided within a period of one month. I would also like to know what is the procedure and what is the criterion followed for the new manned level crossing ? How many applications are pending with the Railway Ministry for new railway crossings ?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** do not know whether the level crossing which the hon. Member wanted in his constituency, is a manned or un-manned one.

**SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :** I want a manned-level crossing. This is very important.

**MR. SPEAKER :** What is important about it ? He will not have the preference

for it. He has a set of rules and guidelines for the purpose.

**SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :** Sir, it is a genuine demand.

**MR. SPEAKER :** You send him the demand in writing.

**SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :** Sir, I want that there should be a simple procedure for this so that a genuine demand is fulfilled within a specific time.

**MR. SPEAKER :** He will do that.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** I still want to be clear about it as to whether he is talking about a new level crossing or he is talking about manning the existing unmanned crossing.

**SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :** I am talking about the new manned-level crossing. We have already deposited Rs. 4 lakhs for this purpose.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** Sir, the new level-crossings are, normally, sponsored by the State Governments or the local authorities. In some cases, of course, where necessary, we also undertake this work. But normally it is done by the State Governments or the local authorities sponsoring it. As far as priorities for manning the level crossing are concerned, there are a number of priorities which are basically made on the basis of the number of train/vehicle units which go through that particular unmanned level crossing. All that is taken into consideration. Every five years, a census is taken and the number of trains passing and the number of vehicles passing through a particular level crossing are multiplied and accordingly the priorities are laid down. I can convey the priorities to the hon. Member. If you want, I can read them out.

**SHRI B.K. GADHVI :** Even in the category of manned level crossings, there are two types. One is manned round the clock and the other is manned only in the day time. I would like to know how many level crossings are there which are manned

in the day time only and in the night time people are not allowed to pass the unmanned level crossing. What is the number of people killed in the case of unmanned level crossings in this year ?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** As far as the figures of level crossings manned for 24 hours and those manned partially are concerned, I will have to collect the information and sent the same to the hon. Member. As far as the total number of accidents are concerned, I would like to use this question for giving certain information to the House that for the first time after many years, the total number of accidents on the Railways have diminished in April-November period, as compared to the previous years. What is worrying us is the slight increase in the number of accidents at unmanned level crossings. Upto November the number of accidents was 28. But I would also like to point out just by way of information that even in advanced countries like Japan, the annual rate of accidents at level crossings in 783.

**SHRI B.K. GADHVI :** I simply wanted to know the number of accidents here, and no comparison with the advanced countries.

**SHRI MURLIDHAR MANE :** I would like to know whether the Government have a proposal to build flyovers over the level crossing to avoid accidents and delay intraffic.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Where is the money for that? You are asking for the stars.

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE :** May I have the indulgence of the House on my maiden question ?

**MR. SPEAKER :** Yes ; all attention.

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD :** But he is not maiden to us.

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE :** The hon. Minister is young and energetic and has also ideas and dreams of his own.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Why don't you add one more adjective, handsome ?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** Others pale into insignificance when Mr Bachchan is sitting here.

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE :** The hon. Minister is very happy that there is ten times increase in the number of manned railway level crossings. I would like to know whether the number is decided on the basis of financial allocations or on the basis of necessity of manning them. The lesser number of accidents may be more due to the alertness of the people than performance of the railways. Therefore, I would like to know whether you decide the number of manned level crossings on the basis of your financial allocations. And how do you decide your financial allocations for this ?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** Naturally, the financial allocations have to be kept in mind. It is against the backdrop of the entire financial allocations that we have to decide our priorities and our allotments. But there are certain set priorities and certain laid down procedures on the basis of which level crossings are given priorities within the level crossing allocations to be manned. There is a judicious mix; it is a blend of the two.

**SHRI SARAT DEB :** The hon. Minister mentioned that the manning of the railway crossings has to be done by the State Governments. I would like to know under which notification etc. the State Governments have been notified about this. When in the State Assembly we raised this question about level crossings, the Minister concerned invariably said that this was a matter concerning the Central Government. Here, you say that it concerns the State Governments. I want to know what is the clear position.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** Are you giving me the responsibility for answering all the maidens, Mr. Speaker, Sir ?

**PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :** Do not advise him to resign and go to the State Assembly.

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :** They are certain set procedures, which are decided in the Railway Board and the

Railway Ministry from time to time. I would also like to state that the manning of the level crossing in the majority of cases unless it is something which comes down on our priority of train-vehicle units, is normally sponsored by the State Government and the local authority concerned. But also we have the Railway Safety Works Fund and Accident Compensation Safety and Passenger Amenities Fund, which is a percentage of the total capital at charge on a specific date, and from the first fund, specially, the Railway Safety Works Fund, eighty per cent of the money collected is reimbursed to the various States.

**MR. SPEAKER :** We have three Members absent all the time and the questions pass. I thought, I would allow these three maiden Members in a row. This is a hat trick of the maidens.

[*Translation*]

**Superfast train between Delhi and Varanasi**

\*458. **SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV .** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to introduce a superfast train between Delhi and Varanasi which will cover the journey in one night ; and

(b) if so, the details there of ?

[*English*]

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) :** (a) No, Sir, (b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV :** Sir, I was very hopeful that Shri Scindia would say 'yes' in reply to this question, because his ancestors had been closely connected with Varanasi. GHATS were constructed in Varanasi to perpetuate their memory. Will the hon. Minister likewise introduce