

Regarding need to fill vacant posts of Loco Pilots and Assistant Loco Pilots in Railways-laid

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH): On 19 April, 2023, two coal-loaded freight trains collided and hit a third train in Singhpur, Madhya Pradesh. On 2 June, 2023, a passenger train hit a stationary goods train, the impact of which hit a third train near the Bahanaga Bazaar Railway Station, Odisha. In this incident, at least 288 people were killed. On 25 June 2023, two goods trains collided in Adra, West Bengal.

A common factor contributing to these accidents is the extended working hours imposed on Loco Pilots. From 2017-18 to 2022-23, 244 consequential train accidents occurred and the leading cause as per the Ministry is failure of Railway Staff.

The Ministry avoids the blame for making Loco Pilots work for long hours. The Ministry has nearly 5,700 vacancies of Assistant Loco Pilots. Unfilled vacancies compel Loco Pilots to endure extended shifts, often leading to accidents. This practice not only violates labour laws but also jeopardizes the safety of millions of citizens who travel through Railways.

Thus, I urge upon the Ministry to urgently fill the outstanding vacancies in mission mode, and establish regulations to cap the maximum working hours for both Loco Pilots and Assistant Loco Pilots, ensuring their well-being and enhancing safety in Railways.