

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:868
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2001
RAILTEL CORPORATION OF INDIA
NANDIPAKU VENKATASWAMY;SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether RailTel Corporation of India Limited had proposed to launch Indian Railways into e-age and brought in crores for the cash starved exchequer;
- (b) whether nothing has come out even after 18 months;
- (c) the funds allocated from the budget so far;
- (d) the total kms. transferred into optical fibre out of 62,000 KM track network in the Indian railways zone-wise and division-wise;
- (e) the total expenditure made on this process by Indian Railways;
- (f) whether this work is going on very slowly due to pressure by some private parties; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken or being taken by the Government for speedy transfer of its network into optical fibre?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL)

(a): The RailTel Corporation of India Limited (RailTel) has been launched by Indian Railways to create a nationwide broadband telecom and multimedia network by laying optical fibre cable along the Railway track utilising Railways' right of way and provide modern communication system to improve Railway's operation and safety and bring in additional revenue by marketing surplus telecom capacity.

(b): RailTel was formed in September 2000 and Railways' right of way (ROW) is in the process of being leased on a long-term annual lease basis. The optical fibre cable assets on about 7,000 Route kilometre are also in the process of getting transferred to the RailTel in lieu of RailTel's equity. As per the Cabinet decision, the induction of Joint Venture partner(s) in the RailTel is in progress. RailTel has initiated steps to roll out the network so as to connect major cities. The surplus telecom capacity, when installed, will bring revenue to the RailTel and also to the Railways as dividend payment.

(c): Rs. 15 crore as seed Capital has been transferred to RailTel Corporation of India Limited (RailTel), so far.

(d): No Railways' optical fibre cable has been transferred to RailTel so far.

(e): Apart from the seed capital, mentioned in c) above, no other major expenditure towards RailTel has been incurred by the Indian Railways.

(f): No, Sir.

(g): Does not arise.