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Govt decided to fill up 50 per cent of Rail Safety Department vacancies

Union Railways Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said the government has taken a conscious decision to prioritise safety over other aspects even though punctuality of trains remains the top priority.

Answering questions on punctuality, Goyal said a lot of railway infrastructure requires upgrade, as some of these have, over the last several decades, outlived their life.

“Of 1,678 Mail or Express trains which terminated between August 1 and December 15 (this year), on average 1,140 reached their destination on or before scheduled time. Of the remainder, on average 432 trains were delayed, 51 cancelled and 55 diverted or short-terminated,” he said.

Goyal also informed the Upper House that a policy decision has been taken to fill up 50 per cent of total vacancies — 1.2 lakh to 1.3 lakh — in railways, assessed as per the sanctioned strength, . “New technology is being used to monitor tracks, and as an interim measure we have decided to fill up 50 per cent of such vacancies. Normally it takes over a year to complete the process, but we will speed up the process, and the vacancies will be filled up between six and nine months,” Goyal said.