**Issue Brief: Kavach + Railway Security**

The statistics from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) indicate that roughly 2.6 lakh (260,000) people have lost their lives in train accidents over the past decade are alarming and highlight the critical need for improvements in railway safety in India.  
  
The collision near Odisha’s Balasore district on June 2, 2024, which resulted in the deaths of 275 people and injured over 1,000, underscores the severity of the issue. This incident is noted as the worst train accident in India since 1995, emphasising the ongoing challenges in ensuring safe rail travel in the country.

These recent accidents have drawn attention to the absence of the Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems (TCAS), specifically the indigenously developed system called 'Kavach,' which, if installed, could have averted the tragic incident.

* KAVACH is an Automated situational awareness system that provides Automated Train Protection as well as Collision Prevention capabilities for trains. Developed by the Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO).
* It has been adopted as our National Automatic Train Protection (ATP) System.
* Work on Kavach began in 2012, and the first field trials were carried out in 2016, followed by active development since 2017.
* The system was reportedly deployed in 65 locomotives and 134 stations. As of December 2023, 1,465 km of tracks have been covered under Kavach, which is a little more than 2% of the total 68,000-kilometre rail network.
* Its deployment cost is ₹50 lakh per kilometre, the route length of the Indian Railways is 68,000 km. Then in total, it would cost ₹45,000 crore to implement the system across all the tracks and in all the engines.
* According to the CAG, 75% of the funding for the 'Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh' (RRSK) was reduced, whereas the mandate was to provide Rs 20,000 crore every year. The railway only provided Rs 4,225 crore, leaving a shortfall of Rs 15,775 crore.
* About 2.74 lakh posts in the Railways are lying vacant as of 2023, with more than 1.7 lakh of them in the safety category. Understaffing of Railways leads to overworked and tired personnel who get careless, resulting in massive accidents.

**Suggested Questions**

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

1. Why was "Kavach", the anti-collision system, not added in the trains which collided in Balasore?
2. What steps have been taken to increase the pace of the installation of the Kavach system? Especially after the recent railway accidents.
3. Is it true that the Ministry of Railways allocated only Rs 4,225 crore to the Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh (RRSK) which is much lower than the recommended amount? If so, reasons for the same.
4. Despite recent accidents, why has the Railway Ministry not taken action to fill the 2.74 lakh vacant positions, especially the 1.7 lakh in the safety category?

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