

Shri Rami Reddy: How many deaths have occurred in connection with this disease and what is the assistance that the Centre has given to prevent this disease?

Shri Karmarkar: It was a matter for anxiety in that area. We did receive about three weeks or one month back reports about the serious incidence of polio. This is the season for polio. This year the incidence of this disease has been greater. We sent from here a senior officer and also an officer from the ICMR was sent there. After the incidence of this disease, there is nothing that can be done as such, except careful nourishment and protection. There is no specific treatment. The question is one of—it is much more—preventing the spread of the disease in the future. The Andhra Pradesh Government asked for our aid in respect of getting some vaccine from the other countries. We have given them all the assurance, and we shall support them in any request in that direction that might come from them. In the meantime, happily for us, the disease has subsided, but we have to be very careful about it.

Shri Rami Reddy: What is the number of deaths that occurred?

Shri Karmarkar: I require notice.

Mr. Speaker: He talked of iron lungs and so on; in America, they are flying it from one place to the other.

Shri Karmarkar: I should like to have notice.

Shri Venkatasubbalah: May I know, as a preventive measure, whether the Central Government propose to supply this vaccine to the different general hospitals in the Andhra Pradesh State?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes, Sir. The Andhra State Government is seized of the matter. As I said a moment ago, we shall give them all the aid and assistance that they want from us.

Shri Nanjappan: May I know the number of States which depend upon this Institute for anti-rabies vaccine

and, if so, whether their requirements are fully met?

Shri Karmarkar: I should like to have notice, Sir.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar rose—

Mr. Speaker: I have allowed several questions. Next question.

Alarm Chains on North Eastern Railway

*1289. **Shri S. M. Banerjee:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether alarm chains on North Eastern Railway have been discontinued from 1st February, 1961;

(b) if so, the reasons for the same; and

(c) whether this is likely to put the passengers to great inconvenience?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy): (a) Yes Sir. On some trains. A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 62].

(b) and (c). The blanking off was found necessary in view of persistent misuse of the apparatus and resultant adverse effects, including serious dislocation to trains services and consequent inconvenience to passengers.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: From the statement, it appears that from 1st February, 1961, the alarm chain apparatus has been blanked off in nearly 36 or 37 trains of the North Eastern Railway. May I know whether, after the tragic death of Mr. Rama Rao, the Railway Administration will revise this decision and will continue to retain the use of alarm chains in this region?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: We have no idea of revising our views. I should like to place some facts before the House regarding this matter. Of the 361 trains in the North Eastern Railway, 53 have been blanked off in respect of the alarm chain. It is about 14 per cent. Since the 1st

February, four more have been added to the list. The misuse of this apparatus in the North Eastern Railway is far above the all-India percentage: it is as high as 29.2 per cent, of all railways in India. It has increased 100 per cent. since 1957. Therefore, as a matter of fact, in some of the trains, much against our wish, we have blanked off even the ladies' compartment, because, the men seem to be getting into the ladies' compartment and indulge in misusing the apparatus there.

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I will allow a half-an-hour discussion on this matter. Whether this is the proper method, and which is the lesser of the two evils—accidents or the blanking off of the apparatus—will be discussed in the House then.

Accident on Darjeeling Himalayan Branch Railway

+

*1290. { **Shri Muhammed Elias:**
Shri P. C. Borooah:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state;

(a) whether there was an accident on the Darjeeling Himalayan Branch Railway on the 25th January, 1961;

(b) how many persons died in this accident; and

(c) the cause of this accident?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two.

(c) The accident was due to the 'Failure of Railway Staff'.

Shri Muhammed Elias: May I know whether any enquiry was conducted by the Railway Board about the cause of this accident and any steps taken against those persons who were found responsible for this accident?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: A joint enquiry with the deputy heads of the department was held and the Loco Fuel Inspector has been held responsible. He has been suspended.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Apart from the departmental enquiry, was there not a statutory enquiry conducted by a senior inspector of the Railways?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: This does not warrant a statutory enquiry.

Shri P. C. Borooah: Is it not a fact that the accident took place on account of the failure of the vacuum brake?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: This was a vacuum trial train. It was more speedy. The maximum speed allowed there is 12 miles an hour, but it was running in excess of the speed.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: Is it not a fact that passengers stand on the foot-board of the wagon and even sit on the floor or on the top of the wagon and that is why the accidents generally take place? May I also know whether any steps have been taken to stop such practices?

Mr. Speaker: He wants to know what steps are being taken to prevent these practices, namely, a number of persons standing on the foot-board in this line, which is also one of the causes of the accidents.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: The main question is a specific one concerning a particular accident, and I have given the reason for the accident.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: According to the Indian Railways Act, wherever there is loss of life involved in any accident, there should be a statutory enquiry, apart from any departmental enquiry. Now, the Loco Fuel Inspector has been held responsible. May I know what is the offence committed by the Loco Fuel Inspector?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: He was in charge of the vacuum trial train and he allowed it to run at a greater speed.

Shri P. C. Borooah: Could such accidents be avoided but for the want of care, and negligence, on the part of somebody in the railways?