

which non-officials were associated to go into the question of the new projects. Well, we have got the answer, and the answer has been given in relation to the Railway Ministry as such. We are trying to economise as far as possible in the Broad and then it will be taken in respect of the railways and seen what is possible to do there.

Dr. Sushila Nayar: In view of the urgent need for economy on which the attention of the various Government departments is concentrated at the moment, may I know if the recent considerable expansion of the Railway Board is not contrary to that policy and whether the hon Minister would consider reducing this expenditure?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: There is another question which I have answered. The Railway Board was strengthened at the recommendation of the Estimates Committee. The membership of the Board was not increased, but some additional Members of the Railway Board were posted a year back. That was in view of the increased work-load on the Railway Board itself. As the Deputy Minister just now said, we have been reducing the posts and we are examining what further posts it will be possible to do away with in Railway Board itself.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: May I know whether any interim orders have already been issued to effect economy, as has been done in all other Ministries, as the Prime Minister informed the other day and may I know whether a similar step has been taken by the railways?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: So far as the directive regarding the filling of vacancies for certain period is concerned, the general directive issued to other Ministries is also applicable to railways.

12 hrs.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mileage rates of Goods and Passenger Traffic

S.N.Q. No. 7. Shri Tyagi: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether Government have taken a decision to reduce the inflated mileage rates of goods and passengers traffic on hill, and semi-hill sections of State-owned railways in view of the rampant conditions of unemployment and poverty obtaining in the most unproductive and undeveloped areas of hills in India?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): Yes, Sir. The details of the decisions are given in the statement placed on the Table of Lok Sabha [See Appendix II, annexure No. 123.]

श्री नरत बर्मान : क्या ये जान सकता हूँ कि किन किन रेलवेज पर यह आदेश लागू होगा ?

श्री जगजीवन राम : यह तो सदस्य महोदय प्रगर स्टेटमेंट देख लें तो उनको मालूम हो जायेगा ।

Railway Accident

S.N.Q. No. 8.—Shrimati Renu Chakravarty.—Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether an engine travelling without lights on the Eastern Railway at Ballygunge and Gobra crossing of this railway ran over several people;

(b) how many were killed and injured;

(c) whether it is a fact that the driver notified the failure of lights to the Station authorities at Ballygunge and if so, how he was allowed to proceed;

(d) whether compensation has been paid to the dead and injured; and

(e) whether any enquiry has been instituted.

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah nawas Khan): (a) and (b). At about 19.30 hours on 31st July, 1957, two patrolmen on duty were run over and killed at mile 2/15 near Ballygunge North Cabin by No. S295 Up Passenger running from Lakshmikantapur to Sealdah. At about 19.58 hours the same train knocked down and seriously injured one trespasser at mile 1/12 between Ballygunge and Calcutta South stations. He subsequently died in the hospital.

(c) The head light of the engine failed after the train had left Ballygunge station and therefore the Driver was not able to advise the station staff at Ballygunge. It was, however, provided, with prescribed buffer lights.

(d) No claim for compensation has been received so far.

(e) The cause of the accident being apparent, no enquiry was considered necessary.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know who is responsible for checking the lights before the train goes on the track and how it is possible that many of these trains along these lines are running without lights often?

Shri Shah nawaz Khan: The locomotive maintenance staff and the electrical staff attached to the loco sheds are responsible for attending to the lights. Sometimes there is sudden failure of the lights. In this particular case, some part of the light broke and the failure of the light was due to the failure of a certain mechanism.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know if the hon. Deputy Minister's attention has been drawn to certain letters appearing in the Press that this is also the case with trains running to Ranaghat and Krishnagar, that often they are running without lights and many accidents have taken place along these routes?

Shri Shah nawas Khan: These things have been brought to our notice from time to time. It is true that on certain occasions the locomotives do run without lights, but our difficulty is that there is so much of theft of parts of

locomotives and other equipment connected with the lighting arrangement. So, sometimes we find it difficult to cope with the situation.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Is it not provided in the rules that a locomotive cannot proceed if its headlights is off? A similar case happened in the Jadcherla Mehboobnagar tragedy also, the lights were off.

Shri Shah nawas Khan: When it starts, the locomotive is supposed to have arrangements for alternate lights in addition to the headlight. In this case that buffer light was on. It is provided in the rules that a locomotive must have alternate arrangements of lighting. In this particular case, the buffer lights were on.

Shri Hem Barua: In view of the fact that the Deputy Minister himself has admitted that there are instances of trains running without headlights, may I know why these engines are allowed to run without headlights at all and why they are not checked before letting the engines out of the loco sheds?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): They are not allowed to run without lights. As has been stated in the answer, it was noticed after the train has left the station and therefore, the driver could not inform the Station Master about the failure of the headlight. According to the rules, there should be provision for alternative light in case of failure of headlight. In this particular case, the buffer light was on when the headlight failed.

Shri Hem Barua: If I understand the Deputy Minister's English correctly, he admitted that engines are allowed to run without lights and that is with knowledge.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: As far I can understand the English of the Deputy Minister, that was not the reply. He only said that there were cases of failure of headlights in the trains and it follows that when there is a failure of headlight, the train runs for certain number of miles without headlight.