

[*Translation*]

Damage to Railway property

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*309. SHRI PRABHU DAYAL
KATHERIA:

SHRI B. L. SHARMA
'PREM':

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been unprecedented increase in the number of train accidents and the cases of damage to railway property by terrorists during the last few years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the extent of damage done to railway property so far in both circumstances during the last two years and the current year (till date); and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) While there has been no increase in the number of train accidents during last few years, there is an increase in terrorists' activities.

(b) The extent of damage to Railway property due to terrorists' activities and accidents is nearly Rs. 64 crores.

(c) Security arrangements have been tightened in co-operation with the State Governments.

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, will the hon. Minister be pleased to state whether

there has been unprecedented increase in the number of train accidents and cases of damage to railway property by terrorists during the last few years? If so, the reasons therefor and the extent of damage caused to railway property during the last two years as a result of accidents and terrorist activities and the current year; and the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: Because of the terrorist activities mainly in Punjab, Assam and Andhra Pradesh—as the hon. Member desires to know about it year-wise—this has been mostly taken in Northern Railway, North-East Frontier Railway and South-Central Railway. In Northern Railway, in 1989-90, there were 29 cases; in 1990-91, there were 54 cases; and upto July 1991, there were 14 cases. The total number of cases is 97. And the property lost is to the tune of Rs. 28,70,158.

On the South Central Railway in 1989-90 there were four cases, in 1990-91 there were 23 cases and in 1991 up to July there were six cases, totalling 33 cases. The extent of damage was to the tune of Rs. 1,56,82,482.

On the Northeast Frontier Railway in 1989-90 there were 21 cases, in 1990-91 there were 12 cases and in 1991 up to July there was only one case, totalling 34 cases. The extent of damage was to the tune of Rs. 79,82,000.

On the Western Railway there were two cases in 1989-90, in 1990-91 there was only one case and in 1991 up to July there was no case, totalling three cases. The extent of damage was to the tune of Rs. 50,000.

The total amount of all these cases is Rs. 2,65,84,940, that is, almost Rs. 2.66 crores. These things have been happening particularly because of sabotage activity, bomb blasts and firing on trains. In this connection I would

like to say that the property lost so far as the Railways are concerned in 1989-90 was Rs. 12.86 crores in respect of rolling stock and Rs. 6.18 crores for Permanent Way; and in 1990-91 the loss of rolling stock was to the tune of Rs. 35.58 crores and that of Permanent Way was to the tune of Rs. 7.11 crores. It totals Rs. 64 crores.

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA: Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister is saying that no accident took place during the last few years but it appears from the answer that there have been 134 train accidents during three months in which 41 people lost their lives. If it is a fact, the reasons therefor?

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: The accidents have taken place. That is a fact of reality. But as such, the rate of accidents is coming down compared to the previous years. The real reasons for such things are, human failure which accounts for 65 per cent, 10 per cent due to road users and 25 per cent due to failure of equipment.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHEB TOPE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, whether it is a fact that 70 per cent accidents have taken place due to the negligence of Railway employees and only 3 per cent because of sabotage?

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: That is what I have mentioned, that about 65 per cent is due to human failure.

SHRI RAM-KAPSE: While replying to the supplementary the Hon. Minister has given the figures of accidents and deaths. Actually, I would like to know how many accidents occurred and how many of them were due to terrorist activity. Separately, I would like to know the number of

cases in which the accidents occurred due to other failures and the number due to terrorist activity. I want the bifurcated figures.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: So far as the terrorist activity is concerned, on the Northern Railway, during 1989-90 there were 18 accidents on track, one at station, and five in trains, and altogether 91 people were injured and 20 were killed.

In 1990-91 there were 28 accidents on track, two at station, and one in train resulting in the death of six people and injuries to 93.

In 1991-92 up to July, there were 15 accidents on track, one at station and there was no accident in train. Three people were killed and 19 were injured.

Due to derailment there was one case in 1989-90, there were four cases in 1990-91 and two in 1991-92, up to July.

Due to firing on trains there was no case in 1989-90, there were sixteen in 1990-91 and three in 1991-92, up to July. These resulted in five deaths and 31 injured in 1990-91 and 75 deaths and 44 injured in 1991-92 up to July.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: What is the number of deaths due to accidents and the number due to terrorist activity, separately?

[*Translation*]

SHRI B. L. SHARMA PREM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, rail accidents in 1988-89 have.....

SHRI RAM KAPSE: He has stated it in the reply.

SHRI B. L. SHARMA PREM: led to a loss of Rs. 551.1 lakh whereas the loss suffered in 1989-90 has increased to Rs. 1285.7 lakh. Nearly 65%

of these accidents occurred due to negligence on the part of the railway staff. I want to know, through you, as to what action the Government has taken against those responsible for the accidents. Apart from this, 20% of the accidents have occurred due to failure of equipment. What steps have been taken by the Government to replace the faulty equipments?

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: Sir, so far as the human failure of the railwaymen is concerned, necessary instructions have been issued that the railwaymen should be very cautious. And they have been subjected even to medical tests, periodical checks and so on and so forth. Sometimes the drivers are also subjected to periodical checks.

So far as the equipment failure is concerned, the concerned mechanical, electrical and all these divisions have been given firm directive that should be cautious and use the standard materials and not the substandard materials for want of funds even for signals and telecommunications.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ARVIND NATAM: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what special safety measures the Ministry has taken in the states of Punjab and Assam in view of the terrorist activities there?

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: Sir, we have taken the following steps:—

1. Vulnerable railway stations, vital installations and important bridges are being provided protection.
2. All important trains are being escorted in affected areas.
3. Track patrolling is being undertaken in identified vulnerable sections.

4. Patrol specials have been provided before important Mail/Express trains for piloting in Punjab and other affected areas.
5. Sniffer dogs have been deputed in certain places in order to detect explosive materials in the trains.
6. Travelling public is being alerted through public address system to be careful about suspicious articles/unclaimed luggage.
7. Random checking of passengers' luggage at important stations have been introduced.
8. Ticket checking staff have been instructed to prevent entry of unauthorised persons in coaches.
9. Control rooms have been opened for better coordination and taking immediate steps in affected areas.

MR. SPEAKER: If it is too long you can lay it on the Table of the House.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: This matter concerns everyone, Sir. That is why, I have been giving all these details.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister just told us....

SHRI KESRI LAL: Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister....

MR. SPEAKER: I have not allowed you to speak. This will not go on record.

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: ... that the Railways have suffered damages to the tune of Rs. 1266 lakh on account of terrorist activity and nearly 250 accidents took place.

st Just 15 days back a train from Barcelona kept running without driver up to 140 kilometres. Other incidents like failure of Locomotive and robbery occur frequently on the North Eastern and Northern Railway. What steps are being taken by the Government in this regard and how much loss (in crores of rupees) has been suffered by the Railways?

MR. SPEAKER : This is human failure. He has already answered that.

[English]

SHRI SOBHANA DREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, in Andhra Pradesh, because of increase in Naxalite activities, several times, they are damaging the properties of the Railways. Sometimes it so happens that passengers are also suffering and a large number of people died in a fire accident, caused by the Naxalites. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of similar such incidents taking place in other parts and recently near Bheemavaram, where an incident had taken place in which one first class passenger died. Will the Minister take suitable steps to compensate such victims who are travelling in the Railway trains? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot make a speech Shri Rao, during the question hour. There are others who want to ask questions.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : We do have a scheme that if any passenger dies during an accident or in any similar such manner, compensation of Rs. 2 lakhs is paid for the dead by the Claims Settlement Tribunal.

Late Running of Mail Trains

*310. DR. SUDHIR RAY : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Express, Mail and Superfast trains often run late, throughout the country; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures contemplated by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Maintaining punctuality of trains is an ongoing continuous effort.

DR. SUDHIR RAY: The Minister has made an evasive statement because for the last six months, almost all the superfast Express trains are running and arriving six or seven hours late, everyday. In fact, they have doubled the Rail fare. These Express trains do not run even at the speed of 50 Kms per hour, but the Government is raising the surcharge on the passengers. I would like to know from the Minister what steps he is taking so that the trains run punctually?

MR. SPEAKER : He has already answered that question.

DR. SUDHIR RAY: No Sir, he has not answered and he has to reply to my question.

MR. SPEAKER: Apart from your taking regular steps, are there any extra steps being taken to see that the trains run on time?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Sir, the punctuality depends on various factors. The hon. Member has said that the punctuality is suffering. From first of July, we have started monitoring the punctuality of the trains. Now the punctuality has improved. But, we are not satisfied with this improvement. We want much more improvement on the punctuality and this is the position.

DR. SUDHIR RAY: Sir, because the trains run late sometimes over five to six hours, everyday, long distance passengers, particularly the second class passengers face difficulties. I would like to know from the Minister what steps he is taking about the insanitary conditions in the toilets... (Interruptions)