

News Item under Caption "Partners in Loot"

2220. SHRI S. M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the writeup 'Around the Capital' under the heading 'partners in Loot' appearing in the Patriot, New Delhi dated the 9th February, 1981;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether such blackmailing of passengers by the Travelling Railway staff in the matter of provision of berths on the super-fast trains not only fills their coffers at the expense of Railways which lose the revenue but also inconvenience the bonafide passengers who are waitlisted; and

(d) if so, what stringent measures Government propose to take to stop such malpractices which are prevalent on almost all important trains particularly those going to South?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes.

(b) to (d). Unless there is a specific complaint from affected passengers, it has not been found feasible to check the type of malpractice reported in the press. Frequent checks are, however, conducted on trains by the zonal Railways as well as Commercial and Vigilance Directorates of Railway Board on the working of TTEs/Conductors/Coach attendants manning the reserved and upper class coaches. Action is promptly taken, if irregularities are found to have been committed by the staff on duty in the train.

To do away with the allotment of berths by the TTEs, on consideration, cancelled at the last moment, certain

percentage of over-booking against anticipated cancellation is being done. Waitlisted passengers are to a certain extent now being provided with confirmed reservation during the run of the train against non-turned up booked passengers and cancellations. One bay in II class sleeper coach to accommodate 14 waitlisted passengers in sitting by long distance trains and one berth compartment in I Class are being earmarked for providing sitting accommodation to waitlisted passengers. Special checks on important and super-fast trains are being frequently organised and action taken against staff if found at fault.

Railway Accidents during Agitation of All India Loco Running Staff Association

2221. SHRI A. K. ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Railway accidents which took place during the agitation of All India Loco Running Staff Association;

(b) the reasons for increase of Railway accidents within such a short period; and

(c) the action taken by Government to eliminate the accidents in Railways?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) During the agitation of All India Loco Running Staff Association, 78 train accidents occurred on the Indian Government Railways. The details are as under:

Collisions	5
Derailments	64
Level crossing accidents	8
Fires in trains	1
Total:	78

(b) During January and February, 1981 there were 162 train accidents against 130 during the corresponding period of the last year as indicated below:

	January to February 80	January to February 81
Collisions	10	12
Deraillments	100	133
Level crossing accidents	16	13
Fires in trains	4	4
TOTAL	130	162

It will thus be seen that increase is chiefly due to higher incidence of derailments.

(c) Since failure of railway staff is the largest single factor responsible for accidents, safety organisations on the railways have been engaged in a relentless campaign to create greater safety consciousness amongst the staff connected with running of trains and to ensure that staff do not violate rules or indulge in short-cut methods that may lead to accidents.

Examination of trains and spot checks in carriage and wagon depots have been intensified and greater care is being paid to the proper maintenance of track. In order to reduce dependence on the human element, sophisticated aids like ultrasonic flaw detectors for wheels, axles and rails, axle counters, track circuiting etc. are being introduced progressively.

Violation of customs act in Lucknow Division

2222. SHRI JHARKHANDEY RAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many railway employees were arrested violation of customs

act in Lucknow Division on N.E. Railway and how many of them were convicted or fined; and

(b) what departmental action was taken against those fined or convicted?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALIKARJUN): (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid down on the Table of the Sabha.

Posts of Assistant Superintendents

2223. SHRI A. U. AZMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of posts of Assistant Superintendents (Personnel)—both temporary and permanent—on the Northern Railway in the Headquarters Office and Division as on 1st January, 1981;

(b) the number of persons who have put in more than 3—4 years service as Asstt. Supdt. (P), but have not as yet been confirmed;

(c) the reasons therefor and what is the normal period after which confirmation is done in such cases when permanent vacancies are available;

(d) whether it is a fact that while some senior A.S. (P)s. have been left out, the juniors have been confirmed; if so, the number thereof and how it happened; and

(e) how long it will take to confirm these persons who have already waited for long?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALIKARJUN): (a) 99.

(b) Nil.