

frequencies was because of malfunctioning of the power stabiliser following which neither commercial supply nor stand by supply from power house which is through the stabiliser was available to the transmitters. It also prevented switch over to standby battery supply. However, as the frequency (118.1 Mhz.) of Tower was operational, being on a separate battery back up, the same was used to guide the Air India aircraft and three other aircraft which made an uneventful landing at Delhi Airport.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken action to provide battery back-up to Area and Approach frequencies. This will obviate such incidents in future.

Defence Cooperation with UAE

3598. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

SHRI M. BAGA REDDY :

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether for the first time India has sent its aircraft carrier Virat to the United Arab Emirates as a part of its attempt to deepen the defence engagement in Persian Gulf;

(b) if so, whether three Navy ships left for Abu Dhabi held joint manoeuvres with Naval Ships of the UAE;

(c) if so, whether a defence dialogue with UAE to encourage exchange of personnel to each others training institutions and conduct joint Naval exercise is in offing; and

(d) if so, the extent to which both India and UAE have agreed to work with each other for the defence cooperation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The three Indian Naval Ships visited Abu Dhabi from 9-12 March 1999 but did not participate in any exercises with UAE ships. However, a flying demonstration was witnessed by the senior officers of UAE Defence Forces, on board the Aircraft Carrier.

(c) and (d) Defence cooperation with a large number of countries including UAE is an on-going process.

[Translation]

Accident of Gwalior-Chhapra Express

3599. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether an accident of 1144-UP Gwalior-

Chhapra Express train took place on Gonda-Lucknow railway line near Maijapur railway station on January, 31, 1999;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the total loss of life and property thereby; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to check the recurrence of such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAY, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir. No such accident of Train No. 1144 Up took place on 31-01-1999. However, on 30.01.1999, 1144 Up Chhapra-Gwalior Mail train derailed between Gonda Kacheri and Maijapur stations on Gonda-Barabanki B.G. single line section of Lucknow Division of North Eastern Railway.

(b) The cause of the accident is under investigation by Commissioner of Railway Safety/ North Eastern Circle.

(c) Loss of life and property are as under :-

Casualties - Killed	-	1
Grievous Injuries	-	4
Minor Injuries	-	10

The cost of damage was Rs. 1,05,66,300/-

(d) Following steps have been taken to check recurrence of such type of accident :-

(i) Intensive inspection of track at various levels is undertaken to ensure round the clock safety.

(ii) For better and improved track maintenance, mechanised track maintenance is being progressively introduced in place of conventional manual maintenance.

(iii) The rails are being tested regularly as per a predetermined frequency by the hand held USFD testers as well as by the SPURT (Self Propelled Ultra-sonic Rail Testing) car.

(iv) Regular patrolling of the railway track by gangmen is carried out during vulnerable seasons such as summer, monsoon and the winter months.

(v) Those found responsible for accidents are sternly taken up including senior officials. Stringent penalty to the extent of dismissal/