

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:341
ANSWERED ON:05.02.2004
INCIDENTS OF FIRE IN COACHES
NARESH KUMAR PUGLIA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that incidents of firing in Railway Coaches standing at yards/stations are increasing day by day;
- (b) if so, the details of the incidents that occurred during the last six months, train-wise;
- (c) the loss suffered by the Railways in these fires, incident-wise ;
- (d) whether the Government has made any inquiry about the cause of such fire;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) the outcome of the inquiry, the officials found negligent in their duty and the action taken by the Government on inquiry report and against the guilty officials, incident-wise; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such incidents in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR)

(a) to (g) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha. STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (g) OF STARRED QUESTION No. 341 BY SHRI NARESH PUGLIA AND SHRI RAJAIAHMALYALA, MPs TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 05.2.2004 REGARDING INCIDENTS OF FIRE IN COACHES.

- a) There have been some incidents of fire in the coaches in the recent past at stations over Northern Railway.
- (b), (c) & (e): Details of the incidents that occurred during the last six months, train-wise Approximate loss to the Railways and the probable causes are given in appendix.
- (d) Yes Sir. Inquiry into the causes of Fire has been conducted.
- f) Except for one case that took place on 3-12-2003 at Delhi Shahdara Railway station, where train lighting staff was held responsible all other cases were due to suspected sabotage/miscreant activity. First Information Reports (FIRs) have been lodged with concerned Government Railway Police (GRP) stations and the cases are under investigation. Members of Railway Protection Force (RPF) and other Railway staff found negligent have been taken up departmentally.
- g) The following steps have been taken by the government to prevent such type of incidents:
 1. RPF/GRP & Civil Police staff in plain clothes are detailed to keep a constant watch over anti-social elements to prevent and detect such fire incidents.
 2. Information in respect of suspected criminals indulging in such crime is being exchanged among the RPF, GRP and Civil Police Officials.
 3. Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF)/RPF/GRP and Civil Police Officers and staff deployed in yards, Platforms and sick line are being regularly briefed to be ever vigilant and to check unauthorized entry in yards/washing lines.
 4. Identity cards have been issued to all railway staff working at stations, yards and washing lines.
 5. Padlocking of coaches is being done jointly by Carriage and Wagon (C&W) and RPF staff. All coaches remain locked when not under maintenance and the same are opened when the rakes are placed at platforms for occupation by passengers.
 6. All railway staff have been advised to check entry of unauthorized persons at work places and hand over the trespassers or unauthorized persons to the police, particularly those loitering around in suspicious circumstances.
 7. Trains lighting staff have been asked to put off the main switch of the coaches after the arrival of the trains at the destination

stations.

8. Fire fighting equipment including Fire extinguishers and fire hydrants are being kept in working order.

9. Heads of the Department and Junior administrative Grade officers of Northern Railway/Headquarters have been directed to conduct surprise checks at yards, platforms and washing lines in Delhi area to ensure that staff deployed for duty remain alert and the procedure for securing and padlocking is strictly followed by them.

10. As many as 514 RPF, 109 RPSF, 255 GRP, 98 Delhi Police (Crime Branch) personnel and 102 Delhi Armed Police recruits have been deployed in yards, platforms, washing lines of New Delhi, Delhi Main, Delhi Sarai Rohilla and Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Stations to check unauthorized entry in Railway premises.

11. Intensive drives have been conducted against unauthorized persons in Delhi area during the period November, 2003 to January, 2004. Such intensive drives resulted in arrest of 394 persons under Section 147 of the Railways Act, 1989 and realization of the fine to the tune of Rs.24,900/-.

12. A special task force under a J.A. Grade RPF officer has been constituted to collect intelligence and find out the culprit(s) behind the incident. The said officer is also being assisted by officers of Central Crime Bureau (CCB) of Railway Board.

13. Awards of Rs.1 Lakh and 50 thousand each have been declared by Railway Administration and Delhi Police respectively, for person giving any reliable information / clue about the culprits (s) behind the fire incidents. A computer generated pictorial sketch of persons reported to be involved in the incidents has been prepared and widely publicized through posters.

14. Short term and long term security plans have been prepared for access control in the station area. Short term plan includes relocation of Jhuggi clusters, sealing of unauthorized entry points/thorough fares etc. Long term plan includes segregation of passenger areas from yard areas by erecting physical barriers, removal of jhuggi clusters in Delhi Sadar Bazar Railway Station and Ajmeri Gate area of New Delhi Railway Station and construction of high walled fencing from Shivaji Bridge to Delhi Sadar Bazar Railway Station. Apart from the aforesaid physical security improvements, a proposal for high-tech gadgetry including CCTV's/ Smoke & Fire detectors etc. has also been prepared.

APPENDIX REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (b), (c) & (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.341 BY SHRI NARESH P AND SHRI RAJAI AH MALYALA TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 5.2.2004 REGARDING INCIDENTS OF F COACHES.

Sl. No	Date	Briefs details of the incidents	Approx. loss	Probable cause
1.	10.11.2003	While rake of Kaifiat Express (4025/26) was standing on Platform No.1 at Delhi Junction two coaches (No.01222/A & 03229/A-NRWGSN) of the same caught fire at about 14.14 hrs. Both the coaches were completely burnt.	Rs.80 Lakh	Mischief/ Sabotage
2.	21.11.2003	While rake of Brahmaputra Mail (4055/66) was under maintenance in washing line at Delhi Junction at about 13.50 hrs. its two Coaches caught fire. While one coach was completely burnt, the second coach (No. 16696 GSN) was partially burnt.	Rs.50 Lakh	Mischief/ Sabotage
3.	3.12.2003	While rake of train No.4RD/7RD was stabled on Platform No.1 of Delhi Shahdara Railway station, fire took place in leading SLR No.01713/A.	Rs.20,4000/-	Short circuit
4.	6.12.2003	While rake of Rajdhani Express (2951/52) was standing on washing line No.2 at New Delhi railway station its one coach (No.ACCN-94133 WR) was partially burnt at about 11.30 hrs.	Rs. 1 Lakh	Mischief/ Sabotage
5.	6.12.2003	While rake of Purushottam Express (2801/02) was standing on washing line No.6 at New Delhi railway station, its one coach (No.968214 ECOR) was completely burnt at about 12.10 hrs.	Rs.10 Lakh	Mischief/ Sabotage
6.	18.12.2003	While rake of Purushottam Express (2801/02) was standing on washing line no.6 of New Delhi Railway Station at about 11.45 hrs. one cabin of a coach	Rs.15,000/-	Mischief/ Sabotage

(No.968208/A-WGSCN) was partially burnt.

7. 18.12.2003 While rake of Prayagraj Express (2417/18) was standing on stabling line No.16 of New Delhi Railway Station at about 12.20 hrs. two coaches (WGSCN - 17213/A, 17193/A & 17210/A) were completely burnt and one coach (No.WGSCN-17213/A) was partially burnt. Rs.16 Lakh Mischief/Sabotage
8. 5.1.2004 While rake of Lucknow Mail (4229/30) was stabled on running line No.6 of Delhi Sarai Rohilla Railway Station two coaches (No.12641, 17050 WGSCN) were fully burnt while three other coaches (No.12648, 17136 & 96300-WGSCN) were partially burnt at 12.30 hrs. Rs.50 Lakh Mischief/Sabotage
9. 8.1.2004 While Ashram Express (2916) was standing on Platform No.16 of Old Delhi Railway Station, one coach (No.WRCCN-98228) of said rake caught fire. Rs.35 Lakh Mischief/Sabotage

Note: Approximate loss in different cases varies due to variation in extent of damages to the coach. The loss is higher in those cases where the coach shell has suffered extensive damages as in SL Nos.1,2,8 and 9. In such cases, where the shell can be reused (such as no.5) the loss is less.