

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RAILWAYS  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:94  
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2012  
FIRE IN TN EXPRESS  
Jeyadurai Shri S. R.;Verma Smt. Usha

**Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:**

- (a) the number of people died/injured in the fire which took place in the Tamil Nadu (TN) Express recently;
- (b) the amount of ex-gratia and compensation announced by the Railways to the wards of those killed and injured;
- (c) whether the Railways have set up any committee to probe the cause for this accident;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the corrective steps especially in terms of fire safety measures being taken/taken by the Railways to prevent such incidents in the future?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MUKUL ROY)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 94 BY SHRIMATI USHA VERMA AND SHRI S.R. JEYADURAI TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 16.08.2012 REGARDING FIRE IN TN EXPRESS.

(a): On 30.07.2012 at about 04.19 hrs., an unfortunate incident of fire in one Sleeper Class Coach (S-11) of Train No. 12622 New Delhi - Chennai Tamil Nadu Express took place near Nellore on Vijaywada - Gudur section of Vijaywada Division of South Central Railway. As per latest information, 30 passengers have lost their lives in this unfortunate incident, 6 persons sustained grievous injuries and 22 sustained simple injuries.

(b): Ministry of Railways has announced an enhanced ex-gratia of Rs. 5 lakhs to the next of kin of each deceased, ` 1 lakh to the grievously injured and ` 25,000/- to the passengers with simple injuries. Ex-gratia amount totalling to ` 11.50 lakhs has been disbursed fully to all injured passengers. Out of 30 death cases, 28 bodies have been identified and 2 bodies remained unidentified. Out of 28 identified cases, in 27 cases, enhanced ex-gratia has been cleared for payment (in 11 death cases, ex-gratia payment has been made to the next of kin of the deceased and in 16 cases, ex-gratia is being disbursed by deputing railway staff). In one identified death case, ex-gratia will be released after verification of legal heirs. Compensation is additionally payable to the victims on the basis of claims to be filed by them in the Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) and decrees to be awarded by the Tribunal. So far, no claim application has been filed in the Tribunal.

(c) & (d): Statutory inquiry into the above incident is being conducted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), South Central Circle, under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and his report is awaited. Forensic experts of State Government were also pressed into service to investigate the burnt coach for necessary scientific collection and evaluation of clues/ evidence.

(e): Railways have taken various measures to prevent incidents of fire in trains, which include the following:

(i) Indian Railways have always endeavoured to enhance fire worthiness of coaches by using more fire retardant furnishing materials such as Compreg Board/PVC for coach flooring, laminated sheets for roof, ceiling wall and partition panelling, Rexene and cushioning material for seats and berths, Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) Windows and International Union of Railways (IUC) Vestibule, etc. Specifications for such furnishing materials have been periodically upgraded to incorporate fire retardant parameters in line with IUC and other international norms. All new manufacture of coaches/periodical overhauling of existing coaches is being carried out with fire retardant specifications of the furnishing materials.

(ii) Railways have also taken measures to prevent fire due to electrical short circuits in coaches, which include (a) three levels of protection in non AC coaches in case of short circuit, (b) separation of positive and negative wires, (c) use of fire retardant material in all electrical items.

(iii) With a view to improve fire safety in running trains, a pilot project for provision of Comprehensive Fire and Smoke Detection System has been taken up in one rake of Rajdhani Express on Northern Railway. Similar automatic fire alarm system in 20 more rakes for extended field trails has also been decided. The system will provide advance warning in case of any fire hazard in running

train and thus enable the passengers to protect them from fire.

(iv) Guard-cum-Brake Van and AC Coaches in all trains are provided with portable fire extinguishers to cater for emergencies due to fire accidents.

(v) Detailed instructions have been issued to zonal railways for observance of safe practices in handling of pantry cars and for ensuring periodical inspection of electrical and LPG fittings in the pantry cars.

(vi) Intensive publicity campaigns to prevent the travelling public from carrying inflammable goods are regularly undertaken.

(vii) Two separate Fire Safety Audit Teams have been constituted recently to plan safety audit in selective stations, coaching depots and workshops, etc.