

Title: Fatal accidents at unmanned level crossings in Indian railways.

\*SHRIMATI PARAMJIT KAUR GULSHAN (BHATINDA): Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir, I want to draw the attention of this august House towards the accident that took place on 29<sup>th</sup> July in Ludhiana district of Punjab in which 3 precious lives were lost due to the fault of Railway department. This accident took place at an unmanned railway crossing at Himmatnagar-Dugri near Ludhiana city. A maruti-zen car collided with a train that was going from Ludhiana to Hisar. When the train was passing through Baba Deep Singh it suddenly collided with the car at an unmanned railway crossing. Paramjit Singh, resident of Baddowal, who was just 47 years old, was driving the car. He was accompanied by his 40 years old sister whose husband had died recently and who left behind two small children.

Another woman Rajni was accompanying them. All of them died on the spot. The car was totally wrecked. This accident was so violent that the speeding train dragged the car along with tracks for half a kilometre. The local people and the police reached the spot on hearing about this fatal accident. But it was unfortunate that the Railway officials and the Railway police reached the site of the accident only after one and a half hours. By that time, everything was over. Sir, this is not the first accident at this unmanned railway crossing. Last year, on 6<sup>th</sup> of May, an even more tragic accident involving a van of school children had occurred here. In that fatal accident, 6 innocent school children had lost their lives and dozens of school children were badly injured. People of the area have been demanding that this unmanned railway crossing should be made a manned railway crossing but it is unfortunate that the Railway department is not taking any steps in this direction and the blood of passengers is being spilled here. This is not the only unmanned railway crossing where fatal accidents have taken place. There are several such unmanned railway crossings in Punjab where such painful accidents take place almost daily.

Sir, through you, I want to ask the Railway Minister whether he knows about this accident and if so, then what action has he taken in this regard. What action has he taken for granting compensation to the affected families? Why has he not taken any steps in this regard? In the near future, is the Government planning to make such dangerous unmanned railway crossings into manned railway crossings?

\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi