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Title: The Minister of Railways laid a statement regarding incident of fire in Howrah-Dehradun Doon Express between Nimiaghat Parasnath stations of East Central Railway on 22.11.2011.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I wish to lay a Statement regarding the incident of Fire on East Central Railway on 22.11.2011.

Sir, with profound grief I apprise the House of an unfortunate incident of fire in train no. 13009 Howrah - Dehradun Doon Express between Nimiaghat and Parasnath stations of Dhanbad Division of East Central Railway at about 02.35 hrs. on 22.11.2011. While the train was on run, fire broke out in Three Tier Air Conditioned Coach B1, positioned 8<sup>th</sup> from train engine. Subsequently, it also spread to adjacent Three Tier AC Coach B2. As a result of the fire, the two coaches got completely burnt. In this unfortunate incident, seven passengers lost their lives.

Medical Relief was immediately despatched through Accident Relief Medical Train from Dhanbad. Fire Brigades from Dhanbad and Giridih reached the site and extinguished the fire. Divisional Railway Manager, Dhanbad rushed to the site along with his team of officers to supervise the relief and rescue operations. Senior officers from Zonal headquarters at Hajipur also reached the site. A team of officers from Railway Board was also despatched to accident site.

On humanitarian grounds, enhanced ex-gratia amount of Rupees five lakhs to the next of the kin of each deceased and Rs.25,000/- to each passenger of the affected B1 and B2 coaches to provide immediate relief for inconvenience and loss of belongings has been announced.

The cause of the incident is being investigated from all possible angles, including miscreant activity, in cooperation with the State Government authorities of Jharkhand However, Statutory inquiry into this incident has already been ordered to be conducted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Eastern Circle, under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The General Managers of all Zonal Railways have been instructed to exercise extra vigil as well as launch a special safety drive regarding precautions to be taken to avoid recurrence of such accidents.

On behalf of the Railways and myself, I express deep condolences to the bereaved families and also express sincere sympathies to the injured. I trust the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.

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