

Title: Regarding blast on a bridge No.237 between Gosaigaon-Chautara block section of New Coochbehar-New Bongaigaon section of Northeast Frontier Railway's Alipurduar Division.

13.31 hrs

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): I would like to apprise the House of an unfortunate incident of a blast on bridge number 237 between Gosaigaon - Chautara block section of New Coochbehar - New Bongaigaon section of Northeast Frontier Railway's Alipurduar division at about 03.35 hours on 02.06.98. The blast occurred while a goods train Up New Guwahati Sugar Special was passing over the bridge.

While there has not been any derailment to the goods train which is still standing on the bridge; the blast has caused extensive damage to the bridge girders as a consequence of which the section is likely to remain closed for passenger traffic. Likely time of restoration is awaited.

Local civil and police authorities have arrived at the site. Divisional Railway Officials have also reached the site. All relief operations are under progress.

Prima facie, the blast was caused by an explosive device. Police clearance has been obtained at 10.05 hours. The Railway Security department has been asked to step up vigilance and keep a close watch on all the railway installations.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS): Was there any casualty?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: No. It was a goods train.