

[Sh. Balram Jakhar]

officers from Central Government have been visiting areas and giving us the benefit of their advice and feedback, I have had the most recent opportunity of personally visiting the area interacting with the affected persons and reviewing the relief and rehabilitation programmes with the State Government. I wish to record my appreciation of the goodwork done by the State Government, Armed Forces, non-Government Organisations and public spirited individuals. While conveying my heart felt sympathies for the affected people, I wish to assure this House that we will spare no efforts in meeting the challenges of rehabilitation.

MR. SPEAKER : Should we have a short discussion on this ?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Later on Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: We will fix up a time for that.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Any time that you say I am prepared.

MR. SPEAKER : You were to make a statement on the cyclone.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : That I will do later on Sir. The report is being prepared. The assessment is coming. My teams have gone and they will bring out the data.

MR. SPEAKER : Will it be possible tomorrow?

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Gobichettipalayam) : Only Rs. 1 crore has been released as a token amount. I demand more funds should be released. Nearly one week has passed since his visit.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : He does not actually have the facts. We have already

recommended. That has to be gone through the process. You do not worry about it. I have already recommended for the early release of the instalment for the next year also. You do not worry on that score. We are taking care of that. I am going to make a statement about this and then I will come back to you.

SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNAIAH (Tumkur) : Some three districts in Karnataka are also affected. A liberal attitude should be shown. Because Karnataka is not in a position to meet the demands of the people.

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : In such matters Parliament should be taken into confidence earlier. Even on earthquake it is a post-mortem report of the Government of India. About cyclone it will take two-three weeks more. It has to be brought to the notice of the House at the earliest possible opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER : It is going to be a long drawn process and we will consider it very carefully.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani) : There have been repeated tremors in the Marathwada area and the areas around.

MR. SPEAKER : We are going to discuss that issue.

*(Interruptions) **

MR. SPEAKER: It is not going on record.

(ii) Unmanned Level Crossing Gate Accident Involving 7304 Syhyadri Express and a Bus on Miraj-Pune be Single Line Section of South Central Railway on 11.12.1993

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF) : It is with deep anguish that I apprise the House of an

unfortunate accident involving train No. 7304 Kolhapur-Bombay VT Sahyadri Express and a school bus at about 11.30 Hrs on 11.12.93 on the Miraj-Pune BG SL section on the Hubli Division of South Central Railway. While the train was on run in the block section between Alandi and Phursungi stations and approaching level crossing No. 11 at Km. 17/11-10, two buses carrying Primary School children for a picnic suddenly tried to cross the level crossing. It is learnt that the driver of the train whistled heavily and tried to slow down. One bus passed the level crossing, but the second bus was hit. It appears that the driver of the illfated bus while taking the turn to cross the level crossing, perhaps, stalled because he could not change the gear in time as there is a gradient. As a result 7304 Sahyadri Express hit the tail end of the bus and threw the bus down the embankment of the level crossing into the field, about 40-50 metres away.

Due to the impact, 38 passengers of the bus including 34 school children, 2 lady teachers, a peon and a clerk lost their lives and another 45 sustained injuries. There was no injury to the train crew or train passengers.

The level crossing where the accident occurred is on a straight track, served by a kutcha road and the visibility on either side is clear for nearly 500 metres, with the road running parallel to the track for about 450 metres. It is said that this level crossing is not very much in use except on holidays by people visiting the nearby temple.

Immediately on receipt of the information about the accident, Medical Van from Ghorपुर/Pune, with railway Doctors left for the site of the accident. General Manager, Central Railway alongwith senior

officers, Director, Indian Railway Institute of Civil Engineering and Area Manager, Pune, organised immediate relief arrangements in coordination with District Administration and Municipal Corporation of Pune. Divisional Railway Manager, Hubli alongwith Divisional Officers also rushed to the site. The Additional General Manager, South Central Railway, alongwith senior officers also proceeded to the site of accident by a special train. The injured have been shifted to the Sasoon Government Hospital, Pune, where they are progressing.

I, accompanied by Chairman, Railway Board, Member Traffic and Member Engineering rushed to the site by a special airforce plane and also visited the injured in the hospital and consoled the relatives. I have ordered an enquiry into the accident.

In an unfortunate accident like this generally ex-gratia or compensation is not allowed. Since the injured are small children, as a special case, I have ordered ex-gratia payment to the injured.

My colleague Shri K.C. Lenka, all railway workers and I express our heartfelt condolences to the families who lost the valuable lives of their children and sincere sympathies to the injured.

I trust the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central): May I seek one clarification ? *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Generally, we do not allow clarifications of this sort.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE : If you allow, I want to seek only two clarifications. He has made a statement that the issue of manning the level crossing would be taken up with the State Government which is supposed to bear the cost of manning the railway level crossing. I would like to know as to whether it is not the duty of the Railway to see that those who cross the railway level crossings are fully protected. How do you rely upon the State Government for that purpose?

DR. VASANT NIWRUTTI PAWAR (Nasik) : Sir, the hon. Minister has just now said that the driver of the train whistled and tried to slow down the train. But, it is learnt that the train was running late; and at that time, it was running at a speed of 90 kilometer per hour. Actually it should run at a speed of 40-50 kilometers per hour. Since it was running at a high speed, the driver could not stop the train in time and so, there was a clash. Hon. Minister has said that he has visited the site. There is a general feeling that an apathy was shown by the Railway Minister. 38 people have died and we should see from the point of view of sympathy towards the children. I strongly recommend that those who have died should be given some compensation as we are giving to the general category. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Yes. You have made the statement.

(Interruptions)

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : Sir, I do not think that I have made any statement regarding the manning of the level crossing that State Government should contribute or anything like that, nor it is the railways. There are very well established norms based on the traffic. There are certain occasions where the State Government also comes into

the picture in meeting the cost of manning the level crossings. The railways also take part in that. It is both.

So far as the accidents part is concerned, my friend totally looks like misinformed. We have been there. The Mayor of Pune was there. The local MP was there. The local Collector was there. The local police officials were also there. Everybody was there. Everybody's version is the same. It is the fault of the driver who was in haste.

MR. SPEAKER : It is being investigated. Isn't it ?

(Interruptions)

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : One bus crossed the level-crossing. The other bus just tried to follow blindly. Unfortunately, the hit was at the fag-end of the vehicle which created this tragedy.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is being looked into.

(Interruptions)

12.47 Hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) **Need to improve the standard of Portrayal of public figures in Films**

[English]

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK (Bolangir) : Sir, it has been observed that the standard of portrayal of public figures in films has been declining now-a-days. Instead