

STATEMENT RE: FIRE IN A SECOND CLASS COACH OF 14 DN UPPER INDIA EXPRESS ON 31-10-1974

MR. SPEAKER: Shri L. N. Mishra to make a statement regarding Fire in a Second-class coach.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, (Shri L. N. Mishra): I beg to lay the statement on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

Sir, I regret to inform the house of a serious accident which took place near Manoharganj station of the Northern Railway on 31st October, 1974.

At about 08.00 hours, while 14 Down Upper India Express ex Delhi to Scaldah was approaching Manoharganj station on the Kanpur-Allahabad double line electrified section on the Allahabad Division of the Northern Railway, a second class coach caught fire suddenly. It appears that the fire started so suddenly and spread so rapidly that the passengers got trapped in the coach. While many of them were burnt to death inside the coach, quite a few of those who jumped out also lost their lives. Fifty eight persons have lost their lives so far and 28 are lying injured in the hospitals. Another 5 persons have since been discharged from the hospital.

Immediately on receipt of information about the accident medical aid

was requisitioned from all the sources. Doctors from the nearby Bharwari hospital rushed to the site followed by medical aid from Hospital, Military Hospital, Allahabad, Railway Medical Relief Van and railway doctors from Allahabad. Some of the railway officers had left for the site by road earlier.

Member (Mechanical), Additional Member (Traffic), Railway Board and the General Manager, Northern Railway, accompanied by other Senior Officers, air-dashed to the site.

The Deputy Minister of Railways accompanied by Member (Traffic) Railway Board also proceeded to the site by train.

The Deputy Minister and myself visited the injured in the hospitals to ensure that they receive all possible care and attention.

Arrangements were made to give ex-gratia relief to meet with the immediate needs of the injured and the next of kin of the dead.

The site of the accident has also been inspected by the Controller of Explosives, Agra and Deputy Fire Adviser, Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Northern Circle, Lucknow commenced his statutory inquiry into this accident on 4th November, 1974 at Allahabad.