

The hon. Member opposite, Shri Hem Barua, asked whether they gave any assurance to us that he would not carry on agitation. We cannot ask for assurances to limit his rights under their own laws. That we cannot do. As he is there, he has been carrying on some kind of agitation which has been toned down, not because of any assurances or pressures, but because there was hardly anybody to listen to him. That is a different matter. Presumably, he will try to carry on his agitation wherever he may be.

STATEMENT RE: ACCIDENTS ON RAILWAYS

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): Sir, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to make a statement about the three major accidents that have taken place recently near Ghatsila, Mainpuri and Kosgi stations.

On 20th October, 1961, while 83 Up Ranchi Express was running between Dalbhumgarh and Ghatsila stations on the Khargpur-Tatanagar Section of the South Eastern Railway, it derailed at about 1.25 hours at Km. 209|4-5. The engine and seven coaches behind derailed and capsized on both sides of the track. The eighth coach was also derailed while the rear four coaches of the train remained on the track.

It is painful to report that as a result of this accident, 45 persons were killed on the spot and 6 succumbed to their injuries subsequently. Besides, 11 persons suffered grievous injuries. Out of 184 persons who sustained minor injuries, 71 persons were discharged after being rendered first aid on the spot. 92 persons were discharged after treatment in the hospitals. This morning there are 32 persons still in the hospitals.

Local medical assistance available at Ghatsila was rushed to the site by a shuttle train. Medical relief vans

were worked from Tatanagar, Chakradharpur and Khargpur. After giving medical aid to the injured and general assistance to the afflicted passengers, the injured persons were removed by relief trains and ambulance specials to the Railway hospitals at Tatanagar and Khargpur, Civil hospitals at Sakchi and to the TISCO and Indian Copper Corporation hospitals. Forty-five dead bodies were recovered at the site and sent in batches under the charge of Government Railway Police officials to Tatanagar by running shuttle services.

Three badly injured persons were rescued alive by gas-cutting the underframe of a coach and two by jacking the underframe of another. The entrapped passengers in a few coaches were rescued by breaking open the windows and the side pillars.

Ex-gratia payment to the injured and relatives of the dead amounting to Rs. 22,100 has been made.

Every possible help in relief operations was rendered by civil authorities and adjoining industries, Indian Copper Corporation and TISCO. The Deputy Commissioner, Singhbhum, himself assisted in rendering effective relief at the site of the accident. Large number of volunteers from different organisations and Trade Unions also worked very hard.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Calcutta, Ministry of Transport & Communications held a statutory enquiry into the cause of this accident. He has submitted his preliminary report according to which the derailment of 83 Up Ranchi Express was caused by tampering with track by some unknown persons.

The second accident took place on 29th October, 1961. No. 2 TF Passenger train derailed at Km. 1268|7-9 between Mainpuri and Bhongaon stations on Shikohabad-Farukhabad Branch Line of Northern Railway at about 10.35 hours. The engine and tender capsized and the following

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four bogies derailed and telescoped. The remaining coaches were undamaged and remained on the rails. As a result of this accident, unfortunately, 18 persons were killed on the spot, 4 died subsequently, 17 persons were grievously injured and 45 sustained simple injuries. It is a matter of deep regret that amongst those involved in the accident were 46 Buddhist pilgrims from Ceylon, who were on their way to Sankisa, a place of Buddhist pilgrimage near Farukhabad. Sixteen of the pilgrims were killed on the spot, 2 died subsequently and the others received injuries.

Medical relief from Mainpuri and Bhongaon was rushed by road to the site of the accident. The injured, after being rendered medical aid, were transferred for further treatment to the civil hospitals at Bhongaon and Mainpuri. Out of 62 injured, 51 were discharged on various dates and eleven were in hospitals till this morning. An ex-gratia payment of Rs. 4,107 has been made to the injured and the relatives of the dead. A special plane was chartered to fly to Ceylon the dead bodies of the Ceylonese after embalming them at the Agra Medical College. Such of the injured Buddhist pilgrims who were in a position to undertake air journey were also sent to Ceylon by a chartered plane on 6th November, 1961.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Lucknow, held his statutory enquiry into the accident. According to his provisional findings the accident was caused by high speed which was in excess of the permissible limit of the section for AWD engines which is 30 miles per hour. This coupled with the sudden application of brakes which caused distortion of the track resulted in the derailment.

Ad hoc Claims Commissioners have been appointed to deal with claims for compensation arising out of these accidents.

The third accident occurred on the Southern Railway at about 2.34 hours on 9th November, 1961. The train No. 14 Madras-Bombay Janta Express which was being received on the main line at Kosgi station to cross No. 1608 Up Goods, overshot into the snag dead-end and the engine along with three bogies derailed. The engine capsized and three bogies telescoped. As a result, the driver of the engine and two firemen died on the spot and nine persons including four railway employees sustained minor injuries.

Ex-gratia payment of Rs. 200/- was made to one injured passenger, whose injuries were at the time suspected to be grievous.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Bangalore, held an enquiry into the accident at Kosgi commencing from 10th November, 1961. His report is awaited.

This statement is rather long. With your permission, I shall lay it on the Table.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

[The rest of the Statement, reproduced below, was laid on the Table—Editor.]

Having given information about the recent accidents, I would also like to recount briefly the efforts made and action taken in recent years, beginning for convenience, from the commencement of the present Lok Sabha, in regard to the very important question of minimising accidents and making railway travel safe. In the first Railway Budget Speech of the present Parliament which, incidentally, was also my first as Minister incharge of Railways, I had mentioned about the two cases of unfortunate accidents, one near Ariyalur on the Southern Railway and the second near Mahbubnagar on the Central Railway.

In the year 1957-58 which followed, there was a lull for a period but, unfortunately, in the first two months

of 1958 three major accidents occurred in quick succession, reference to which was made in my Budget Speech on 17th February, 1958, as follows:

"The occurrence of these accidents in quick succession has been a matter of grave concern to all of us. I had, therefore, recently called a special meeting of the General Managers to discuss with them the whole problem of accidents with a view to initiating effective measures for bringing about an improvement. The discussion confirmed that human failure largely accounts for these accidents. Technical improvements, which can help to mitigate the incidence of human element, are being progressively effected, but a significant improvement can only be effected if all those engaged in the running of railways are fully alive to their duty and responsibility.

The General Managers have been asked to intensify outdoor supervision, to check up on the strict observance of rules for safe working and to impress upon the staff the great responsibility for safety of travel which rests upon them".

In August 1958, I placed before the Parliament 'A Factual Review of Accidents'—up to 1957-58. In this review the incidence of accidents during the past 20 years against the workload which the Railways were required to perform was analysed year to year. The incidence of accidents and the casualties resulting therefrom were compared with similar figures on some foreign railways. The main causes of the accidents were analysed and the steps which were being taken to minimise train accidents were detailed therein.

In my Budget Speech for the year 1959-60, on 18th February, 1959, I shared with the Members of the Parliament my thoughts on the question of railway accidents. I would crave the indulgence of the Members to read out the statement which I made

at that time. "An extensive development of line capacity is under execution on long stretches of trunk routes, upsetting settled conditions of working; at the same time, rapidly increasing volume of traffic has been passing over these sections, which are mostly working to saturation points. Under these abnormal conditions, a state of constant pressure and strain is inevitable, and this at times unfortunately leads to human failures.

We are fully alive to the seriousness of the problem, and the Railway Administrations have been directed to initiate certain measures—educative, psychological and punitive—which, it is hoped, will instil greater safety-mindedness among the staff. Simultaneously, attention has also been paid to the provision of improved technical devices as an aid to the staff; safety organisations and research cells have also been set up on every railway to undertake a critical analysis of accidents, to focus attention on safety aspects in every field of operation, to carry out intensive inspections and to ensure strict observance of the safety rules and regulations by all concerned.

In regard to anti-sabotage measures, various schemes were examined in consultation with the Intelligence Bureau and the Ministry of Home Affairs. As a result of this examination, the State Governments have been addressed to afford assistance through publicity measures amongst inhabitants of the villages in the vicinity of railway lines, through improvement of the arrangements of the Government Railway Police for the collection of advance intelligence in this regard, through intensification of patrolling of vulnerable areas, through a continuous study of all serious railway accidents by the State C.I.D.s., and through periodical liaison meetings for exchanging information between railway officials and State Police officials, Railway Administrations have been directed to act in close contact with the State Governments for this purpose.

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Considerable emphasis has also been given to initial training and refresher courses for all categories of staff responsible for train working. I would like to assure the House that constant endeavours would continue to be made to deal with this problem of accidents with the utmost imagination and care. In this effort I solicit the unstinted cooperation of everyone concerned, so that a greater sense of safety-consciousness may be brought about amongst the large number of railwaymen employed for train operation."

A comprehensive review of accidents on Indian Railways during 1958-59 was presented to the Parliament with the Budget Papers for 1960-61. From the analysis made therein it was shown that the total number of accidents on Indian Railways during 1958-59 remained more or less the same as compared with the previous year despite slight increase in certain categories. The review concluded, "Viewed in the context of increasing volume of traffic though this static features may appear quite satisfactory on statistical considerations, it has not given rise to any feeling of complacency on the part of the Railway Ministry. We are frequently focussing the attention of the railway administrations to the supreme importance of keeping a strict watch on the situation. Sustained efforts are being made to instil a higher sense of safety-mindedness amongst all categories of staff with a view to reduce the incidence of accidents still further. It is hoped that with the vigilance exercised by the railway administrations and the preventive measures adopted by them Indian Railways would be in a position to set up a high standard of safety in rail travel".

Fortunately, there were no major accidents during 1959-60. However, the measures taken to improve the safety on the Railways continued to be pursued vigorously. The House

will recall the following observations made by me in my Budget Speech on 17th February, 1960:

"Irrespective of whether this is fortuitous or is a reflection of sustained human endeavour we can only work and pray for continued absence of any serious mishaps..... judged in the light of the increasing volume and tempo of traffic, the position seems to be satisfactory, as far as it goes. Without any reservation, I want to assure the House that there is no complacency in this regard. Besides, a strict watch is being kept at all levels and a persistent endeavour is being made to enliven safety-consciousness among the staff."

I ended my observation with an appeal to the railway staff:

"they would continue to discharge their duties with greater care and attention so as to set up a high standard of safety."

A comprehensive review of accidents for the year 1959-60 was also laid on the Table of the House along with Budget papers. From the review it was seen that "despite a significant increase in the train miles run on the Indian Government Railways, there has been a decline in the total number of accidents during 1959-60 as compared to the previous year. Nevertheless, slight increases in the incidence of certain categories of accidents and static results in some others have been a cause of anxiety to the Government. They have frequently drawn the attention of the Railway Administration to the paramount need of exercising a constant vigil and taking adequate preventive steps. The Railway Administrations are also fully alive to their responsibilities in the matter and they have launched an all-out drive to reduce the frequency of accidents to the minimum.

In view of the improving trend in the accidents position, the Government hope that in the years to come standard of safety in rail travel on the Indian Railways would become better still".

Sustained efforts continued to be made during the year 1960-61 to maintain the previous year's good record. The House may like to recall my observations on the subject in my Budget Speech of February this year "I want to assure the House that there is no sense of complacency in this vital issue. There is constant awareness in the Railway Board of the importance of the problem". The Railway Administrations are also fully conscious of their responsibilities in the matter of sustained education and training of staff, so as to instil "safety consciousness" in them. As in the past, many of the accidents in 1959-60 were due to human failure. Having regard to the size of the railways, the present tempo of work and the large number of staff employed, it will be appreciated that there can be no ready solution. With prompt deterrent measures, as well as incentives in the way of rewards, where justified, I hope that railway staff at all levels will put themselves out even more than hitherto, in this important aspect of avoiding accidents to the utmost extent possible."

My purpose in reading lengthy extracts from the recorded observations

on accidents during the course of this Parliament was to show that ever since I was entrusted with the responsibility of this Ministry, the problem of accidents has been constantly engaging my attention as also of the Railway Board and the Railway Administrations.

This watchfulness was rewarded by a beneficent Providence as a result of which the number of accidents in relation to the traffic handled decreased. This will be seen from the figures given below:

Year	Total No. of vehicle miles in millions	Total No. of Accidents	Accidents per million vehicle miles
1957-58	6,401	9,011	1.41
1958-59	6,606	9,071	1.37
1959-60	6,979	8,916	1.28
1960-61	7,220	8,808	1.22

The extent of safety achieved is often judged by the number of passenger casualties in train collisions and derailments per billion passenger miles. The figures for the Indian Railways, including the casualties caused by train wrecking and attempted train wrecking (sabotage) were as follows:—

Year	Total casualties			No. of passenger casualties in train collisions and derailments per billion (1000 million) passenger miles		
	Killed	Injured	Total	Killed	Injured	Total
1957-58	76	475	551	1.77	11.0	12.77
1958-59	44	357	401	1.04	8.44	9.48
1959-60	3	315	318	0.07	6.83	6.90
1960-61	26	213	239	0.54	4.44	4.98

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It is unfortunate that there have been two serious cases of train wrecking this year, first in the month of April in Gulm forest on the N. F. Railway and the second recently near Ghatsila on the South Eastern Railway, which resulted in a total of 86 killed and 281 injured.

In the end, I would like to assure the House, that to minimise the number of accidents on the Railways, no effort is being spared and safety measures are being intensified.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Shri B. Das Gupta (Purulia): We may be allowed to have a discussion.

Shri Rajendra Singh (Chapra): There are so many accidents.

Mr. Speaker: There have been three accidents. I suggested to the hon. Ministers of Railways and Transport that whenever major accidents occur, they may themselves report to the House, and in pursuance of that suggestion, the hon. Minister has himself made a statement about the three accidents that have occurred. No doubt, one or two of them are very serious.

He has also laid on the Table of the House a statement about the effective steps taken from time to time, in spite of which the accidents occur. Hon. Members will kindly go through the statement and also the annexures, and if they think that a discussion is necessary or useful, I shall consider.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): It is very necessary.

Shri S. L. Saksena (Maharajganj): It may be given to all Members.

Mr. Speaker: Any hon. Member may table a motion for discussion. I will allow.

Shri Hem Barua: May I seek a clarification about the Ghatsila tragedy? Firstly, it has been said that it is an act of sabotage.

Mr. Speaker: We will discuss this matter. Why should he put questions now?

Shri Hem Barua: It has been said that relief measures were taken, but individual victims and eye-witnesses have reported to me that the first relief train appeared on the scene long after sunrise, and that it came without any water, milk or food. The second train came from Tatanagar at 8.15 and that too did not carry any water or milk. The first train carried only railway officials. There are certain commendations about the relief measures undertaken by the Indian Copper Corporation and Tatas. Discrepancies have been pointed out in the relief work, and I want a clarification on this.

श्री शि० ला० सक्सेना : क्या इस बयान की कापी सब मेम्बरों को मिलेगी ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अगर सब लोग कारी मांगेंगे तो उनको स्टेटमेंट की कापी सर्कुलेट कर दी जायेगी ।

Of course, the annexure need not be sent.

Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur): That is more important.

Mr. Speaker: Copy of the statement and annexures may be circulated. They will be kept in the Notice Office. Whichever hon. Member wants may take it.

Shri Prabhat Kar (Hooghly): There are allegations particularly about this accident to the Ranchi Express, about the working of the engine and other things.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members will discuss all that. The time will be

fixed for a couple of hours. Hon. Members may give notice of a motion for discussion. I will allow it.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): You may kindly allow the discussion to take place very early, because in the course of three weeks three major accidents have taken place. In addition, I would request that we may be allowed to discuss the great Siliguri disaster also along with this.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. Minister agree?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I will have no objection. Some time may be given for the discussion.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members may suggest how these accidents may be averted.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad): In regard to the Mainpuri accident the hon. Minister says that he has received the provisional report of the enquiry. Does it show that the driver of the train who was killed in the accident had previously told the authorities that the track was defective and that it should be remedied?

Mr. Speaker: All this may be reserved for the discussion. He does not carry all the details with him. We are going to have a discussion. Why these small questions?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I will make one thing clear. The investigation that is made is made by the Government Inspector of Railways, now the Inspector of Railway Safety, and that staff is under the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The Minister concerned may like to make a statement in that respect as to the detailed information and reports submitted to him by the Inspector of Railway Safety.

Mr. Speaker: He may also be present on that day.

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): I promise to be present.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: The preliminary reports which have come in their possession may also be placed on the Table of the House so that it will help us.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The difficulty is that in the preliminary reports they do not give any detailed information. They simply say that according to their preliminary findings, the cause is such and such. That will not be of much help. It is, as a matter of fact, in the detailed report that they give the reasons why they have reached the conclusion that the cause is their the fault of the driver or defective track or whatever it is, but it will take some time before they give a detailed report.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am going to allow a discussion.

Shri Tangamani: Before you go on to the next item, may I mention that there was accident in which the Ministry of Transport and Communications was involved, namely the crashing of an Indian Airlines Passenger plane—the first time that a Viscount plane met with an accident—on the 15th November?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member might have given notice of a motion or given a calling attention notice or something like that. He may even now. . . (Interruptions).

Order, order. Hon. Members will kindly resume their seats. When I am on my legs no hon. Member ought to stand. It is true that I suggested that with regard to all major accidents statements might be made. But it is left to the Minister to decide whether it is a major accident or a minor accident. If he considers it of

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small importance and does not make a statement, hon. Members who are aware of it may table an adjournment motion, as they do in a number of cases, or may table a calling attention notice and I will ask the hon. Minister to reply. This is the general rule. Nothing prevents hon. Members from tabling calling attention notices. I will call upon the hon. Minister to make a statement in proper cases.

STATEMENT RE: IMPORT OF
PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

Mr. Speaker: Shri Malaviya.

The Minister of Mines and Oil (Shri K. D. Malaviya): Sir, the statement that I have to make in connection with the oil prices and the controversy that has arisen about it is lengthy; if I am permitted, I would like to cut out certain paragraphs for the sake of reading.

Mr. Speaker: He may give the substance of it and place the statement on the Table of the House.

Shri K. D. Malaviya: If you permit me I will read out one or two paragraphs.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): This is a very important statement and it may be read out in full.

Mr. Speaker: It goes over 7 pages. By the time we come to the last page one cannot remember what is given in the first page.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): The whole should be circulated to us. He should not read only paragraphs. We cannot follow one paragraph divorced from the rest of the statement.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister knows how to make it effective.

Shri K. D. Malaviya: Sir, I wish to explain to the House the implications

of the situation that has unexpectedly developed between Government and the oil companies over the last few days in regard to the import of petroleum products for consumption in this country and other connected matters.

Paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 explain the historical facts and all that we have done in order to arrive at a formula for a price.

With a view to evolving a long-term pricing formula, we constituted on 2-8-60, the Oil Price Enquiry Committee, under the chairmanship of Shri K. R. Damle, a former Chairman of the Tariff Commission, one of the other members of the Committee being Shri P. N. Sapru, who resigned from the Committee on 14-3-61, on grounds of ill-health and was replaced by Shri C. P. Sinha, retired Chief Justice of Assam High Court. I have considered it necessary to state these details to convince the House that we had entrusted the enquiry to an impartial and independent tribunal, unconnected with the administrative Ministry concerned.

The Report of this Committee was submitted to Government in July last.

The prices evolved by the Committee show that there will be reductions from the ceiling selling prices, in force heretofore, of the order of Rs. 13.78 crores on the basis of 1962 sales of the three major oil companies—of which the Bulk Refined Products account for Rs. 12.41 crores and Bitumen for Rs. 1.37 crores. The amount of Rs. 12.41 crores is made up as follows:—

- (i) Rs. 4.89 crores on account of the actual difference between the posted prices as on 24-5-61 and 1-11-59.
- (ii) Rs. 6.64 crores on account of discounts recommended by the Committee on the posted prices of Bulk Refined Products.