

12.17 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: ACCIDENT TO
MADRAS-HOWRAH EXPRESS AT
BAUDPUR STATION

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): Sir, with profound regret I have to inform the House that at about 23:25 hours last night, train No. 38 Down Madras-Howrah Express, which started from Madras on Saturday morning collided head-on with a stationary goods train at Baudpur station situated on the Khurda Road-Kharagpur single line section about 300 kilometres from Howrah.

According to the information so far available, 7 persons including 4 railway employees of which two were drivers of the two trains and the other two, the fireman and the second fireman of the goods train, were killed and 36 others sustained injuries. Twenty-nine of the injured were removed to a nearby civil hospital at Bhadrak and the remaining 7 were discharged after first aid and preliminary medical attention. According to the latest information, two of the 29 admitted in the Bhadrak civil hospital have been discharged. The wreckage has so far not been cleared completely.

Immediately on receipt of information about the accident, relief trains with medical vans and cranes were rushed from Bhadrak and Khurda Road along with railway doctors. The unaffected portion of the express train was despatched to the destination with a fresh engine and is expected to reach Howrah this evening.

The General Manager along with other senior officers of the South Eastern Railway proceeded to the site soon after the news of the accident came and has visited the site and the injured in hospital. A member of the Railway Board has also left by air this morning to visit the site of the accident and the injured.

Ex gratia payment to the next of kin of the dead and to the injured is

being arranged. The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Calcutta, is holding a statutory enquiry into this accident tomorrow.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): Sir, may I seek a clarification?

Shri Kapur Singh (Ludhiana): Sir, may I ask a question? I have given notice of a Calling Attention Notice on this subject.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Kapur Singh.

Shri Kapur Singh: In view of this demonstrated inefficiency on the part of the railway management, apart from other routine steps that are being taken, do the Government propose to take any significant step with a view to expiate their own responsibility in the matter? . . . Perhaps, he does not understand my question. My question was directed at him.

Mr. Speaker: He should allow him some time to answer the question. Then only he should decide whether the question has been understood or not.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: As I mentioned in my statement, the Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety is holding an enquiry into this accident. It is a very unfortunate accident and he will fix the responsibility for failure etc. I would not like to say anything at this stage.

Shri Kapur Singh: What I said is correct. My question was not understood and it has not been answered. I leave the matter at that.

Mr. Speaker: I did not correct the hon. Member. I did not say that he was not correct. I simply said that before the answer is received, prejudging is not fair.

Shri Kapur Singh: I thank you.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I hope he understands now.

Shri Hem Barua: The hon. Deputy Minister has mentioned in his statement that the wreckage has not yet been cleared from the site of the accident. Are we to presume from that that the number of dead and injured given by the Minister so far is only tentative?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Yes, Sir. That may be so.

श्री यशपाल सिंह (कैराना)
क्या

अध्यक्ष महोदय : सरदार कपूर सिंह ने नोटिस दिया था, उनको मैंने सवाल करने का मौका दे दिया है। जिन्होंने नोटिस नहीं दिया . . .

श्री यशपाल सिंह : कार्लिंग एंटेनशन नोटिस मैंने भी दिया था।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपने भी दिया था तो आप भी एक सवाल पृछ लें।

श्री यशपाल सिंह : क्या यह बात सही है कि हमारी रेलवे लाइनें सेकड़ों साल पुरानी हैं और उनको रिप्लेसमेंट नहीं हो सका है और नये इंजन उन पर फिट नहीं करते हैं, यह कारण ऐक्सिडेंट्स का है।

श्री शाहनवाज खां : यह वजह नहीं है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह वजह तो नहीं हो सकती। लाइन पर आ जाने की वजह से ऐसा हुआ है।

श्री शाहनवाज खां : ऐक्सिडेंट जो हुआ है वह इस लिये कि रेल गाड़ियों की आपस में टक्कर हो गई है।

श्री श्रीकारलाल बेरवा (कोटा) : हमारे यहां इंजन ठीक बने हुए हैं, सिग्नल भी ठीक बने हुए हैं, लाइन भी सिग्नल होती है, तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि इस मौके पर कुसूर कंट्रोल का है या सिग्नेलर का है या स्टेशन

मास्टर का है। किस के ऊपर यह जिम्मेदारी आयेगी।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह तो एम्बवायरी ही बतलायेगी।

श्री श्रीकारलाल बेरवा : कंट्रोल तो तीन स्टेशन पहले से कंट्रोल करता है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह तो जब तहकीकात होगी तब पता चलेगा कि किस ने ठीक काम नहीं किया या किस की गलती से हुआ।

श्री श्रीकारलाल बेरवा : अक्सर इस तरह के ऐक्सिडेंट्स होते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अगर मिनिस्टर साहब कह दें कि फलां का कुसूर है तो एम्बवायरी करने की जरूरत क्या है।

Shri Maheswar Naik (Mayurbhanj): The hon. Minister has just now stated that the express train collided head-on with a stationary goods train. May I know whether the line for the express train was not clear so that the express train could get on the line where the goods train was already standing?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: That is obvious. When this head-on collision took place there has been a serious failure. But whose failure it is and how exactly it has happened, the inquiry will decide.

Shri Joachim Alva (Kanara) rose—

Mr. Speaker: There were only four names; others are not allowed to participate . . .

Shri Joachim Alva: On account of the railway accident . . .

Mr. Speaker: No.