

# LOK SABHA DEBATES

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Thursday, August 7, 1980/Sravana 16,  
1902 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of  
the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

#### Loss of Fertilisers at Miraj Railway Station

\*878. SHRI RATANSINH RAJDA:  
Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be  
pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware  
of the loss of 500 tonnes of fertilisers  
at Miraj railway station on way to  
Panvel which had been ordered by  
Government of Maharashtra from Goa;

(b) whether due to negligence of the  
railway staff who did not care to pro-  
tect the fertiliser wagons from rains,  
the fertilisers were reduced to pulp  
and completely useless;

(c) is it also true that 2500 bags of  
cement have been similarly rendered  
useless due to negligence on the part  
of railway staff at Miraj and Panvel;

(d) will the Government fix up res-  
ponsibility on the concerned staff and  
take action against them for the loss  
of fertilisers; and

(e) is it a fact that there are only  
two sheds at Panvel station against  
the requirement of minimum 10 sheds?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE  
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI  
MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (e) A state-  
ment is laid on the able of the Sabha.

## Statement

(a) There was no case of damage  
to fertilizer consignments at Miraj in  
the recent past.

(b) At Panvel station 3383 bags of  
urea, received from Goa between  
12-6-1980 and 17-7-1980, were found  
affected by rain water resulting in net  
loss of 23.73 tonnes. No Railway staff  
at Miraj or Panvel is held responsible  
for damage as the staff concerned had  
taken all possible precautions to guard  
against the consignments getting  
damaged by rain.

(c) There was no case of damage to  
cement consignments at Miraj. How-  
ever, 12 consignments of cement  
consisting of 9,776 bags were loaded  
in open wagons by senders from  
Raghavapuram (BG) to Panvel (BG)  
in May-June, 1980. Out of these, 4616  
bags were found affected by wet  
resulting in net loss of 91.14 tonnes of  
cement. This traffic did not undergo  
any transshipment. No negligence on  
the part of the Railway Staff has been  
established.

(d) Negligence on the part of the  
Railway staff has not been established  
so far.

(e) At present two temporary and  
one permanent sheds are available at  
Panvel station which can accommo-  
date about 14 wagon-loads. The work  
on the extension of the existing per-  
manent covered shed at Panvel is in  
progress. When completed, this  
extension of goods shed will accom-  
modate another 22 wagon-loads and  
will be adequate for the present level  
of traffic.

**SHRI RATANSINH RAJDA:** The reply of the hon. Minister is completely unsatisfactory and full of inconsistencies. In answer to part (a) of the question, he has stated that there was no case of damage of fertilisers, but in part (b) he has accepted that 3,383 bags of urea were damaged. The hon. Minister, I think, is aware that urea is also a fertiliser. This is how inconsistencies are there.

He has stated that no Railway staff at Miraj was responsible for the damage, but according to press reports in all the Maharashtra dailies, it was a case of negligence and dereliction of duty on the part of the Railway staff. So, I would like to know what, according to the Minister, is the cause of the damage.

**SHRI MALLIKARJUN:** With due respect to the hon. Member, he would notice that part (a) of the question is about Miraj. So, the information furnished is that at Miraj no damage occurred. In reply to part (b) of the question we have agreed there was damage I also know that urea is a fertiliser. The fertiliser was sent from Goa to Panvel. At Miraj there was transshipment because it was travelling by metre gauge up to Miraj and from Miraj it had to go on broad gauge. It was coming in covered wagons up to Miraj, but from Miraj no covered wagons were available. Therefore, we had to board it into box wagons. The South Central Railway has stated that up to Poona there was no lapse on the part of the Railway staff. While travelling from Poona to Panvel, it was covered by tarpaulin, but because of unfortunate rains, some damage occurred on the way to Panvel.

**SHRI RATANSINH RAJDA:** This is a highly objectionable reply. He says that precautions were taken by covering it with tarpaulin, and yet he says that because of rain it has been damaged. So, there are inconsistencies. I think the Minister should not try to shield the members of the staff who

are responsible for dereliction of duty. A great loss has occurred to the farmers because the Chief Minister took special interest in ordering this consignment and the fertilisers were being sent to the farmers in a particular district in Maharashtra, but because of this loss, the farmers are without urea, and that would affect agricultural production. So, in the light of what I have said, would he kindly carry out investigations and fix the responsibility of the staff?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF):** I do appreciate the anxiety of the hon. Member. The question is that of line capacity and the availability of wagons and when this happened. As the House is aware, in the last few months, all the wagons both covered and open were diverted to thermal power plants for loading of coal. We had to supply the essential commodities to most of the drought affected areas and so we had so much of burden. Sometimes it is unfortunate that because of the situation, we have to take some calculated risks and in this something has gone wrong. Nevertheless, we have ordered an inquiry into this.

#### Tamluk-Digha Line

\*879. **SHRI SUDHIR KUMAR GIRI:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made in respect of survey in connection with the construction of a rail-link between Tamluk and Digha in Midnapore, West Bengal; and

(b) the factors to be taken into account for the purpose of the construction of the said rail-link?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN):** (a) and (b). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.