

[Shri Jagjivan Ram]

via Asansol, was received at Asansol from Khargpur. Early in the morning on 31-7-1957, it was placed on the siding serving the transshipment shed so that the contents may be sorted and despatched to the different destinations. The wagon was opened at about 11 00 hours and very shortly thereafter its contents exploded.

The explosion was of severe intensity. It was felt not only all over the town of Asansol, but over a radius of several miles. Besides the wagon containing the fireworks, three wagons by its side were damaged, and the roof of the transshipment shed was blown off. The track was also severely damaged and thrown out of alignment.

As a result of the explosion, 10 died on the spot and 4 more have since died in the hospital. One of those who died is a tranship clerk, another a member of the Railway Protection Force and three labourers working under the labour contractor. The remaining dead bodies have not yet been finally identified, but it is believed that two of them are of tranship clerks and the remaining of labourers employed by the contractor.

Two persons who were seriously injured were taken to the Railway Hospital where they are progressing.

Some persons also received minor injuries, but their exact number is not known.

An enquiry into the accident by a Committee of Railway Officers commenced yesterday (18/8/57). The Inspector of Explosives, Calcutta, the Additional Superintendent of Police, Asansol, and a representative of the local District Magistrate were also present during the enquiry.

The Indian Explosives Act, the Indian Railways Act and the Red Tariff issued by the Indian Railway Conference Association prescribe a number of regulations in regard to the packing, marking, handling and transport of explosives and dangerous

goods. Some of these are for the senders to comply with and the others for the railway staff to implement.

At this stage, with the enquiry into the accident still in progress, it is not possible to say what was the cause of the explosion.

POINT OF INFORMATION

Shri Viswanatha Reddy (Rajampet): May I make a submission, Sir? Some days ago I gave notice of a call attention notice with regard to the Pataskar Report on the subject of the Madras-Andhra border. Since then certain reports which purport to be substantial portions of the Pataskar Report have appeared in the Madras Press. I wish to know from the Home Minister whether he is prepared to make a statement on the subject.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has given a call attention notice regarding Pataskar's Report on the ground that some portions have appeared in the Madras Press. I have passed it on, I think, to the hon. Home Minister for consideration and information.

The Minister of Home Affairs (Pandit G. B. Pant): I don't think I have received it.

Mr. Speaker: Let me see where it is. I shall try to send it on immediately. I will look into it and see.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS*—contd. MINISTRY OF LAW

Mr. Speaker: As suggested by me on the 31st July, 1957, Members who want to speak on the Demands for Grants in respect of various Ministries should send me chits intimating their names, Division Numbers, State, Constituency and Party to which they belong and also whether they have already taken part in any other debate or debates on the General Budget. Even in case where parties and groups give names, they may use the same forms.

*Moved with the recommendation of the President