

certainly do the drilling work. As far as the question how many wells are needed, is concerned, nobody can say that there have been cases where people have dug 500 holes and got nothing and in the 501st hole got everything which is at a depth of 5000 ft. below the water level.

SHRI P. M. SAYEED: Sir, my question is concerned with off-shore drilling. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the off-shore drilling work in Kerala, drilling work in Lakshadweep will be carried out?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: On the West-Coast of Kerala from Cochin to Lakshadweep, we have been assessing the whole thing. The seismographic recordings have been taken. So far, Lakshadweep is not a site indicated for boring any hole.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: In his quest to have more oil to attain self-sufficiency, whether the O.N.G.C. and the other organisations have identified the areas where oil exploration could be done successfully and in that process whether Godavari

MR. SPEAKER: No, No, the question is concerned with Kerala. Godavari is not in Kerala. It does not arise. Please read the question. Come back to Kerala.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Whether in his quest for oil to attain self-sufficiency in course of time, the hon. Minister has identified the areas where we can successfully get oil and in that process Kerala is one and I want to know which are the other places where he finds commercial production of oil?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, Godavari Basin is also one of them and apparently in Andhra Pradesh, we are already doing drilling and Narsapur is one where on-shore drilling is done.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 130. The Member is not here. Q. No. 131

Suburban Traffic in Metropolitan cities

*131. **PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the suburban daily traffic in all metropolitan areas, and particularly in Bombay is increasingly getting heavy and crowded;

(b) if so, whether Government are taking any short-term as well as long-term measures to give relief and safety and comfort to the daily commuters on the said trains;

(c) if so; broad details thereof;

(d) whether the commuters expressed their resentment and even damaged Railway property on the Central and Western sectors of the suburban train services in Bombay in recent months and if so; broad facts thereto; and

(e) steps taken by Government to tackle such events?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAYAN): (a) to (e). A statement is laid on the table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (c). Yes; Sir. Having regard to the availability of requisite facilities, steps are being taken to introduce additional suburban trains, extend the runs of existing trains and also to augment their loads. During 1978-79 thirty six suburban trains were introduced in Calcutta area, three in Delhi area and fifteen existing trains were also extended.

Proposals are in hand to augment the loads of remaining eight car units in Calcutta area to nine car units and also to introduce additional trains. In Madras, EMU services are proposed to be provided on Madras-Gummidipundi and Madras-Tiruvallur sometime after April, 1979 when the electrification takes effect. A separate suburban terminal for Madras area is also being contemplated.

In Calcutta, underground railway line between Dum-Dum Tolly Gunge is under construction and also the doubling of Dum-Dum-Barasat section is being included in 1979-80 Works Programme.

In Bombay area, 21 additional trains were introduced on Western Railway from 8-4-77. The number of trains in the morning peak period on Western Railway system has been raised to 80 since April, 1977 time table as against 61 and in the evening peak period from 50 to 60 trains. The frequency of services has also been brought down from 3 minutes to 2.5 minutes and the number of services are further to be increased gradually so as to provide 2 minutes frequency with matching availability of EMU stock and completion of back up facilities augmentation of power supply arrangements ancillary car shed etc. Similarly, on Central Railway; additional capacity is being generated by gradually reducing the time interval between successive trains from 6 minutes at present to 5 minutes in the first phase and finally to 3 minutes in the third phase. An additional corridor consisting of double line electrified system in Bombay area is also being contemplated.

(d) Yes, Sir. A few cases of commuters' agitations have taken place recently in Bombay suburban section due to failure, late running and change of platforms. There was a demonstration by the commuters at Bombay V.T. on 26-5-78 due to change of platforms of suburban train service. On 30-5-78, Bandra bound commuters squatted on the track at Vadala Road station of Harbour Branch for about half an hour demanding diversion of Mankhurd bound train to Bandra. On 31-5-78 there was a case of rowdiness at Kurla and on 1-6-78 at Chembur over termination of Mankhurd-bound train at Kurla. On 12-6-78 there was a case of rowdiness by commuters of Dombivili station due to delayed running of local as a result of interruption of power supply which had taken place due to lightning. On 19-10-78 at Bombay V.T. suburban services were suspend-

ed from 19.45 hours to 21.00 hours due to altercation between some of the commuters and the railway staff.

(e) A high level study team has gone into the working of Central Railway suburban service and has suggested certain measures which are being processed. A special meeting of Suburban Railway Users Consultative Committee was also called and position explained to the members. The press correspondents have also been invited by Railway administration to enlist their co-operation for educating public regarding various reasons leading to cancellation/unpunctual running of suburban trains.]

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must say that the statement which the Minister has laid on the Table of the House is very exhaustive and considerably satisfactory because it does indicate that the Railway Administration is well seized of the whole problem of the metropolitan railways in four cities. May I ask him in particular, whether it is a fact that a large number of suburban trains in the 4 areas; particularly in Bombay sector are because of their excessive use considerably out-dated in terms of their efficiency, servicing and running? And whether Government are considering not only in terms of increasing the frequency of trains but also replacing the old ones rapidly so that the general problem of overcrowding can be solved and passengers can be given more comfort and trains could be run with more speed especially during the time of peak hours in the morning and evening?

SHRI SHEO NARAIN: We are trying to replace old ones.

श्री दोनेन मट्टा चार्य : कब तक हो जाएगा ।
[श्री शिव नारायण : पैसा चाहिये, दादा ।

आने जाने की सुबह शाम की दिक्कत का माननीय सदस्य ने जिक्र किया है । यह सही शिकायत है । उसको भी हम हिसाब किताब कर रहे हैं ।

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: But he has not been to reply to my

point of the first question, that is, what is the Government's strategy with regard to replacement of out of use trains by having new trains?

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that he is trying to do that.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: He did not say that.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The hon. Member has made a specific reference to suburban trains in Bombay. He is right. The difficulty is that about 40 per cent of the rakes on the Central Railway have got traction motors and compressors which have imported materials. These are obsolete designs and therefore the original manufacturers do not want to go into that. Therefore, we are trying to import spare parts which are available. In the meantime, we have given orders to the indigenous manufactures to replace all those components so that in due course, full replacement will be available and thereby we will be able to improve efficiency of the suburban trains.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: The Minister, in his statement, has given details regarding several acts of passengers' violent demonstrations at various stations on the Western Railway and the Central Railway in the Bombay area. Although he has mentioned in part (e) of the answer that certain steps have been taken in educating public opinion, my question is what concrete steps are being taken to see that the waiting on the platforms is reduced to the minimum, because what happens is that in Bombay, particularly in the morning and evening, lakhs of passengers and office-goers either go to their offices or go back to their homes? They are naturally, after day's work, tired and exhausted, and a little more extra delay because of various factors causes considerable tension and that tension leads to violence. Therefore, what steps the Government are taking to reduce the gap of waiting period so that tension does not go high; for, once the tension

goes high, nobody can help the passengers. They are bound to take to violent demonstrations. I hope he has got that point and he will try to see that time lag between one train and another is reduced to the minimum?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: As far as Western Railway suburban services are concerned, we are changing the frequency of the trains from 3 minutes to 2.5 minutes. As far as the Central Railway suburban services are concerned, we are trying to increase the frequency from 6 minutes to 5 minutes and ultimately we want to improve it to even 3 minutes. The only difficulty is with regard to new spare parts that are required for traction motor and compressor. We have already booked an order for imported materials. As soon as we get them, we will be able to improve it.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: He has not replied to my question.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that by increasing the frequency of the trains, they are going to do it. I understand your question.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: A newspaper like *Free Press Journal* in Bombay had written many articles. I do not know whether he has seen those articles.

MR. SPEAKER: He has answered your question by saying that I have reduced crowding by increasing the frequency of the trains.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: Apart from finding the necessary financial resources how is he tackling some of the psychological and human situations by being alert?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE. As you have rightly pointed out, we have told him that the frequency has already been increased. But in addition to that about psychological factor, I may tell the august House that we have made arrangement at Dadar Station whereby

the driver has to immediately tell two staff members about the compressor or the traction motor is not being in working order so that immediately they can communicate the message to V. T. Station. By this measure, when the train comes on platform No. 1, there will be no occasion or cause to announce that the same train will be going from another platform and passengers should shift to another platform. If that psychological factor is taken into account, all the trouble will be over.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI: May I know from the hon. Minister whether there is any phased programme regarding replacement of various parts that have been mentioned now?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I have already booked an order for imported materials and we hope that by February we will be able to get the first consignment of some of the components. They are only spares. But as far as replacement is concerned, they will be completely replaced by indigenous parts.

श्रीमती भृगुलाल गोरे : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं जानती हूँ कि मंत्री महोदय ने दबाव में कहा है और यह बात सही है कि मेट्रोल रेलवे में जो इंस्टॉल हुआ, गये 6 महीने में बीसा वैस्टन रेलवे में नहीं हुआ, लेकिन मैं उनसे जानना चाहती हूँ कि क्या वे जानते हैं कि 1980 तक वैस्टन रेलवे में कोई नये रेकम नहीं आ रहे हैं और अगर इसी प्रकार से चलेगा तो वैस्टन रेलवे की परिस्थिति भी बहुत खराब हो जायेगी ?

सबबन रेलवे यूनर्स कंसल्टेटिव कमेटी में पिछले महीने एक राय से प्रस्ताव पारित हुआ कि वैस्टन रेलवे में जो रेकम की मांग है, वह पूरी करने के लिये कदम उठाये जायें, मैं जानना चाहती हूँ कि क्या मंत्री महोदय इसके बारे में कोई प्राश्वासन दे सकते हैं ? अगर रेकम कम मैन्वु-फैक्चर हो रहे हैं तो क्या वह इम्पोर्ट करेंगे जिससे वैस्टन रेलवे को भी इसमें प्रीफरेंस मिल सके ? क्या इस बारे में वह कुछ कार्यवाही करेंगे ?

प्रो० मधु दंडवते : माननीया सदस्य वैस्टन रेलवे के सबबन में रहने वाली महिला हैं इसलिये उनको वैस्टन रेलवे की ज्यादा फिक्र है यह मैं जानता हूँ । यह भी मझे जानकारी है कि वहाँ के सबबन पेसेजर्स एसोसियेशन ने एक राय से मांग की है कि 1980 तक उनको रेकम दिये

जायें, अगर उससे पहले मिल सके तो ठीक होगा लेकिन कम-से-कम 1980 तक भी हो जायें तो ठीक होगा । चाहे इस प्रकार की तकलीफ वैस्टन रेलवे में न हो जाये इसलिये हम रेकम का इन्तजाम करने की कोशिश करेंगे, ऐसा मैं प्राश्वासन देता हूँ ।

Bursting of Gas Cylinders in Delhi +

133. **SHRI KACHARULAL HEM-RAJ JAIN:**

SHRIMATI MOHSINA KID-WAI:

Will the Minister of **PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a truck-load of domestic gas cylinders had burst out in Kotla Mubarakpur, New Delhi; on 10th October; 1978 and caused great public panic in the area;

(b) the reasons for the bursting of gas cylinders; and

(c) the loss of life and wealth as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) A truck loaded with 250 domestic cooking gas cylinders was being brought from the Indian Oil Corporation's Shakurbasti (Delhi) bottling plant on 10th October, 1978. The cylinders were to be delivered to the distributing agent at Babu Park, Kotla Mubarakpur New Delhi. The truck caught fire leading to the bursting of a large number of cylinders.

(b) The exact cause of the fire and explosion is still under investigation by the Controller of Explosives, Agra. Preliminary investigations tend to show leakage of gas from filled cylinders. These cylinders appear to have got ignited from an external source of fire likely to have been brought into the truck carrying the cylinders.

(c) The total estimated loss of property is about Rs. 1.5 lakhs. This in-