

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): O.K. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please ...*(Interruptions)*... अब आप बैठिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री रघुनन्दन शर्मा : निश्चित रूप से आप देश के प्रति और मध्य प्रदेश के प्रति, ...*(व्यवधान)*... दोनों के प्रति, सड़कों के मामले में सजग रहेंगे, जागृत रहेंगे ...*(व्यवधान)*... और पक्षपात तथा सौतेलेपन की पुरानी नीति को बदलेंगे। बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. JURIEN): O.k. Now, discussion on the working of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is concluded. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री रुद्रनाथ पाणि : सर, एक मिनट। ...*(व्यवधान)*... सर, इसमें National Water Ways भी आता है। मैंने यहां बैठ कर सब सुना, लेकिन National Water Ways के बारे में किसी ने भी जिक्र नहीं किया। इसलिए कल जब माननीय मंत्री जी उत्तर दें, तो कृपया वह National Water Ways के बारे में भी बताएं।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. JURIEN): O.k. Now, discussion on the working of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways is concluded. Hon. Minister will reply tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)*...

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Decision taken by Board of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation on the accident at the DMRC construction site on 12th of July 2009

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): Sir, I am to make a statement. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. JURIEN): No, no. ...*(Interruptions)*... It is last but one.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: How long will the House sit, Sir? ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): First Special Mentions and immediately after that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: They will take their own time. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN) : Okay, if the House agrees, I will allow the Minister to make his statement and after that we can have Special Mentions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Okay, fine. Mr. Jaipal Reddy.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I have to make a statement on the decisions taken by the Board of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation on the basis of the report of the high level committee that inquired into the incident at the DMRC construction site on the 12th July, 2009.

Sir, as I have already apprised the House on 13th July, 2009, a launching girder along with a portion of Metro viaduct collapsed at Zamrudpur near East of Kailash in South Delhi at about 5.00 a.m. on 12th July 2009. A high level four member Inquiry Committee was constituted by the Delhi

Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to investigate the incident. Subsequently, the Chief Engineer (Design) of DMRC was withdrawn from the Committee on 21st July, 2009 and the remaining experts have now submitted the Report. The main findings of the Committee regarding the causes of the accidents are (i) serious deficiency in the design of the cantilever arm; and (ii) the concrete not having the adequate strength probably due to lack of adequate curing of the concrete. DMRC had decided to take the following action:-

(c) The Design Consultants, M/s Arch Consultancy Services to be blacklisted for five years. The structural consultant M/s Tondon consultants, who did not give the correct advice to DMRC, is being debarred for two years.

(d) Shri V. P. Srivastava and Shri Mukesh Thakur, the two Deputy Chief Engineers directly responsible for the designs and site supervision, have been placed under suspension.

(e) Shri Rajan Kataria, the Chief Engineer (Design), DMRC to be issued with a major penalty charge sheet.

(f) Shri C. Mallonga, the expatriate Consultant of General Consultants, who had direct responsibility for ensuring quality of works, to be immediately de-mobilised and replaced.

(g) The Contractor M/s Gammon India to be issued a show-cause notice for blacklisting for two years.

(h) Shri Vijay Anand, the Director of DMRC in whose jurisdiction this accident took place as well as the previous accident involving a launching girder collapse, has been repatriated back to the Railways.

(i) The DMRC has started a special drive to check all the cantilever piers so far constructed and their designs are now being rechecked by M/s Shirish Patel and Associates, a well known Design Consultant. Based on their advice, necessary action will be taken to ensure that all the cantilever piers are safe.

(j) The DMRC has also decided to get all the designs checked in future by the General Consultants or by an outside Consultancy. The Design Wing of DMRC is also being substantially strengthened.

(k) The General Consultants are also being strengthened to ensure safety and quality of construction.

(l) DMRC has also initiated steps to revitalize the Tool Box Safety Drill to all the workers before commencement of the shift. DMRC has also started a crash course for three days in safety rules and regulations for every worker involved at the construction site. The entire work force will be covered within a period of 15 days.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, the hon. Member has in the statement elaborated what action is proposed to be taken against consultants, contractors, officers, engineers and it is said that the design of the cantilever arm was seriously deficient. I have got two

clarifications to seek. My first clarification is: the action will be on etc. and that is an issue on which the Minister has elaborated. Has the Minister looked into or have the experts looked into the fact that in order to reach the deadline for the Commonwealth Games, the hurry in the time phase which is taking place is seriously compromising the safety considerations? After this accident and the last one which took place late last year at Lakshmi Nagar, now a series of defects are being pointed out in the media and some admissions are also being made by the DMRC which was otherwise doing an excellent job in Delhi. This is a matter of concern that in order to meet that deadline of the Commonwealth Games, are we compromising on security?

The second one is: The elevated platforms of the Metro at both the places—Laxmi Nagar and Zamrudpur—where the two major accidents took place are in very congested localities. At least, this one is not a broad road; it is a little bit narrow road. Even when this was being planned, there was a huge demand amongst the people living in those areas that like in many other areas this should also be underground so that the safety consideration, as also the aesthetic consideration of the national capital could be retained. Is there a serious consideration going on that to have such indefinitely large elevated constructions was a compromise also with safety in order to save the extra expenditure which may involve by having underground Metro? Thank you.

श्री कलराज मिश्र (उत्तर प्रदेश) : सर, मैं Commonwealth Games के बारे में ही पूछना चाहता था कि उसको deadline मानकर जो कार्य किया जा रहा है, कहीं यह safety value से समझौता तो नहीं किया जा रहा है? मैं यही पूछना चाहता था, जिसे अरुण जी ने पूछ लिया।

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, the hon. Minister in his statement has mentioned two deficiencies for the causes of the accident. The first one is a serious deficiency in the design of the cantilever arm. He has elaborated it. The second point he has said, 'the concrete not having the adequate strength.' This is the second point. He has drawn the conclusion. Then, he has added, 'probably, due to lack of adequate curing of the concrete.' What is the reason? This statement is prepared by his department officials. On the one hand the hon. Minister is saying that the concrete does not have adequate strength and, on the other, he says that there is lack of adequate curing. Sir, perhaps, the hon. Minister is not sure whether it is due to lack of adequate curing of the concrete. Nothing has been mentioned about the action on these things in the Report. Then, Sir, there is lack of serious supervision. The hon. Minister has not reported what was the reason for that and why the concrete does not have the adequate strength. He has drawn the conclusion. And, what is the reason? He says, 'perhaps, due to lack of adequate curing of the concrete.' I want to have clarification from the hon. Minister on this and why no action has been reported about the second point. Thank you.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, it is appreciated the actions taken by the Ministry and the resolution to restart the work within a period of 15 days. I would like to know whether it will cover what is stated in para 7 of the Statement. It says, 'The DMRC has started a special drive to check all the cantilever piers so far constructed and their designs.' Sir, if they are found to be faulty, will it be possible to set them right within these fifteen days? Thank you.

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद (बिहार) : सर, मेरा सीधा सवाल यह है कि अभी जो रिपोर्ट आई है कि 15 पायों में दरार हो गए हैं।...(व्यवधान)...

एक माननीय सदस्य : सत्रह ... (व्यवधान)...

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद : हाँ, 17, जो भी है। मेरा मंत्री जी से यह पूछना है कि क्या उन्हें पुनः बनाया जाएगा या उनमें ही सुधार किया जाएगा? अगर उनको ही सुधारा जाएगा तो क्या यह safety point of view से ठीक होगा?

SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT (Maharashtra): Sir, whatever happened is very unfortunate. My request and suggestion to the Government is, why not the entire work be suspended, get it checked by third party expert, the names of which you have mentioned. I am saying this because we are playing with the lives of thousands and thousands of people. Forget the Commonwealth Games now. The Commonwealth Games will come and go. But, the Metro will remain for 100 years. This is number one.

Secondly, I come from Mumbai. Metro work has started in Mumbai. I want to know from the hon. Minister what type of security measures that the Government is taking. Now, we found that there is a fault in design, if it is so, what will happen to Mumbai Metro? As Mr. Jaitley has rightly said that the area is very narrow. In Mumbai, it is narrower than Delhi. Therefore, my suggestion to the hon. Minister is to suspend the work and get it re-examined in Delhi and Mumbai. Thank you.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR (Tripura): Sir, the hon. Minister has mentioned two major causes of the accident. My question is, whether these two causes correspond only to the places where the incidents occurred or all throughout. I want to know whether you have examined it. Whether it is all throughout, that has to be enquired.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Mr. Madhu; ask one question only. ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the Minister in his explanation tried to ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Shall I repeat? I think, he has not heard.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): He has heard. Yes, Mr. Madhu.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, I would like to know which is the most important aspect of causing such an accident. That is not spelt out clearly. The major cause for this defect is not properly presented. I would like to know what measures they are going to take.

DR. PRABHAKAR KORE (Karnataka): Sir, this is the statement of Minister regarding accidents. But, today, if you had just gone through media statements, there are even new places where they have found the cracks at various cantilevers, I want to know whether this whole project is design-defective. If so, what is the next action that the Government is going to take? That is my question.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I am grateful to all the nine hon. Members, more particularly, to the Opposition Leader, Shri Arun Jaitley. I would like to make one general observation. Accidents should be avoided in principle. But during the construction time, accidents take place, unfortunately. We should, however, try and avoid, at least minimise, the number of accidents. I would like to state in all humility, going by international benchmarks, at the construction time, we are not doing badly. We are slightly ahead of Singapore, slightly behind London. That, however, is no source of comfort.

We need to understand another thing. Accidents that occur at the construction stage are qualitatively different from the accidents that occur during the operation time. It gives me satisfaction, if not pride, to tell the House that during the last seven years of Phase-I, DMRC, not one accident has taken place during the operation time. Therefore, there are all kinds of fears in the minds of people because this distinction between accidents during the construction time and accidents during operation time is being blurred. Therefore, we, at least, the hon. Members, should note it so that the people will be able to assimilate it. Arunji has made two relevant points. One is, whether we are compromising on quality, efficiency for the sake of hype. I should like to tell the House with all the sense of responsibility that safety is not being compromised. The Commonwealth Games is no doubt a big peg on which we hang the targets of our major city projects. It is our natural anxiety, as a nation, to see that the Commonwealth Games event leaves a lasting legacy.

I was watching the BBC only two days back where even Londoners were seeking to leave behind a lasting legacy after their Olympic Games in 2012. It is a legitimate, natural, national aspiration. But all these things are not being built for the sake of the Commonwealth Games; they are being built with a focus on the Commonwealth Games; they would have been built even without the Commonwealth Games. Therefore, I would like to assure the Leader of Opposition and all Members that safety is not being compromised. We have enough cushions in terms of time schedules. Some of the schedules may be relaxed; even so, we will have time enough to complete all our programmes in time for the Commonwealth Games.

There is a general opposition to elevated metro. The difference in cost between the elevated metro and underground metro is almost three times. Secondly, and equally importantly in my view, the safety requirements needed for the underground metro in regard to fire hazards and others are far more elaborate. Therefore, it is incorrect to think that the underground metro is somehow safer than the elevated metro. This kind of an impression is there among the people. I would like to address those concerns; this is not the case.

Sir, hon. Member, Mr. Prasanta Chatterjee had raised a point in regard to inadequate strength of the concrete. I have looked into this when the report was given to me. I am told, concrete was found to be lacking in strength while the quality of cement was good enough. Therefore, this was an observation made by the technical committee.

SHRI PRASANTACHATTERJEE: Are you reconstructing it?

SHRI JAIPAL S. REDDY: No, we are not.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: But the concrete does not have enough strength.

SHRI JAIPAL S. REDDY: No. For everything, the technical committee does not have to come to definitive positions. They give a report. They referred to two variables, namely, the concrete, the overall product, and the input called cement. The word 'probably' was inserted because the technical committee in its report did not give a finally affirmative position. Therefore, I used the word 'probably' there.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: You have drawn the conclusion that the concrete does not have adequate strength and then said 'probably' about the action.

SHRI JAIPAL S. REDDY: For example, the contractor concerned in the case of concrete was Gammon India. It is a major construction company. A show-cause notice is being issued to Gammon India for blacklisting the company. This, you will appreciate, is a very serious step that we are taking.

Cantilever piers become necessary wherever there are sharp curves. The 67th pier, no doubt, entailed a long cantilever. Some mistakes have crept in, which have been honestly admitted to. Shri Rajniti Prasad had referred to some piers now being found to have cracks. In all, I am told, there are 18 cantilever piers – which are different from other piers, as you know which are found to have cracks. These cracks could be superficial or could be structural, if they are superficial, of course, we do not have to bother. If they are structural, then we have many other options like external pre-stressed treatment, jacketing, etc. These could have been done for six to seven piers also. But this was not done because the consultant gave a wrong report that the crack was superficial. Therefore, we don't have to worry about any of these things. Every cantilever pier in the whole city is being thoroughly checked. In case any of them is found to have a structural problem, some of these fundamental remedies will be applied.

Sir, Bharatkumarji suggested a remedy. I think the remedy you are suggesting is infinitely worse than the malady we are facing. I don't think that we should rush to such a panicky conclusion. Please do not spread the panic. DMRC is a magnificent product on which India, as a country, is proud and I may also tell you that it stands on its own in the comity of nations as well. You are trying to develop doubts about metro rail itself. That is not correct. Whether the metro rail is built through PPP model ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Don't mistake me. I am not taking any doubt on anything, nor am I blaming. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am saying that we are playing with the lives of lakhs of people. The metro will be remaining there for next hundred years. So, why don't you suspend the work for fifteen days or one month, check everything, clear all your doubts and then restart the work? That is the simple thing because I also have the background ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: I appreciate your concerns and I appreciate the nobility of your motives. But we should not get scared. Phase-I of DMRC has been running magnificently, almost faultlessly

for the last seven years. This must set all your doubts to rest.

Now Madhujii of CPM, my good friend, has asked me as to what is the major cause. I referred to two major causes. I cannot now substitute my judgement for the judgement of the Technical Committee. The Committee has arrived at the conclusion that there are two causes. I am not competent to respond to as to which one of the two is more important.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Cantilever piers were found defective. Will they be completed within 15 days time-frame?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: No, fifteen days period is meant for training and retooling of workers. What we are first doing is to get every cantilever pier checked, not only 18 piers which have shown cracks but every other cantilever pier. I will not be able to give a time-frame, but I am making a commitment in regard to thorough checking of every cantilever pier. Sir, well I thank all the hon. Members and I would like to assure them that this was a mishap. There was a fault in the process of construction of 67 piers. That has alerted us to all the negative possibilities. We will be on guard. From every accident, we also learn. I am sure DMRC which has done a wonderful job will learn more as an institution from this incident.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Now, we shall take Special Mentions. Those who want to lay their Special Mention on the Table can do so.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Need to take steps for proper management and conservation of religious places of archaeological importance in Jammu and Kashmir

श्री कलराज मिश्र (उत्तर प्रदेश) : महोदय, कश्मीर घाटी में आतंकियों द्वारा हिन्दू और मुसलमानों के बीच दरार पैदा करने की कोशिशों के बावजूद दोनों ही समुदायों में आपसी विश्वास कायम है, किन्तु दुर्भाग्य से सरकारी विभाग अपनी जिम्मेदारियों से पीछे हट रहे हैं। कश्मीरी पंडितों के घाटी छोड़ने के बाद पुरातत्व महत्व के और धार्मिक आस्था के केन्द्र मंदिरों में पूजापाठ का संकट पैदा हो गया है। इनके रख-रखाव और देखभाल से पुरातत्व विभाग के द्वारा अपने हाथ खींच लेने के कारण इनके ध्वस्त होने का संकट पैदा हो गया है।

लिदर नदी के किनारे लगभग 900 साल पुराने शिव मंदिर का रखरखाव कश्मीरी पंडित एसोसिएशन करता था, किन्तु उनके कश्मीर घाटी छोड़ने के बाद वर्ष 1989 से मंदिर राज्य पुरातत्व विभाग के पास आया गया। आतंकियों की धमकियों के बाद पुरातत्व विभाग ने धन की कमी दिखाकर रखरखाव से अपना हाथ खींच लिया, जिससे इनके ध्वस्त होने का भी खतरा पैदा हो गया है। मंदिर के दर्शन और पूजा बंद न हो, इसके लिए मुस्लिम समुदाय ने पहल करके एक अच्छा और सराहनीय कार्य शुरू किया है जिससे आपस में विश्वास और प्रेम बढ़ रहा है, किन्तु सरकार का उपेक्षापूर्ण रवैया खेदजनक है।

मैं सदन के माध्यम से मांग करता हूँ कि ऐसे पुरातत्व की दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण और पौराणिक आस्था व भाईचारे के प्रतीक स्थलों की उचित देखभाल और रखरखाव की व्यवस्था करे। धन्यवाद।