

[Mr. Chairman.]

the Home Minister in regard to the alleged offensive remarks made by the Minister of Agriculture of Andhra Pradesh against Harijans.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE (Maharashtra): I have to make a submission, Sir. One hour's time will be insufficient for such an important discussion.

SHRI ABID ALI (Maharashtra): I want to secure permission . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): May I make . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want first to finish the Calling Attention notice and then I will come it.

श्री राज नारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
श्रीमान्, क्योंकि यह हरिजनों से संबंधित
मामला है, इसलिए आप समय बढ़ा दीजिये।

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will be looked into at the time when the discussion, comes up.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

COLLISION BETWEEN AN ELECTRIC TRAIN AND A GOODS TRAIN NEAR EGMORE, MADRAS

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Railways to the collision between an electric train and a goods train on May 1, 1968, near Egmore, Madras, in the context of the series of railway accidents in the country in the recent past.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH): Sir, on the 1st May, 1968 at 07-11 hours while goods train No. G-3 consisting of an electric locomotive and a goods van was leaving from Madras Eg-

more goods yard for Tambaram, Electric suburban train No. E-26 Ex-Tambaram to Madras collided head-on with it. As a result of this accident, 11 persons were hurt grievously and another 80 sustained trivial and simple injuries.

The injured persons were attended to at the site and Egmore dispensary. Four persons were discharged at the site after being given medical aid and 73 persons after being rendered first aid were taken to Perambur Railway Hospital from where 45 persons were discharged the same day. Only seven persons, 3 with grievous injuries and 4 with simple injuries now remain in the railway hospital and the rest have been discharged. Some 14 passengers went to the neighbouring Government hospital for medical attention from where 13 were discharged after being treated as outdoor patients for trivial injuries and one with grievous injury was admitted in the Government hospital. The condition of the persons still in hospitals is satisfactory.

The cause of the accident is under investigation by the Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety who is holding his inquiry commencing from today.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Sir, the main reason for giving notice of this Calling Attention is to draw the attention of the Government and yours that it has been the practice in this House, in Parliament, that soon after a railway accident, as early as possible the Minister makes a statement. Now is it the revised policy of the Government that since accidents are a normal thing and as so many accidents happen every day they need not be taken account of? During the recess period there were two or three serious accidents. One would have expected the Railway Minister to take the first opportunity and make a statement about them. After all, we were in recess for only

three weeks. I would like to know why the policy of the Railways has been changed in this matter. Has your approval been taken about it?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, the policy of the Railway Ministry has not changed in this particular matter. The fact that we made no statement earlier is because we considered that in this accident there has been no casualty. Even the loss of property was only to the extent of Rs. 12,000. As such if the hon'ble Member has taken it as an offence I am only too sorry. But only on that consideration I did not make any statement.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL; I am referring to the others. There were several accidents just as far we assembled.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa), Sir, the frequency of accidents in the Railway has made Railway travel hazardous compared to air travel these days. May I know, Sir, what concrete steps the Government are taking in the meantime. I know, Sir, the reply that would be given by the Railway Minister, namely, that they have set up a committee, and the Committee is supposed to give its findings in course of two years. By that time the causes of accidents now prevailing would have been out dated so that another Accident Committee would be needed. May I know, Sir, if the Government will thus hoodwink Parliament and the people in general by setting up a committee and then waiting for the report of the Committee to be placed before Parliament, or are they going to take any concrete step in the matter so that accidents can be avoided? Accidents have become so frequent that they have become a matter of course really. What are the steps that the Government is proposing to take to avoid these accidents. Let him say something categorically so that we know about it and the country knows about it. They have lost faith in your Railways.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: I can appreciate and understand the anxiety of the hon'ble Member. We are equally anxious in this matter because there have been serious accidents. This bunching of accidents at a time is really causing great anxiety to the Railway Ministry. I can understand the concern that the hon'ble Member expressed. But it is very difficult to say now what immediate steps—which can be taken—which could eliminate the number of accidents can be taken. Accidents are such that it is very difficult to rule them out.

In the case of accidents that have taken place within this short period, in the preliminary investigation it was found out that in most cases it had been because of the failure of the Railway staff. In three cases it was because of the Drivers' dis regarding the signal at danger and in one case because of the Railway staff not lowering the correct signal and admitting a train when a train was already on that line.

Sir, these are matters which are constantly engaging our attention. In the case of Southern India accidents we immediately constituted a judicial enquiry committee. That Committee is now going into the matter. And because of this bunching of accidents we have constituted, as the hon'ble Member pointed out—that is only what I can say now—a very high powered committee. That high-powered committee is headed by the ex-Chief Justice of India, Mr. Wanchoo, and there are some Members of Parliament also in that Committee. They have already started their work and I am sure that as a result of their investigation something will come out which will help the Railway Ministry at least to minimise the accidents as far as possible.

श्री गोडे मुराहरी (उत्तर प्रदेश) : सर
अभी कुछ महीनों के अन्दर कई रेलवे एक्सि-
डेंट्स हुये हैं और इससे पहले भी कई बार
रेलवे एक्सिडेंट्स हुये हैं और मेरा खयाल है

[श्री गोडे मुरारहि]

कई कमेटियों ने इसकी जाँच भी की है, क्या बात है कि हिन्दुस्तान में इतनी कमेटियों की जाँच के बाद भी कोई आटोमेटिक सेफ्टी डिवाइस जो अन्य देशों में लागू है, उसको यहाँ पर लागू नहीं किया गया ? यह कहना तो झूठ भी होगा कि रेलवे के पास पैसा नहीं है; क्योंकि उसको आमदनी होती है और रेलवे मिनिस्टर सरप्लस बजट भी हमारे सामने लाते हैं। इसलिये सबसे पहले उनको यह चाहिये कि वे आटोमेटिक सेफ्टी डिवाइस का इस्तेमाल करें। मैं जानना चाहूँगा कि रेलवे मिनिस्ट्री इसके बारे में क्या कर रही है ? उन्होंने यह बताया कि ऐक्सिडेंट रेलवे स्टाफ के फेल्योर से हुआ। रेलवे स्टाफ के फेल्योर आगे भी हो सकता है। चाहे आप जितनी भी कमेटियाँ बैठाइये, रेलवे स्टाफ का फेल्योर भी होगा और ऐक्सिडेंट्स भी होते रहेंगे। इसलिये क्या गवर्नमेंट यह उचित नहीं समझती कि आटोमेटिक सेफ्टी डिवाइस यहाँ पर इस्तेमाल किया जाय।

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, in 1960-61 when we had a similar type of bunching of accidents, we constituted a Committee headed by Dr. Kunzru. That Committee made about 377 recommendations, out of which we have already accepted 353 and about 303 have already been implemented. That recommendation about which the hon. Member is mentioning, about introduction of modern methods and sophisticated gadgets, has also been accepted. We are implementing it on a phased programme. It is not possible to have these sophisticated gadgets and modern devices at each and every station within this period. But there is a programme that has been made and this has been done in quite a number of stations. Now, in regard to the accident that took place at Bharwari, Sir, at that particular station we had almost all the modern fittings and gadgets. So, on the point is very clear, that is, whatever sophisticated gadgets and modern devices you may put

in, ultimately it will depend on the man who will have to operate it. So it is not possible to eliminate accidents even by introduction of 100 per cent sophisticated gadgets and modern devices. But certainly we can minimise. We can eliminate human failures. In these cases at least the human element so far as the operation of the signals and other things is concerned, could be eliminated and it has been eliminated. But the accident that took place at that particular station is not because of the failure of the staff but because of the failure of the driver who disregarded the signals which were all put in the automatic arrangement. That is the position.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी (राजस्थान) :

श्रीमान्, मेरा यह निवेदन है कि इस विशेष ऐक्सिडेंट में क्योंकि हैड-आन ऐक्सिडेंट हुआ है क्या इस बात की जाँच कर ली गई है कि इस हैड-आन ऐक्सिडेंट में मुख्य कारण मेकेनिकल था या और कोई गलती थी जिस की वजह से यह ऐक्सिडेंट हुआ।

दूसरे यह कि आजकल रेलगाड़ियों के या रेलवे विभाग के इतने बड़े खर्चों के आधार पर और आमदनी बढ़ते हुये भी, जब घाटे की बात होती है तो कई जगहों पर रिट्रेंचमेंट करते हैं और सबसे बड़ी बात तो यह है कि रिट्रेंचमेंट करते हैं वह भी मेंटिनेंस स्टाफ में परन्तु मेंटिनेंस स्टाफ का काम कहाँ खत्म हो जाता है यह समझ में नहीं आयेगा। आज सबसे बड़ा नुकस जो रेलवे विभाग में है वह यह है कि जो लेबर ऐन्वुअली इन सारी चीजों की मेंटिनेंस में बहुत बड़ा हिस्सा ले करता है उसको रिट्रेंच कर दिया जा रहा है परन्तु रेलवे विभाग का जो सुपरवाइजरी स्टाफ है उसका बोझ बढ़ता जा रहा है। ये ऐक्सिडेंट्स सुपरवाइजरी स्टाफ से नहीं सकते, ऐक्सिडेंट्स रुकेंगे जब ठीक जगहों पर जितना लेबर रहना चाहिये उतना रहेगा, उसको ठीक प्रकार की अमेनिटीज मिलेंगी और जिन पाइन्ट्स पर जितने आदमी चाहिये उतने रेलवे विभाग अगर रखेगा तब इन ऐक्सिडेंट्स की फ्रिक्वेंसी

को रोका जा सकता है। क्या रेल विभाग इन बढ़ते हुये ऐक्सिडेंट्स की बात को ध्यान में रख कर अपने लेबर के प्रश्न पर जो वास्तव में सब प्रकार की रेलवे एफिशिएंसी के लिये बहुत बड़ी हद तक जिम्मेदार है उसके बारे में विचार करेगा या केवल सुपरवाइजरी स्टाफ का बोझ बढ़ा कर ही, इन ऐक्सिडेंट्स को रोकने की कोशिश करेगा ?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, the hon. Member has mentioned two specific points. One is regarding the causes for these head-on collisions. Sir, if we take this Yalvigi accident, that was also a head-on collision. But in that case, from the preliminary investigation it has been found that the Station staff who were to give the signal made the mistake and because of that, the head-on collision took place. But in the case of Bharwari, there has been no mistake on the part of the Station staff because everything was automatic, and modern devices were there. But there also the collision took place because the driver disregarded the signal at the danger. Now, Sir, another very pertinent question has been raised, whether the cause of these accidents can be attributed to what is being done in the name of simplification and other things. This is a point which is agitating our mind also and I am prepared to investigate into this matter thoroughly. In fact, this is also one of the terms of reference to this Committee, that they should go into this particular aspect to see whether anywhere, in any part, there has been some lapse Or whether there has been anywhere, in any part, some shortage of labour, which is now endangering the safety of Railway operations. We have particularly asked this Committee to go into this and other points and it will definitely be gone into.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the Kunzru Committee, as he just now said,

made some very important suggestions and, as he has mentioned, some of them are still not implemented. I would like to know why those re-commendations have not been implemented. Regarding these accidents, there are two things, Sir one is mechanical deficiency and the other is human inefficiency. I would like to know what steps Government is taking to see that human inefficiency is reduced.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, two points have been mentioned, one is regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Kunzru Committee and the other is regarding mechanical failure *vis-a-vis* human failure. Sir, as I have already stated, the Kunzru Committee made about 377 recommendations, out of which 353 have already been accepted and 303 have been implemented. About 50 are now in the process of being implemented. These have not been implemented as yet because the nature of these recommendations is such that it needs time . . .

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: They were made in 1962.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: They were made in 1962 and they came into operation in 1963. Within this period, we have already implemented 303 recommendations. In the case of these 50, it is not only the affair of the Railway Board, but the State Governments have also to be consulted because there are so many aspects on which the Railway Administration cannot take a unilateral decision. Regarding the other point— mechanical failure *vis-a-vis* human failure—about 72 per cent of the accidents take place due to human failure and only about 11 per cent are <3rd to mechanical failure.

SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMI (Madras) : Sir, the usual explanation of the Minister of Railways is that the accidents are due to human failure. But has the Ministry gone farther than that to see what the causes of these human

[Shri M. Ruthnaswamy.] failures are? Is it due to over-work? Is it due to these people, the engine drivers, station masters and guards being tired on account of the long hours of work that they have to do? They must go beyond this human failure and enquire into the causes of this human failure. Sir, from recent talks with engine drivers and firemen, I find that it is not that every accident is due to human failure. Some accidents are due to mechanical failure. Engines have been sent out without proper repairs being made. Even when engine drivers refused to take out the engines on account of their dissatisfaction with the condition of the engines, the Foremen have insisted on their taking them out. So all the causes of failure, human and mechanical, should be enquired into by the Administration.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, I have not stated that all the accidents that have taken place are due to human failure. About seventy-two per cent of them are due to human failure and about 11 to 12 per cent are due to mechanical failure. Regarding human failures, the point he made is a very important point. After all the person involved will himself be risking his life. We know these things. And that is one of the points agitating our minds and that is one reason why we have made a particular reference to this Committee to go into the causes to find out how and where these human failures are actually taking place. That is the main point and that is the main reference for this Committee which we have constituted. We are now awaiting the recommendations of this Committee and I can assure you that all the recommendations suggested by it will be taken into consideration. (Interruption.) On an average 72 per cent, of the accidents are due to human failure.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव (बिहार) : मैं सरकार से जानना चाहता हूँ कि पहले तो ऐसा या कि रेलवे ऐक्सीडेंट होने पर जो

इन्चार्ज मंत्री होते हैं वे रिजाइन करते थे, जैसे स्वर्गीय श्री लाल बहादुर शास्त्री ने रिजाइन किया था.....

श्री डाह्याभाई व० पटेल : और किसी ने नहीं किया। कांग्रेस मिनिस्टर कभी रिजाइन नहीं करते।

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : वे भी कांग्रेस मिनिस्टर थे।

श्री डाह्याभाई व० पटेल : वे एक ही थे।

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : हाँ वे एक ही थे।

दर्जनों ऐक्सीडेंट होते हैं और उनका कारण ह्यूमन फेल्योर या मेकेनिकल फेल्योर बताया जाता है। प्रत्येक वर्ष ईस्टर्न रेलवे के लखी सराय स्टेशन पर ऐक्सीडेंट होते हैं और एक-दो नहीं दर्जनों व्यक्ति मरते हैं, कमेटी कह देती है कि इसमें रेलवे विभाग की कोई गलती नहीं है। मैं इसका कारण कुछ स्पष्ट करना चाहता हूँ जिस से कि मंत्री महोदय कुछ सुधार कर सकें। क्यूल और लखी सराय क्यूल पुल के माध्यम से जुड़े हुए हैं जो क्यूल नदी पर है। लखी सराय स्टेशन पुल में कर्व है। क्यूल स्टेशन से जब गाड़ी खुलती है और अगर कोई गाड़ी लखी सराय स्टेशन पर खड़ी होती है तो खास मौकों पर दशहरा या गंगा स्नान के मेलों पर यात्रों उस स्टेशन पर आ जाते हैं और कर्व के कारण गाड़ी चली आती है और उन्हें दिखाई नहीं देती जिसके कारण ऐक्सीडेंट होते हैं। वहाँ पर जो प्लेटफार्म है वह भी ऐसा बना हुआ है जिसमें लोग आसानी से चढ़-उतर नहीं सकते। वहाँ एक पुराना पुल बना हुआ है जो कम्प्लीटली डेड है, जिसका सदुपयोग नहीं होता। इसके कारण वहाँ पर अनेक दुर्घटनाएँ हो रही हैं। आप जाँच करके बताते हैं कि रेलवे विभाग की कोई गलती नहीं है। मैं सरकार से जानना चाहता

हैं कि क्या वह कर्व लाइन, उसका प्लेटफार्म और उसका डेड पुल ये तीनों कारण नहीं हैं जिनके कारण वहाँ दर्जनों एक्सोडेंट होते हैं? अगर ये कारण हैं तो क्या सरकार विचार करके स्टेशन के पश्चिम में जो रेलवे को जमाने है स्टेशन को वहाँ हटाएगी और जो स्टेशन है उसको गोदाम बना देगी?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, the hon. Member has mentioned two points. One is: Why is the Railway Minister not resigning? To answer that I want to make a categorical statement that if the exit of the Minister will in any case eliminate accidents, the hon. Minister and all the Ministers will be prepared to leave their seats straight now.

Secondly, the hon. Member mentioned about Luckeesarai. When this accident took place, I had been to that place myself. Sir, this Luckeesarai is a station which is in existence for the last 100 years. The first accident took place in the year 1966 and unfortunately another accident has taken place in the beginning of 1968. It has been found out that the cause of the accident has nothing to do with the Railway working and no railway staff were involved in it. It was not even a mela day. But there has been some recommendation when this first accident took place. The question is whether these recommendations were implemented or not. That is the basic issue. Three recommendations were made on that particular issue. The first one was that on such a mela day there should be an arrangement for microphone and loudspeaker announcing the arrival and the departure of the trains. That particular day was not a mela day. The number of persons present on the station on that particular day was much less as compared to the normal days.

The second recommendation was that there should be a barrier in between the two lines. That recom-

mendation we did not consider advisable to accept. In between the two lines if there be any fencing, the natural tendency of the people would be to make some opening or a hole and cross. By that the danger to life would be much more than otherwise. Taking that point into consideration, we could not accept that recommendation.

Another recommendation was that when the train is approaching Lucke-esarai station, the approaching train must whistle and there should be proper lighting arrangements. On that particular day the light was absolutely bright and the train while approaching the station was all the time whistling. After the two accidents, in spite of the findings of the Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, we are taking special care and making special arrangements so that the people who are waiting on this particular station will not be in a position to go to the other platform without using the overbridge. That sort of thing is under consideration and I am sure within a very short time these arrangements will be completed.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : श्रीमन् एक प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं मिला।

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no time, Mr. Yadav.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : श्रीमन् इसमें बहुत से आदमियों की जिन्दगी का सवाल है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can go to the Minister and make your suggestions to him.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, as far as we are concerned, we do not insist upon the hon. Minister to resign, because we know that the bureaucracy will be too much for any Minister who comes

[Shri A. P. Chatterjee]

in and the Ministers may come and the Ministers may go but the accidents will continue to occur. But there is only one point which I should like to mention. The Minister has said that an enquiry is going to be held. Now such an enquiry was held earlier also and 277 recommendations were made. In order to obviate enquiries so many hundreds of recommendations are made. But the Railway Ministry has done its duty by accepting 200 out of 277 recommendations. Now, Mr. Chairman; the only persons who really do matter should be associated with this enquiry. What I suggest is this: Let there be a judicial enquiry. We do not mind that judicial enquiry. But the judicial officer holding the enquiry should be associated with assessors taken from the Railway Unions because unless you take assessors from among the employees—I do not mean Class I and Class II—belonging to Class III and Class IV, unless you take representatives from them and associate them with the judicial enquiry, you will never know what is the real reason for these accidents, and accidents can never be prevented. Without doing this no judicial enquiry will do the job. Will the hon. Minister assure this House that he will take some steps to consider this question and that he will associate one or two assessors from the Railway unions with this enquiry, so that the real causes of these accidents may be known?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH: Sir, for the information of the hon. Member I can say that in this Committee which we have constituted one of the very famous labour unionists is already a member and the terms of reference are that whenever they find it necessary, they can call for the evidence of any of the railway employees; they are welcome to do it.

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) : आप की आज्ञा हो, समय हो तो पूछूँ बरना मैं मंत्री सहोदय से मिल कर उनको दे भी सकता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that would be better.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

THE UTTAR PRADESH NAGAR MAHA- PALIKA (ALPAKALIK VYAVASTHA) (SANSHODHAN) ACT, 1968

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, FAMILY PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI B. S. MURTHY): On behalf of Shri Satyanarayan Sinha, I beg to lay on the Table under sub-section (3) of section 3 of the Uttar Pradesh State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Act, 1968, a copy of the Uttar Pradesh Nagar Mahapalika (Alpakalik Vyavastha) (Sanshodhan) Act, 1968 (President's Act No. 12 of 1968), together with the Hindi Version thereof. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1310/68].

REPORT (1967) ON THE WORKING OF THE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION AND RELATED PAPERS

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Report on the working of the Deposit Insurance Corporation during the year ended the 31st December 1967, together with the Auditors' Report thereon, under sub-section (2) of section 32 of the Deposit Insurance Corporation Act, 1961. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1177/68.]