

the firemen of both the engines were killed. The accident was due to the failure of railway staff.

(b) *Ex-gratia* payment of Rs. 500 has been made to the family of each of the deceased persons. The question of providing relief due under the Workmen's Compensation Act is under consideration].

CRISIS IN HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN CANNANORE

67. SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the handloom industry in Cannanore District Kerala, is facing a serious crisis due to lack of adequate foreign market; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to improve the position?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI M. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) No, Sir,

(b) Does not arise.

CONVERSION OF METRE GAUGE RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN RENIGUNTA AND THIRUPATHY TO BROAD GAUGE

68. SHRI Y. A. REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government received any representation for the conversion of the metre gauge Railway line between Renigunta and Thirupathy into broad gauge; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAM NATH): (a) Till some time back, several representations were received from time to time, for conversion of Renigunta-Tirupati metre

gauge section into broad gauge (6.1 miles/10 KMs.)

(b) The question of conversion of this metre gauge section into broad gauge was considered on several occasions in the past, and found not financially justified. An appreciation made by the Southern Railway in 1960 revealed that neither the laying of a separate broad gauge line, nor conversion into mixed gauge, would be financially remunerative. From the operational angle also, the capacity of the metre gauge section was considered adequate to meet the demands of traffic. Moreover, extension of broad gauge line to Tirupati will not serve the main purpose intended, that of removing the transshipment difficulties of pilgrim passengers, who will nevertheless be required to change trains at Renigunta, from main line trains for the branch line. The conversion is thus not justified, either on financial, or traffic, or operational considerations.

पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे के नूनखार स्टेशन पर यात्री गाड़ियों की टक्कर

69. श्री महाबीर दास : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि जनवरी, १९६६ के अंतिम सप्ताह में पूर्वोत्तर रेलवे के नूनखार स्टेशन पर दो यात्री गाड़ियों में टक्कर हो गई ; और

(ख) यदि उपरोक्त भाग (क) का उत्तर 'हां' हो तो दुर्घटना का कारण क्या था, कितने यात्रियों की मृत्यु हुई और कितने घायल हुए और रेलवे को कितने की क्षति हुई ?

†[COLLISION OF PASSENGER TRAINS AT NUNKHAR OF N. E. RAILWAY

69. SHRI MAHABIR DASS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two passenger trains collided at Nunkhar

†[] English translation.