

**SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR EXPENDITURE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KERALA FOR THE YEAR 1965-66**

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR SAHU):** Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a Statement showing the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Expenditure of the Government of Kerala for the year 1965-66.

**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS**

**SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore):** Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Minutes of Sitzings of the Committee on Public Undertakings relating to Eleventh Report on the Rourkela Steel Plant of Hindustan Steel Limited.

**STATEMENT RE EXPLOSION IN PETROL TANK WAGON NEAR RANIGANJ/NIMCHA STATION ON EASTERN RAILWAY**

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAM NATH):** Sir, shortly after 16-00 hours on 12-8-1965, while Budge Budge Special No. 270 Down, containing 18 wagons of petrol, was approaching Warner Signal of Nimcha Railway Station (on Asansol-Raniganj Section) the relieving Cabin Assistant Station Master, Nimcha on noticing one tank wagon, 5th from the brake van on fire immediately showed red signal to the driver. Simultaneously, the Guard of the train, on smelling petrol and hearing an unusual sound, applied vacuum brake and brought the train to a stop. The front portion of the train, consisting of a load of 51 vehicles, was immediately isolated from the rear portion consisting of 12 vehicles. SOS was sent for help of Fire Brigades from Asansol and Raniganj.

At about 16-40 hours, the tank wagon burst. Two other loaded tank wagons on either side of the tank wagon which burst, were also damaged as due to intense heat more vehicles from the rear portion including these tanks could not be detached. Fire Brigades which were requisitioned arrived at about 17-10 hours and 17-25 hours respectively. They started fire-fighting at 17-30 hours and the fire was completely extinguished by 21-00 hours. The fire had spread to nearby huts and the Nimcha coal siding also. The cooling of the tank wagons was done up to 23-30 hours.

As a result of the explosion 3 persons died and 380 persons were injured. These outsiders who were killed or injured had gathered to witness the fire. A civil Fire Station Officer of Raniganj Civil Fire Station, is also included among those injured. Three railway employees received injuries in the incident. Thus  $380 + 3 = 383$  persons were injured in all and 3 were killed. 54 injured persons were released after giving first aid and 329 persons were hospitalised in different hospitals. Up to 19-8-1965, 241 persons have been discharged from hospitals and 88 persons including one who received serious injuries, are indoor patients and are progressing.

The loss suffered by the Railway is estimated at about Rs. 59,550. The cost of 78,000 litres of petrol which was destroyed comes to Rs. 66,300. The value of property salvaged is estimated approximately at Rs. 3,36,000.

A Senior Officers' Enquiry Committee was ordered and their first sitting was held on 16-8-1965. The matter is still under enquiry. The cause of fire has not yet been established but it is not suspected to be a case of sabotage.

**SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA (West Bengal):** Sir, does the preliminary enquiry on the matter disclose any case of sabotage?