

**STATEMENT RE ACCIDENT TO ROOF
TRAVELLERS ON A TRAIN NEAR
BALLIA JUNCTION**

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): Sir, on behalf of Sardar Swaran Singh, I beg to make the following statement.

With regret, I have to inform the House of an unfortunate incident which occurred on 11th November, 1962 shortly after midnight between Manjhi and Bakulha stations on the North Eastern Railway.

At about 1.30 hours on the night between 10th and 11th November, 1962, when 67-UP Muzaffarpur-Allahabad City Fast Passenger arrived at Suraimanpur station on Chupra-Varanasi metre gauge section of the North Eastern Railway, certain passengers reported to the Station Master on duty that some persons travelling on the roof of the train had been hit by overhead structures of the bridge while the train was passing over the bridge situated between Manjhi and Bakulha stations.

On a search being made on the roof of the train at Suraimanpur station, six persons were found to be dead and another five seriously injured. A search party headed by the Station Master was also sent immediately by an engine and a brakevan to search the track upto Manjhi. Simultaneously medical aid was rushed from Chupra under the charge of a railway doctor. Local railway officers at Varanasi and Sonapur proceeded to the site immediately on receipt of information. The Chief Commercial Superintendent and the Chief Medical Officer of North Eastern Railway also proceeded to the site from Gorakhpur.

The District officials at Ballia and Chupra were also advised immediately.

According to the latest information available, twenty five persons died and another three were seriously injured. The number of killed included those who were seriously injured and subsequently died. The three injured persons are receiving medical attention in Ballia Civil Hospital and are reported to be progressing.

Reports received show that the train was running with its full normal composition of coaches. A number of passengers mostly proceeding from wayside stations to Ballia for the Kartik Poornamashi fair got on to the roof of the train. Efforts were made at Chupra, where the train was detained for about twenty minutes, and at Kevelganj, the last stopping station of the train where the train was detained for about fifteen minutes, to get the passengers to come down from the roof of the train. The assistance of Government Railway Police was also sought and obtained for this purpose. It appears that despite efforts and exhortations by the railway staff, some persons managed to remain on the roof.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Lucknow, is holding an enquiry into the accident today.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, according to the latest press reports more than hundred persons are reported to have been killed in this accident. May I know whether the hon. Minister has any information in this regard?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, I have also read that news in this morning's papers but the information we have got is the one that I have given to the House.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: May I know whether fresh information will be collected and the House informed about it in due course?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Certainly, Sir.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): Apart from the information, may I know whether the Station Master and other people who permitted the train to move from the station have been kept under suspension?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: No, Sir. I have just submitted that the station staff did their best to persuade the persons to come down and the Government Railway Police was also called in. They tried to get these gentlemen to come down. They got down when they were asked and they again jumped on to the train again.

SHRI BAIRAGI DWIBEDY (Orissa) : How was the train allowed to move -without clearing the passengers on the roof of the train?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already explained that they were made to get down and when the train started moving they jumped on to it again.

SHRI BAIRAGI DWIBEDY: How can they jump on to the roof while the train is moving?

PROF. M. B. LAL (Uttar Pradesh): It is very difficult to jump on to the roof of a train while the train is moving.

SHRI G. MURAHARI (Uttar Pradesh) : It is not a question of 'some people' but hundreds of them. It is not easy for hundreds of people to jump on to the train.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM (Madras): May I know whether any categorical instructions have been issued to the Station Masters not to allow any train to move with anybody on the roof?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The instructions are there but then the choice is between stabling the train *or* persuading the people to come down and then move the train.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): The answer is not satisfactory. The question was whether any categorical instructions have been given to the Station Masters and others concerned not to allow the train to *move* when people are on the roof of a train? Is it not possible for Government to see that they get down before the train moves because they do not sit there just for the sake of sitting?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: I have already explained that even when the train was moving some people were trying to get on to the roof.

SHRI PANNALAL SARAOGI (West Bengal): As this is a preliminary report and a committee of enquiry has been appointed for this purpose I think it will be well advised if the report of the committee of enquiry is made available to the House.

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The Assistant Commissioner of Railway Safety is holding an enquiry. He will be submitting the report to the Ministry of Transport under whom he works. As far as we are concerned, we shall have no objection to laying it on the Table of the House.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: In view of the fact that they cannot stop people from sitting on the roof of the trains why can't Government make some fencing arrangements on the roof so that people can stay there? You get them down before the train moves or you make safety arrangements on the roof.

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, of all the people, my hon. friend, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, knows that there are many things which the Government wants to do but sometimes it is made difficult by the demonstrators.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that is enough.