

I should think that it should not take more than a few months' time. It is an important report and the decisions that we have to take are also important, but I can assure the House that we shall not be sleeping over the matter and shall take our decisions as early as possible.

CONDITION OF BRIDGES IN SAURASHTRA ON THE WESTERN RAILWAY

*101. SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHP. Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) when the bridges at Jamnagar, Rajkot and Jetpur in Saurashtra on the Western Railway were constructed;

(b) whether any repairs were done to these bridges; and if so, when; and

(c) what is the present condition of these bridges and whether Government undertook any survey of these bridges recently?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) The hon. Member is presumably referring to bridges between Jamnagar and Rajkot, Rajkot and Jetalsar, and Jetalsar and Jetpur. If so, these bridges were constructed in the years 1897, 1893 and 1889 respectively.

(b) The bridges have been repaired from time to time.

(c) The results of the recent survey shows that the condition of these bridges, on the whole, is satisfactory for the loads and speeds over those.

SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: Has the speed very much decreased on these bridges?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Speed restrictions have been imposed varying from 5 to 10 miles per hour.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Why this restriction on speed? Is it because the bridges are not in order?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: I said that the condition of these bridges is sound. The restriction in speed is as a matter of precaution. Some arches are a little weak.

Dn. RAGHUBIR SINH: When was this restriction on speed limit put in?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: All these bridges are inspected as a matter of routine and whenever we find the need for imposing restrictions it is done.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: I do not want to know when they are imposed generally, but when were they imposed?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: It is a long list of bridges, Sir, and if the hon. Member likes I shall read them.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: I am asking about the three bridges referred to. When were the speed limits imposed on them?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: I was thinking about the three sections over which there are as many as 200 bridges.

DR. D. H. VARIAVA: Has the Government any scheme to strengthen these bridges so that in future they might not say: "Well, it was not known that the bridges were not strong enough and so the accidents happened", because many accidents have happened in Saurashtra particularly, both on the lines and on some of the bridges.

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, for those bridges about which we have a feeling that the arches are weak estimates have been prepared and the work is in progress on some of them.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA: If I have heard the Hon'ble Minister rightly, he has said that the condition of these bridges was good but some of their arches were weak. How are these two things consistent?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: And that is why speed restrictions have been

imposed and the work of strengthening those arches or replacing them has either already been taken up or is going to be taken up shortly.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: Are there any more unfortunate bridges in India where the speed limit is restricted?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: There may be a few others, but I have not got the information of all the bridges.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS IN SAURASHTRA

♦102. SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many accidents occurred in Saurashtra on the Western Railway during the last two years;

(b) how many persons died and how many were injured in these accidents;

(c) what was, the total estimated loss of railway property due to these accidents; and

(d) what was the total amount of money spent by Government towards the repairs to railway property; and for the payment of compensation, if any?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) to (d). A statement is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) 147 train accidents occurred on the Saurashtra portion of the Western Railway during the two years 1955-56 and 1956-57. (Tram accidents comprise accidents to trains due to collisions, derailments, averted collisions, parting of trains, trams passing signals at danger, reception of trains on blocked lines, trains running into road traffic at level crossings, fires in trains, trains running without line clear and trams running without proper line clear.)

(b) Killed: 21. (7 Passengers and 14 other persons such as occupants of road vehicles etc.)

Injured: 66. (37 passengers, 4 railway servants and 25 other persons such as occupants of road vehicles etc.)

(c) Rs. 1,97,931.

(d) The estimated loss of railway property given in reply to part (c) includes money spent on repairs to railway property.

No compensation has been paid so far.

SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: Which was the biggest mishap during this period?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The worst accident was the derailment of 340 Down Rajkot-Okha between Hegamatia and Jamwanthali on the 19th May 1956.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Was it the worst in Saurashtra or in the country as a whole?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The worst in Saurashtra.

SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: How many persons were killed in this particular accident?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: In this accident seven were killed and 28 were injured.

SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: Has any compensation been paid to any of them?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The question of claims for compensation is dealt with by the Claims Commissioner. No compensation has been actually paid so far, but the matter is being dealt with by the Claims Commissioner.

SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: Are any cases pending for compensation?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Yes.

SHRI MAGANLAL B. JOSHI: How many applications have been made?