

- (b) the reasons therefor;
- (c) the extent of cost and time overruns as a result thereof;
- (d) the responsibility fixed in the matter; and
- (e) the steps taken to prevent recurrence of such situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) The ongoing project falling fully/partly in Rajasthan are being progressed as per availability of resources.

- (c) to (e) Do not arise.

Fire incident in Howrah-Dehradun Express

2746. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Dehradun bound Howrah-Dehradun Express caught fire in the AC coaches in the early hours of 22nd November, 2011 near Parasnath Railway Station resulting in death of several passengers;

- (b) if so, the details thereof with the number of persons died and got injured;

(c) whether it is also a fact that incident of fire was due to the poor maintenance of the AC machineries of the rolling stocks;

- (d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Railways had taken measures for proper maintenance of all the coaches and rolling stocks; and

- (f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An unfortunate incident of fire took place in train no. 13009 Howrah-Dehradun Doon Express between Nimiaghat and Parasnath stations of Dhanbad Division of East Central Railway at about 02.35 hrs. on 22.11.2011. While the train was on run, fire broke out in Three Tier Air Conditioned Coach B1, positioned 8th from train engine. Subsequently, it also spread to adjacent Three Tier AC Coach B2. As a result of the fire, the two coaches got completely burnt. In this unfortunate incident, 7 passengers lost their lives and 2 passengers sustained simple injuries.

(c) and (d) The cause of the incident of fire is being investigated from all possible angles, including miscreant activity, in cooperation with the State Government authorities of Jharkhand. However, a statutory inquiry into this incident has already been ordered to be conducted by Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), Eastern Circle, under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

(e) and (f) Railways have taken various measures to prevent incident of fire in trains, which include the following:—

- (i) Indian Railways have always endeavoured to enhance fire worthiness of coaches by using more fire retardant furnishing materials such as Compreg Board/PVC for coach flooring, laminated sheets for roof, ceiling wall and partition panelling, Rexene and cushioning material for seats and berths, FRP Windows and UIC Vestibule, etc. Specifications for such furnishing materials have been periodically upgraded to incorporate fire retardant parameters in line with UIC and other international norms. All new manufacture of coaches/periodical overhauling of existing coaches is being carried out with fire retardant specifications of the furnishing materials.
- (ii) With a view to improve fire safety in running trains, a pilot project for provision of Comprehensive Fire and Smoke Detection System has been taken up in one rake on Northern Railway. Field trials on this rake are working satisfactorily. It has been decided to provide similar automatic fire alarm system in 20 more rake for extended field trials. The system will provide advance warning in case of any fire hazard in running train and thus enable the passengers to protect them from fire.
- (iii) Guard-cum-Brake Van and AC Coaches in all trains are provided with portable fire extinguishers to cater for emergencies due to fire accidents.
- (iv) Improved materials for electrical fittings and fixtures such as MCB, light fittings, terminal boards, connectors, etc., are being used progressively.
- (v) Detailed instructions have been issued to zonal railways for observance of safe practices in handling of pantry cars and for ensuring periodical inspection of electrical and LPG fittings in the pantry cars.
- (vi) Intensive publicity campaigns to prevent the travelling public from carrying inflammable goods are regularly undertaken.

Survey of Damoh-Jabalpur railway line

†2747. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether survey for Damoh-Jabalpur railway line has been conducted;
- (b) if so, the details of the survey and the action plan made in this regard; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) An updating survey from Damoh-Jabalpur

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.