

each simple injured has been announced. *Ex-gratia* has since been paid to all the victims except in 8 cases of simple injury as the addresses of these injured persons are not known.

In the derailment of 13009 Howrah — Dehradun Express on 31.05.2012, no claim for compensation has been filed by the victims so far. However, enhanced *ex-gratia* at the rate of Rs. five lakhs to the next of kin of each deceased, Rs. one lakh to each grievously injured and Rs. 25,000/- to each simple injured has been announced. *Ex-gratia* has since been paid to all the victims.

(e) Consequential train accidents excluding incidents of trespassing at unmanned level crossings have consistently declined from 335 in 2001-02 to 269 in 2002-03, 239 in 2003-04, 169 in 2004-05, 169 in 2005-06, 123 in 2006-07, 129 in 2007-08, 115 in 2008-09, 100 in 2009-10, 93 in 2010-11 and further to 77 in 2011-12.

(f) The number of casualties in train accidents is essentially fortuitous. Railways are consistently making efforts to reduce casualties in train accidents by introducing new technologies such as crashworthy design of coaches, progressive fitment of tight lock Centre Buffer Couplers to prevent the coaches from climbing over each other in the unfortunate event of an accident and improvement in electrical wiring, material and design, etc to prevent fire due to short circuit. Introduction of these technologies have yielded positive results.

Safety is accorded the highest priority by Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continual basis to prevent accidents and to enhance safety. These include timely replacement of over-aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signalling and interlocking systems, safety drives, greater emphasis on training of officials and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. Safety devices/systems being introduced to prevent accidents include provision of Block Proving Axle Counters (BPAC), Auxiliary Warning System (AWS), Vigilance Control Device (VCD), Anti Collision Device (ACD)/Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), etc.

#### **Fire accident in Tamil Nadu Express**

890. SHRIMATI KUSUM RAI:

SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

SHRI ARVIND KUMAR SINGH:

SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA:

DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether due a fire in coach No. S-11 of Tamil Nadu Express on 30th July, 2012, hundreds of passengers have either died or have been badly injured;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the reasons for fire in coach No. S-11 of the train;
- (d) whether Government has enquired into the reasons for fire, if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether compensation has been announced for victims of the fire incident;
- (f) if so, the details thereof;
- (g) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (h) the steps taken/being taken to ensure that such accidents do not occur in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) On 30.07.2012 at about 04.19 hrs., an unfortunate incident of fire in one Sleeper Class Coach (S-11) of Train No. 12622 New Delhi — Chennai Tamil Nadu Express took place near Nellore on Vijaywada — Gudur section of Vijaywada Division of South Central Railway. As per latest information, 30 passengers have lost their lives in this unfortunate incident, 6 persons sustained grievous injuries and 22 sustained simple injuries.

(c) and (d) Statutory inquiry into the above incident is being conducted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), South Central Circle, under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and his report is awaited. Forensic experts of State Government were also pressed into service to investigate the burnt coach for necessary scientific collection and evaluation of clues/ evidence.

(e) to (g) Compensation is payable only after a claim is filed in the Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) and a decree is awarded by the Tribunal. No claim for compensation has been filed so far by the victims of the fire incident in Tamil Nadu Express. However, enhanced *ex-gratia* at the rate of Rs. 5 lakhs to the next of kin of each deceased, Rs. 1 lakh to each grievously injured and Rs. 25,000/- to each simple injured has been announced. *Ex-gratia* amount totalling to Rs. 11.50 lakhs has been disbursed fully to all injured passengers and an amount totalling to Rs. 55.0 lakhs has since been released in respect of 11 cases of death. In another 15 death cases, cheques are being prepared for disbursement. Since identification of dead bodies could be done in phases, cheques for *ex-gratia* amounts were prepared accordingly.

(h) Railways have taken various measures to prevent incidents 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, UIC Vestibule etc. Specifications for such furnishing materials have been periodically upgraded to incorporate fire retardant parameters in line with International Union of Railways (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. Railways have also taken measures to prevent fire due to electrical short circuits in coaches, which include (a) three levels of protection in non AC coaches in case of short circuit, (b) separation of positive and negative wires, (c) use of fire retardant material in all electrical items.
- III. 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 of Rajdhani Express on Northern Railway. Similar automatic fire alarm system in 20 more rakes for extended field trials has also been decided. 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.
- IV. Guard-cum-Brake Van and AC Coaches in all trains are provided with portable fire extinguishers to cater for emergencies due to fire accidents.
- 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.
- VII. Two separate Fire Safety Audit Teams have been constituted recently to plan safety audit in selective stations, coaching depots and workshops, etc.

#### **Development of anti-collision device**

891. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH:

SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Railways have been unable to develop a robust and reliable anticollision device to prevent train mishaps despite carrying out field trials for over a decade;
- (b) if so, whether there were operational and technical problems during trials on Southern Railway and the North-East Frontier Railway; and
- (c) if so, the details and time-frame in which they are likely to be resolved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS  
(SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) Development and deployment of