

SC directive about rail accidents

***193. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:**

SHRI JAYANTA BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has asked the Railway Ministry to furnish details of steps taken on the basis of recommendations given by various Commissions that were set up to probe into major rail accidents;

(b) if so, the action contemplated by the Ministry in this regard;

(c) the details of rail accidents that took place in the country during the past three years; and

(d) the steps taken by Government so far to avert rail mishaps?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) Supreme Court has directed Ministry of Railways (respondent) to submit a chart indicating various reports, which has been submitted relating to the rail accidents, the recommendations made therein and action taken thereon. If no action has been taken pursuant to the acceptance of recommendations, explanation to be given as to why this has not been done.

(b) The requisite information regarding status of various Committee reports has been submitted to Government Advocate for assisting Solicitor General who is representing the Ministry of Railways before the Supreme Court.

(c) Number and type of consequential train accidents during last three years are as follow:—

	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
	P	O	T	P	O	T	P	O	T
Collision	18	17	35	13	11	24	11	9	20
Derailment	95	194	289	127	173	300	97	232	329
Manned L-Xing	12	4	16	15	4	19	22	4	26
Unmanned L-Xing	45	5	50	39	9	48*	63	4	67*
Fire	5	1	6	5	1	6	17	4	21
TOTAL:	175	221	396	199	198	397	210	253	463

*The accidents are due to negligence of road users at unmanned level crossings.

Where P — Passenger

O — Others

T — Total

(d) The important steps taken by the Government to check accidents are listed below:—

- (i) Fouling Mark to Fouling Mark (FM to FM) track circuiting on entire 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'D Spl.' routes where speed is more than 75 kmph. have been completed.
- (ii) Modification of the signal circuitry is being carried out to minimize of human error in causing accidents.
- (iii) Auxiliary Warning System for giving advance warning about "Signal at danger" to the driver of the running train is in operation in Mumbai suburban sections.
- (iv) Last vehicle check by Axle Counter have been introduced in over 150 block sections and is being progressively added.
- (v) Walkie-talkie sets have been provided to Drivers and Guards of all trains for faster and better communication.
- (vi) Drivers and Guards are also being progressively provided with LED based electronic flashing lamps, which have better visibility than the conventional kerosene lit tail lamps and hand signal lamps.
- (vii) There has been progressive increase in use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance. Track Renewal Trains are also used.
- (viii) For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometers are being used progressively.
- (ix) Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernized and upgraded at many depots.
- (x) Routine Over Hauling Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles so as to prevent cases of cold breakage of axles.
- (xi) Whistle Boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossing and visibility for drivers has been improved.
- (xii) Audio-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossings are conducted.

- (xiii) Level crossings having heavy traffic density are being progressively interlocked with signals on a planned basis.
- (xiv) Periodical Safety Audit of Different Divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from Zonal Headquarters has been introduced.
- (xv) Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernised including use of Simulators for training of drivers.
- (xvi) Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff and road users.
- (xvii) A pilot project of Anti Collision Device (ACD) has been sanctioned for Northeast Frontier Railway. Trial of prototype ACD equipment has been started. After successful completion of this pilot project, a decision would be taken for its application on other routes of Indian Railways.
- (xviii) Stringent penalty to the extent of dismissal/removal from service is being imposed on officials causing serious accidents.

Genetically Engineered Food

***194. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY:** Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Genetically Engineered (GE) food is being flooded into India;

(b) whether Government are also aware that the items are not tested and are harmful to health; and

(c) if so, what measures Government propose to take to check the harmful activity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Under the Rules for the Manufacture use import export and storage of hazardous micro-organisms/ genetically engineered organisms or cells 1989, notified under the Environment Protection Act 1986, foodstuffs, ingredients in foodstuffs and additives, including processing aids containing or consisting of genetically engineered organisms or cells, shall not be produced, sold, imported or used except with the approval of the genetic Engineering Approval Committee. This Committee