

**Train accident at Latur, Maharashtra**

**142. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that five persons were killed in Latur district of Maharashtra due to a collision between a train and a vehicle at a manned railway crossing;

(b) if so, how did the accident happen at a manned railway crossing in Latur recently;

(c) whether it is a fact that the gates were open at the time of the accident; and

(d) if so, the details of the accident and the steps proposed to avert such accidents in future?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU):** (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. On 19.06.2004, six persons died and 2 persons were injured in an accident involving a light engine and an autorickshaw at the manned level crossing gate No. 5 in open condition between Latur and Latur Road stations in Latur District in Maharashtra. The accident occurred due to failure on the part of the locomotive driver to observe laid down precautions. Preventive steps like counselling of drivers and monitoring of their performance, regular checks at level crossings, and awareness campaigns for educating road users for observing necessary precautions at level crossings have been taken.

**Strengthening of Railway Protection Force**

**†143. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to strengthen Railway Protection Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount likely to be incurred by Government to fulfil this objective?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU):** (a) Yes, Sir.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) In order to strengthen the Railway Protection Force (RPF), steps are being taken to improve the transport and communication facilities for the RPF. In the wake of the Amendments to the Railway Protection Force (RPF) Act, 1957, and the Railways Act, 1989 and the new duties being taken up by Railway Protection Force (RPF), a proposal to increase the manpower of RPF is also under consideration of the Railway Board, so that the new duties can be discharged effectively.

(c) The total expenditure anticipated on modernisation is about Rs. 24 Crore approx. and on manpower creation about Rs. 92 Crore approx.

### **Recruitment Policy of Railway Protection Force**

†144. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large scale changes are being brought in the recruitment policy of Railway Protection Force (RPF);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that recruitment procedure is being handed over to some special officials instead of Railway Recruitment Board; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Change is being made in the method of recruitment. This is only a reversal to the practice which was prevailing till 2002. Upto 2002, the recruitment to RPF was made by the RPF Department themselves in accordance with the RPF Rules. This is also the method envisaged in the report submitted by the National Police Commission in 1980. This change over will not involve any significant change in the selection proceedings. On the contrary, recruitment by the RPF Department will hasten the recruitment process and will enable appointment of the new recruits without delay.

(c) and (d) No Sir. It is not a fact that the recruitment procedure is being handed over to some special officers. As a matter of fact, the erstwhile system of recruitment is being restored.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.