

SHRI SURESH GOPI (Nominated): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir, we too associate ourselves with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. Yes, all those who associate, their names will be added. Now, Shri Mukul Roy.

Increasing number of rail accidents due to poor infrastructure

SHRI MUKUL ROY (West Bengal): Respected Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this occasion. Indian Railways have travelled a long distance. In its illustrious journey, the Railways have witnessed several accidents some of which unfortunately occurred during my tenure as the Union Railway Minister. Even when I was the Railway Minister, I could not avoid railway accidents. I cannot forget those days. But it is a matter of deep agony, that huge increase in the number of casualties, since the last few months, is an upcoming trend.

On 22nd January, 2017, about 27 people were killed and 36 more badly injured by derailment of the Jagdalpur Bhubaneswar Express. The 2016 Indore-Patna Train tragedy is unforgettable. There were casualties of more than 150 lives. In Waltair Division, 41 people lost their lives. In four major train accidents in the last three months, over 200 people died and several hundreds were injured.

The Railway Administration is nowadays not engaged and not properly giving its time to core working of the Railways. Sir, I can remember, at that time I was a Member of this House, when Mamataji proposed the Rail Budget. The then Leader of the Opposition, our hon. Finance Minister, opposed the Rail Budget with the plea that the Railways has shifted from its core working group to other areas. Sir, Railway Administration nowadays is not engaged in core work of Railways. There is excessive focus on other issues like *Swachh Bharat*, tweeting, Rail *Shivir*, activities on cultural events/railway station renovation programmes/competitions etc. which are diluting core functioning of Railways and reducing railway safety.

Employees are not focussing on railway safety work; rather their duties are diverted to other activities, neglecting public safety. Our hon. Prime Minister announced implementation of innovative ideas by conducting camps, engaging gang man to General Manager. The outcome of such idea turned into railway platforms being used for marriage ceremony. This is the innovative idea from gang man to General Manager.

Derailments are mainly caused by defective railway track, rail fractures, lack in

fund allotment compared to total requirement, less number of safety staff across the country....(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Time Over. Three minutes are over. What can I do? ...(Interruptions)... Three minutes are over. What to do? But your point is well-taken. ...(Interruptions)... All those who associate, their names will be added.

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE (West Bengal): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

MS. DOLA SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I too associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

**Need to provide kerosene oil at PDS prices to
traditional fishermen in Kerala**

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN (Kerala): Thank you Deputy Chairman, Sir, for permitting me to raise a very important issue concerning fishermen in Kerala. The fishermen are the most neglected section of people in our country. In Kerala, there are more than ten lakh people depending on fisheries and two lakhs of them are daily going to sea to catch fish. They use about 1,000 mechanized boats, more than 2,000 motorized boats and about 25,000 country boats fitted with outboard engines. These boats make use of kerosene as their fuel. Now, earlier, they used to be given more than 2,500 kilolitres of kerosene per month. Now, for more than a year this ratio has been cut by more than 50 per cent. These 2,500 kilolitres were distributed through Public Distribution System and a price was fixed, and now it is about ₹ 14 per litre. Because of the fact that it has been cut by more than half, they are depending on kerosene available at the market rate which is about ₹ 70 per litre. Because of that the fuel cost alone comes to more than 80 per cent of the fish price. So, this is affecting them. So, what fishermen are demanding is that per year they should be given 1.14 lakh kilolitres of kerosene. Here, we have to note that during the last calendar year, the price of kerosene so also of petrol and diesel was raised for more than 12 times. This also has affected them very badly. So, my request to the Government is that you bring back the distribution, at least, to the earlier level, that is, more than 2,500 kilolitres per month so that to a great extent their requirement of fuel will be met by this. This is what I want.

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.