

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:257

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2006

FIRE INCIDENT IN CHENNAI- BANGALORE EXPRESS

Deora Shri Milind Murlu

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Railways are aware of incident of fire in Chennai-Bangalore Express on August 20,2006;
- (b) if so, the details of the incident alongwith loss of lives and properties therein;
- (c)) whether the cause of the fire has been ascertained;
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the officials found responsible for the incident and action taken against them; and
- (e) the steps taken by the railways to prevent such accidents?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU)

(a) Yes, Sir. The train involved in fire was 2753 Ex-Chennai-Hyderabad Express. 2753 Express was detained at Secunderabad Station for about 40 minutes due to derailment of a goods train on the same track ahead of Secunderabad Station. The passengers in the ill fated coaches had detrained at Secunderabad Station which is the penultimate halt. Thus the coaches were almost empty when the fire broke out.

(b) On 20.08.2006 at about 06.01 hrs. train No. 2753 Ex- Chennai to Hyderabad express arrived on Platform No. 10 of Secunderabad Station. Due to derailment of one oil tank wagon of a goods train at Hussain-Sagar Junction, 2753 Express was detained at Secunderabad Station for 40 minutes. The train commenced its onward journey to Hyderabad at 06.40 hrs. Immediately after about 10 minutes of the train departure, the Loco-Pilot and his assistant noticed smoke in one of the coaches of the train. The fire was extinguished by fire brigade. No casualty occurred. The damage/loss due to the fire incident amount to Rs. 1,88,25,190/-.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Commissioner Railway Safety of South Central Railway Circle, Secunderabad conducted a statutory inquiry into the incident and his provisional findings are that it was caused due to fire of some combustible material lying in the Hyderabad end bathroom portion of coach number S-9, seventh from the locomotive by unidentified passenger/passengers other than railway staff while the train was on run at a speed of 10-15 Kilometre per hour starting from Secunderabad. The accident falls under category – 'failure of person / persons other than Railway Staff'.

(e) Steps taken for prevention of fire incidents.

1. Intensive Safety Drives are conducted on all the Division on sustained basis.
2. Safety awareness by conduction Seminars and Campaigns.
3. Periodic checks on Gas operated cooking arrangements in Pantry Car.
4. Focused checks on wiring circuits of Direct Current Loco, Alternative Current Loco and Air-conditioned Coaches.
5. Security of packages and observance of packing conditions inside Second Class Luggage cum break van (SLRs).
6. Safety propaganda through safety posters, advertisement in compartments, timetables, News-papers and at Stations slides displayed in local cinema theatres etc.
7. Drives are being organized by Railway Protection Force for prevention of carriage of Gas Cylinders, Explosive materials, crackers, other inflammable materials etc. by passengers in trains.
8. Cases under relevant sections of Railway Act are booked by Railway Protection Force (RPF) against smokers in the Trains & other railway premises.
9. Strict measures are taken by Railway Protection Force to prevent unauthorized hawkers and vendors using Sigris and Stoves on trains.
10. Frequent announcements are made in all important railway stations through public address system about the fire precautions.