

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:390

ANSWERED ON:02.12.2004

NEW INQUIRY COMMITTEE ON GODHRA CARNAGE

Kalmadi Shri Suresh;Panda Shri Prabodh;Pathak Shri Brajesh;Singh Shri Uday

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has decided to probe the Godhra carnage through a new enquiry committee;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith its composition;
- (c) the reasons for conducting fresh probe into the incident;
- (d) whether the views of the various political parties were sought for conducting probe into the carnage;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (f) whether the committee has submitted its report to the Government;
- (g) if not, the time by which the committee is likely to submit its report;
- (h) whether the Railways has already held a departmental enquiry into the incident;
- (i) if so, whether in view of such inquiry any steps have been taken to prevent such incident; and
- (j) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a)&(b): Yes, Sir. A High Level Committee to inquire into the incident of fire on 9166 Sabarmati Express Train at Godhra Station on 27.2.2002 under the Chairmanship of Justice U.C. Banerjee, retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India, has been constituted. The Committee is assisted by three technical Experts in Railway Mechanical Engineering, Railway Electrical Engineering and Fire Services with a Secretary to the Committee.

(c): The following are the main reasons for conducting a fresh probe into the Godhra Fire Incident:-

- (i) No investigation and enquiry was undertaken by the Railways or any other authority to ascertain the cause of fire;
 - (ii) there was need to investigate the cause of incident along with the other issues concerning Railway safety like over-crowding and entry of unauthorized passengers in the said train and the role of Railway officials in the matter;
 - (iii) to explore various remedial and preventive actions that need to be taken to avoid such occurrence in the future;
 - (iv) to review the preparedness for rescue and relief operation in such situations in order to minimize loss of life and injury in railway accidents;
 - (v) to improve Railway working procedure, training of employees and upgradation of technology.
- (d)&(e): As the matter relates to functioning of Railway System, consulting political parties was not considered necessary.
- (f): No, Sir.
- (g): The Committee has been constituted on 4.9.2004 and was to submit its report within 03 months. The Government has since decided to extend the tenure of the Committee by another 03 months.

(h): No, Sir.

(i): Does not arise.

(j): Does not arise.