

- (16) The Emergency Risks (Factories) Insurance Bill, 1962.
- (17) The Workmen's Compensation (Amendment) Bill, 1962.
- (18) The Working Journalists (Amendment) Bill, 1962.
- (19) The Constitution (Thirteenth Amendment) Bill, 1962.
- (20) The Constitution (Fourteenth Amendment) Bill, 1962.

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## 12.9 hrs.

STATEMENTS ON RAILWAY  
ACCIDENTS

## (i) COLLISION AT UMESHNAGAR

**The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan):** There are two statements.

On behalf of Shri Swaran Singh, I beg to make a statement on the collision between the Avadh-Tirhut Mail and a Passenger train on the 4th January 1963 at Umeshnagar station on the North-Eastern Railway.

With profound regret, I rise to make a statement on the unfortunate collision which took place at Umeshnagar Station of the North Eastern Railway in the early hours of 4th January, 1963.

At about 04.00 hours that day, 35Up Passenger train was being received on the main line at Umeshnagar railway station situated between Barauni and Khagaria stations on the Barauni-Katihar section of the North Eastern Railway. Even before this train had come to a complete stop at the station, the 2 Down Avadh-Tirhut Mail which was due to cross at this station came running on the same line and collided with the 35 Up Passenger train. The engines of both the trains were badly damaged. The first three bogies next to the engine of the passenger train and the first two bogies of the Mail train got de-

railed, telescoped and capsized. The fourth and fifth bogies of the Mail train caught fire.

As a result of this accident, 37 persons died and 86 received injuries. Of these 18 were discharged after first aid. Of the remaining 68 persons, 36 sustained simple injuries and 32 grievous.

Immediately on receipt of information of this accident, medical aid was rushed from Mansi, Khagaria and Barauni stations and the same reached the site of the accident within a short while. Fifty-five of the injured persons were sent to the Khagaria Civil Hospital in the first instance and latter some of them were transferred to Darbhanga Civil Hospital at Laheria Sarai and to Saharsa and Purnea Hospitals. The remaining 13 were sent to the Railway Hospital at Samastipur. According to the latest information 25 persons are still in hospitals and are reported to be progressing satisfactorily.

The General Manager and Heads of the Departments of North Eastern Railway immediately proceeded to the site.

The Deputy Minister for Railways, Shri Shah Nawaz Khan and a Member of the Railway Board also visited the site and the injured in hospitals the next day.

Some voluntary organisations from Khagaria and a team of staff and students from the Medical College, Patna, also rushed to the site of the accident and rendered valuable assistance in the work of succour to the injured and distressed.

The Commissioner of Railway Safety visited the site of accident on 6th January and started his investigation the next day. According to his preliminary findings, the collision was due to the failure of Railway Staff.

The Bihar State Government have been approached to recommend a judicial officer for appointment as a

[Shri Shahnawaz Khan]

Claims Commissioner to deal with the claims arising out of this accident

**Shri Ranga (Chittoor):** May I suggest that Government take the trouble of giving serial numbers to all these collisions, so that in the course of the year it will be a reminder to the railway staff and other people who are responsible for the management of the railways as to how serious this problem is growing?

**Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur):** This accident has taken place after the interim report of the Railway Accidents Enquiry Committee. We were assured in the House that all precautions had been taken. So, I want to know why a judicial enquiry is not contemplated in this case, and why it has been left again to the inspectors? This is a serious accident.

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** This is the normal machinery that we have for looking into serious accidents, and the preliminary enquiry says that it is due to the failure of the railway staff.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi (Mandsaur):** The number of accidents has gone on increasing, and enquiries have been conducted by the Government Inspector of Railways and there have also been judicial enquiries. I suggested during the debate on the Railway Budget last time, and also this time as also at the supplementary demands stage, that these enquiries may be conducted by officers who are experts in the administration of railways or by Members of Parliament who know the working of the railways.

**Mr. Speaker:** As an experienced parliamentarian, he knows very well that no statement can be made after the statement by the Minister. Only a question can be put for clarification, if he wants. If he wants to make a suggestion, the Budget session is just approaching, and he will have an opportunity to make it.

**Shri U. M. Trivedi:** I am making only one point. Has the point been considered by the Government that these enquiries need not be conducted in the manner in which they have been conducted so far, because things do not come to light and naturally only a stereotyped report is always available.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Barrackpore):** May I know whether the Railway Accidents Enquiry Committee, which has been already constituted, will be going to the spot immediately, so that they may have the opportunity of seeing things immediately after the accident?

**Shri Priya Gupta (Katihar):** When was the preliminary enquiry made? If the detailed enquiry is still to be done, how can it be said that the railwaymen were at fault without probing into the details? One can say so only after taking evidence and going into the details.

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** In the preliminary enquiry the finding has been that the railway staff are at fault. Detailed report will come later on... (Interruptions.)

**Shri Priya Gupta:** Is any other enquiry to be held or not? The House would like it to be done early. कोई डीटेल्ड एन्क्वायरी होने वाली है या नहीं?

**श्री यशपाल सिंह (कैराना):** क्या सरकार यह बात जानती है कि हमने विदेशों से साइडे अटारह करोड़ रुपए के जो नये इंजिन खरीदे हैं, वे हमारी रेलवे लाइनों के साथ फिट नहीं होत हैं और सिर्फ उन्हीं लाइनों पर ये एक्सिडेंट होत हैं, जिन पर ये इंजिन काम में लाए जा रूँ हैं?

प्रध्याय महोदय : पहले एन्क्वायरी होने बीजिए । उसमें इस बात का पता चल जायगा । We go to the next business.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** He may be asked to reply to our questions.

**Mr. Speaker:** They have been put. They will be taken into consideration and then they will give answer. Shri Trivedi himself said that he was going to make a suggestion.

(ii) ACCIDENT AT MAHANADI BRIDGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** Sir, I want to make a statement on the accident that took place on the 15th January, 1963 at the railway bridge under construction in the Mahanadi river near Cuttack.

The construction of a major bridge across Mahanadi at Naraj a few miles upstream of Cuttack has been taken up for doubling the line between Nergundi and Khurda Road. The contract for the sub-structure work including the wells and piers constituting the foundations of the bridge has been let out to Messrs Hindustan Construction Co., who have successfully completed several similar works elsewhere during recent years. The piers of the bridge are being founded on deep wells in the river bed. During the course of sinking well No. 11 by the contractor, rock below bed level was being excavated, keeping the water expelled by pneumatic pressure through the provision of air locks. On the 15th of January, at about 17:45 hours when excavation work was in progress, with 54 workmen of the contractor inside the well and 20 workmen on top of the well, both the air locks at the top of the well suddenly blew off and were thrown out to one side of the well. Within minutes of the occurrence, the contractor's supervisory staff and other workmen at the bridge started rescue operations and medical aid was rendered both by

the Contractor's Medical Officer and the Railway Medical Officer present at the site. The victims were immediately sent by road to the Medical College Hospital at Cuttack, about 12 miles from the Bridge site. Most of the men taken out of the well were in an unconscious state and 45 were found dead when they reached the Hospital. Twenty-nine men were admitted for treatment of whom 4 have since died and the rest are progressing, although three of the cases are stated to be serious. The State Government made special arrangements in the Hospital for giving prompt medical aid to the injured.

The accident is not connected with the working of Railways. Appointment of a high level Enquiry Committee under the Commission of Enquiry Act, 1952 is being considered. I am sure, the House will associate with me in conveying our sympathies to the bereaved members of the families of the deceased and to the victims injured in this tragic accident.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad):** Sir, on a point of information. The Deputy Minister has made statements in respect of two accidents. May I know from him whether the incidence of railway accidents has shown an increase during this period since the Proclamation of Emergency as compared to the same period of the previous year?

**Shri Shahnawaz Khan:** According to the interim report of the Kunzru Committee that we have received the incidence of railway accidents has shown a steady decline year by year.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** How about this period? .. (Interruptions.)

**Shri Priya Gupta:** Sir, I want to know if these accidents happened because of the non-observance of measures and regulations laid down for working the machines and whether the labourers of the company who lost their lives or who suffered injuries will be compensated?