

Democracies deliver:

A Major train crash: Its Management & People's Nobility

June 6, 2023

Friday, June 2, 2023: Balasore, Odisha, India: A Railway accident in Odisha State of India killed 288 travelers and injured about 1,000 persons. *(Please see the brief Appendix on pages 2-3 about Indian Railway system.)*

Tuesday, June 6, 2023: The INVESTIGATION: The **Central Bureau of Investigation** (CBI) has registered a case for investigation of the Railway crash to determine whether a criminal conspiracy was the cause of the accident. A 10-member team of CBI took over the investigation from the local **Government Railway Police Station** (GRPS), which had started the investigation two days earlier.

Mr. Ashwini Vaishnaw, the Railway Minister of India, had asked CBI to take over the investigation. This is, obviously, because the Railways suspect sabotage and external intervention in engineering the crash. *(Please see the remainder of INVESTIGATION on page 2 below.)*

The SCENARIO of the Crash: The accident took place at a small railway station- **Bahanaga Bazar Station**. The **Coromandel Express**, with 18 bogies, which runs at a speed of 130 km/hr and covers a distance of 1659 kms between Shalimar railway station, West Bengal, and Chennai Central railway station, Tamil Nadu, got into the accident a few hours after starting from Shalimar.

Not many fast trains stop at Bahanaga Bazar. There are two 'through lines- one UP (North to South) the other DOWN (South to North)' for fast trains. There are loops for connecting the 'through lines' to the platforms. A freight train, carrying iron ore, was parked at a platform, when the crash took place.

The CRASH: Coromandel Express approached Bahanaga Bazar, the driver saw two GREEN signals, one after the other, and the train continued on the 'through line', at a speed of 128 Km/hour. However, soon the train moved into the loop, which it should not have. That means the track Exchange towards the Loop had become open, while the earlier two Green signals had told the driver that the 'through line' was open. The Loop distance is about 100m, whereas a train moving at 128 Km/hour required 600 m for applying a brake.

The Coromandel crashed into the heavy freight train, which hardly moved. Its bogies de-railed. At that time

The driver in his statement to the **Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS)** has stated that the speed of his train was below the maximum permitted speed and the two signals had informed him about the availability of the 'through line'. It seems CRS has been able to check the veracity of the driver's statement.

Messages from world leaders – **President Joe Biden, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, President Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu** and others have conveyed to **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** messages of sympathy at the tragedy.

Tuesday, June 6, 2023: The INVESTIGATION: (Continued from Page 1.....)

CRS on Monday recorded the statements of the injured engine driver **Gunanidhi Mohanty** and his assistant **Hajari Behera**, who are undergoing treatment at **All India Institute of Medical Sciences Bhubaneswar (AIIMS-B)**. It has become clear that the 'Track Exchange to the Loop' was, inexplicably, open.

The track Exchange is controlled by an Electronic Interlocking System, which is designed to be **fail-safe**. Hence the manual Exchange control system, which can over-ride the Electronic Interlocking System is under suspicion. But the system is under a locking system with dual keys, which can be opened only by both the Station Manager and the Officer, assigned the job of controlling the manual system.

www.DiGiNews360.com expresses its condolences for the families, which have lost their members. It also wants to convey its sympathies and Best Wishes for an early recovery of the injured. It salutes the nobility of the ordinary people and the democratic governments, which work for their people.

Appendix: SOME FACTS ABOUT INDIAN RAILWAYS:

- **Every day**, 22,000 (13,000 passenger + 9,000 freight) trains move on 110,000 Km of track and 22 to 25 million passengers use the trains **every day**.
- The last major accident was, about 5 years back, in October 2018 at Amritsar, where in the evening, a good number of persons were sitting on a railway track. In the dark, a fast train mowed 59 persons, sitting on the railway track. (Reference: <https://tinyurl.com/3sdsn3sj>)

- CBI and CRS have not yet been able to determine the reasons for the accident of June 2, 2023.

INHERENT NOBILITY of ORDINARY POOR PEOPLE: Balasore is a small town in Odisha, the poorest province of India. As soon as the accident occurred at 18.55 hours near the Bahanaga Bazar Station, the local people and from the nearby town of Balasore (at about 25 Km distance), came forward to help the victims of the accident at the Railway Station without any delay.

It took an hour or so for the first battalion of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) to arrive on the crash site, with their expertise and their equipment to help the victims of the Railway Crash. Within hours, 9 battalions, with about 300 personnel, were at work.

Within hours, the local women **cooked food at their home and served it free** to about 1,500 persons at the small Railway Station. Soon the local Tata Power Odisha Distribution Limited came forward to support the women financially.

At the local hospitals, there were queues of citizens, **for donating blood** for the victims of the Railway crash.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS, WHICH WORK: The local Government Officers, under the State Government of Odisha, along with the Railway Officers started working for the victims of the crash immediately after the crash. **Mr. Naveen Patnaik**, the Chief Minister of Odisha, has been talking to his officers and to **Narendra Modi**, the Prime Minister, continuously. They are working to identify the dead persons and to see that these are sent to their respective homes, along with the financial help of Rs one million (Rs 50,000 in cash and the remainder in a cheque). It may be noted that the Odisha and the Central governments are run by two different political parties.

Mr. Narendra Modi himself visited the crash site and the hospitals and asked **Mr. Ashwini Vaishnaw and Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan**, two Ministers in the Central Cabinet and belonging to Odisha, to remain personally present to take care of the

victims and to see that the traffic on this part of the Railway system is restored back fast.



Movement on the UP and DOWN tracks restored back in 51 hours

Within 51 hours, the huge task of removing the debris, laying the new tracks and electric lines etc has been completed and the traffic on these tracks has become normal.

Mr. Mansikh L. Mandaviya, the Central Minister of Health and Family Welfare, came to Bhubaneswar, immediately after the crash. At AIIMS-B, he assessed the needs of the injured persons and ensured that a team of the specialists and the necessary medical supplies were brought to Odisha in a special chartered aircraft.
