

《7月份温州动车事故54名责任人受罚》

周四国务院宣布，经调查认定，总共54人对7月份致40人死亡的动车事故负主要责任，将受到相应惩罚。

A total of 54 people found responsible for the bullet train crash that killed 40 people in July will be punished, the State Council announced Wednesday.

The fatal accident occurred when a high-speed train rammed into a stalled train near the city of Wenzhou in Zhejiang Province on July 23, leaving 40 people dead and 172 wounded.

Liu Zhijun, the country's former railway minister, Zhang Shuguang, the railway ministry's deputy chief engineer, and Ma Cheng, former chairman of board at China Railway Signal and Communication Corp. (CRSC), producer of the railway signaling system, were held chiefly responsible for the crash.

Liu and Zhang were removed from office over an alleged "severe violation of discipline" earlier this year.

A lightning strike caused train D3115 lose power and a signaling failure led train D301 to rear-end D3115, according to the report.

The probe, which lasted more than 180 days, found that besides major design flaws, there had been relaxed safety controls and poor emergency response to equipment failure behind the tragedy.

Police and prosecutors are independently investigating into whether the accident constitutes a crime, the State Council said.

The accident has exposed that the MOR and the Shanghai Railway Bureau had failed to act properly after the accident and were unable to disclose relevant information on issues of social concern, leaving a negative social influence, said the report.

The CRSC also did not fulfill its responsibility, as its chaotic management at its research institute has caused the design flaws and major safety loopholes, it said.

The Ministry of Railways (MOR) said it will pay 915,000 yuan (145,007 U.S. dollars) in compensation for each victim of the high-speed train crash, but it has not reached agreements with families of three

foreign victims.

Of the 172 injured passengers, the ministry has signed agreements with 101 people that provide compensation of more than 7.5 billion yuan as of Dec. 21.

The July accident has caused public fury and discontent over reckless growth and government ignorance of safety management.

Railway minister Sheng Guangzu is required to make a thorough self-criticism and present it to the State Council, according to the meeting.

At a MOR conference after the meeting, Sheng said the July train crash has exposed weak links in railway safety management and taught a serious lesson.

Sheng said that the ministry has failed the nation and its people, and he expressed deep condolences to victims of the accident and sincere apologies to the injured.

The State Council has also concluded a safety overhaul on high-speed rail links and ongoing railway projects that was launched after the accident, and announced measures to fix safety loopholes exposed during the inspection.

The railway ministry has urged the local units to moderately slow high-speed trains at newly-opened links, complete emergency response plans, recall equipment with hidden dangers, and enhance work-safety training.

The railway ministry has been acting as both the regulator and operator of China's railway systems since its establishment.