

Railway accident investigation report

Railway operator : East Japan Railway Company

Accident type : Train derailment

Date and time : About 19:30, December 11, 2015

Location : At around 47,512 m from the origin at Morioka station, between Hiratsuto station and Matsukusa station, single track, Yamada Line, Miyako City, Iwate Prefecture

SUMMARY

On December 11, 2015, the inbound local 645D train, composed of one railway vehicle, started from Miyako station bound for Morioka station, Yamada Line of East Japan Railway Company, departed from Hiratsuto station on schedule at 19:24. While the train was running at about 55 km/h between Hiratsuto station and Matsukusa station, the driver of the train found the trees fell on the track ahead, and applied an emergency brake, but the train hit and ran over the fallen trees and earth and sands, etc., flowed into the track, and stopped.

It was found in the later investigation that all four axles of the train were derailed and the vehicle body was tilted to right. In addition, the slope in left side of the stopped train was collapsed, and earth and sand, etc., flowed onto the track.

There were 22 passengers and 2 train crews, i.e., the driver and the conductor, were onboard the train. Among them, 15 passengers and the driver were injured.

PROBABLE CAUSES

It is highly probable that the accident had occurred as the train was derailed by hit and ran onto the fallen trees or earth and sand, etc., flowed into railway track due to the collapse of the slope in track side.

It is somewhat likely that the slope collapsed by the increased weight of the surface layer of the slope due to rainfall and melting snow, where the surface layer of the slope had been unstable by the steep slope and weathering.