Several buses were burnt in Guntur and five trains were diverted from the Nadikuri-Hyderabad route following bomb and landmine scares.

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Hyderabad, Feb. 22: Four Telugu Desam Party workers were killed by Naxalites after they refused to heed a warning not to attend a mammoth rally that intended to show off the party's confidence in its anti-PWG poll plank. Other than stray Naxalite attacks on Desam leaders in Kadapa, Nalgonda and Guntur districts, several buses were burnt in Guntur and five trains were diverted from the Nadikuri-Hyderabad route following bomb and landmine scares, the state police said. The PWG threat also affected services on the Vijayawada-Nadikuri route with all trains being diverted to Vijayawada-Kazipet-Hyderabad. Some trains were said to be running late by hours. The Vijaya Bheri rally that drew nearly 15 lakh people to the Parade Grounds from across the state not only inconvenienced almost 85 weddings here but also affected the second phase of the pulse polio campaign. "With revenue and police officials busy in making arrangements for the ruling party's meeting, the crucial programme benefiting the poorest of the poor in the city suffered," a senior Congress leader said. On the explicit directions of the government and the police, the wedding organisers were asked to make alternative arrangements and vacate function halls for the party. Desam workers did not spare even government buildings.

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