

I request the Union Government to ensure that the land of Azam Jahi Mills at Warangal is not sold.

14.27 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET 1997-98 - GENERAL DISCUSSION

* DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT - (RAILWAYS)
1997-98

* DEMAND FOR EXCESS GRANTS - (RAILWAYS)
1994-95

* SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS --
(RAILWAYS) 1996-97

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House will now take up further discussion on the Railway Budget and item Nos. 15, 16 & 17. The Railway Minister will reply.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I would like to convey my thanks to you and through you, to all Hon'ble Members for not only taking interest in the railways and railway budget but for giving very good suggestions which would definitely act as a guide to Railways and help Railways to earn good profit. In all, 96 Members participated in this debate which lasted for more than 24 hours. We left the House today morning at about 5.45 a.m.. Yesterday, it was not that only those Members were present in the House, who were to speak on the Railways. I saw many other Members including Kumari Mamata Banerjee and Nitish Kumar also sitting here.

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai North) : Please don't say 'yesterday' but say 'today'.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I was saying that it showed the importance of Railways. The atmosphere in the House was not like other days when the House used to sit beyond midnight. Instead, the Hon'ble Members woke up whole night and keenly participated in the debate. The Hon'ble Member were waking their points so energetically as if they were speaking during Zero Hour. Therefore, first of all, I would like to thank all Hon'ble Members.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I would also like to interrupt. Other Members had left the House after speaking but I saw you sitting whole time in the House.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I also saw you sitting in the House, when you entered the House at 4.00 a.m. we got

* Moved with the recommendation of President.

inspiration from you and noticed that the Chair and all Hon'ble Member were alert.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I had recited a couplet in the morning

"Hamein to aaj pau fate tak jagna hoga,
Yehi Kismat Hamari hai, Sitaron tum to so jao"

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am presenting here vote-on-Account proposals for two months of 1997-98 to be passed by the House. Besides, I am also presenting supplementary Demands for Grants for 1994-95 to be passed by the House. We have formulated a rule in the House under which "the Budget" presented in the House is sent first to the Standing Committee. The meeting of Standing Committee is going on.

There are two parts of the Budget. The first part of the Budget consists of general issues such as the measures to increase the efficiency of Railways, the mode of discussion for its development and the second part consists of projects to be taken up for the year.

The hon. Members of all parties have given their suggestions. I have received many suggestions but I understand that under the existing rules and regulations of the Standing Committee, it would be neither possible nor proper for me to speak regarding projects. The report of Standing Committee is likely to be presented in the month of April when Parliament will be in session.

14.32 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

At that time, I shall tell this House as well as the hon. Members of Parliament in detail about projects. I shall speak on the issues raised by the hon. Members as suggestions during the discussion on Rail Budget.

I am glad that my colleague Shri Pramod Mahajan, while initiating the discussion, has given many suggestions. His main issue, which was later on raised by many hon Members, was regarding the plan. He wanted to know whether Railways had any master plan or just passage of Budget once in a year and increase in fare and freight charges accordingly was enough? Is the work done in this manner only on Railways has any far sight or planning under which it works?

I would like to inform the House as well as the hon. Members that there is nothing as such. Railways has its own planning and master plan which we call corporate plan. We prepare the corporate plan in three stages. We prepare plans for 15 years, for 5 years and for one year also. Our previous corporate plan was prepared in 1985. When we chalk out plan, we keep in mind all the details of coming 15 years as to what would be our position in various sectors, such as internal resources, additional resources, passenger traffic, freight traffic, the likely profit of Railways and the likely

expenditure thereon. While preparing corporate plan, we also see as to how will we develop a technology be it locomotive, wagons, coaches, matters ranging from gauge conversion to electrification. Our next planning for 15 years will start after 2000 a.d. For that purpose, we are alert from now. The Government had started its efforts regarding setting up of new perspective planning cell. This new plan will be valid for a period of four year 2000 to 2015. We prepare objectives as per the plan and strategy consists of our five year plan. Though a separate plan is prepared for the period of five year but generally five year plan runs side by side during the same period. Then annual plan is chalked out. To find out the achievements made vis-a vis target set, a mid-term review is conducted after three years.

I would like to tell the hon Members that this is the plan of the Railways. This year, we have given our a new direction by adding social objective to it. Our plan will not aim at only profit making but the facilities of common man is also kept in mind. I am very glad that all the hon. Members who expressed their views applauded the policy of the Government that Railways is not only a profit-making organisation but its objectives should be public welfare. It has enhanced our will power and I, as the Minister of Railways, would like to assure you that, the Government will prepare one more plan and in that plan, the Government will develop Railways into a public welfare organisation and improve its image.

One of my colleagues had raised the issue of resources mobilisation you must be knowing that the railways have 3-4 services. One is internal resources in which we mobilise resources by increasing our efficiency and production and in which total income, total expenditure incurred and the loss suffered is shown. Thus, the remaining amount is termed as internal resources. The second source of our resource mobilisation is also considered on the same pattern. The Government borrows from the market. Third source is private participation. We encourage private investors. There are mainly two sectors in capital investment. BOLT and own your wagon schemes. Fourth is our budgetary support. The Railways seek financial assistance from the Government through budgetary support. It has to repay the amount so taken.

Our last source is to increase fare charges. These divisions contain almost all the points raised by the hon. Members. But priority should be given to main issues. One or two points are other than these issues. So far as the internal resources are concerned, there is no question of reducing it. We are determined to increase our internal resources, our efficiency and productivity. In the new Rail Budget rolling stock the main issue - has not been reduced. Rs.2408 crore were provided for it in 1992-93 Rs.2320 crore in 1993-94, Rs.1922 in 1994-95 and Rs.2403 crore in 1995-96. While Rs.3800 crore were provided last year which was increased to Rs.4144 till March. This is our rolling stock on which depends the future of railways. We have tried to increase it during the last year and this year also, we have provided Rs. four thousand crore for this year. We have also considered this aspect as to the number of wagons and

coaches required. We have proposed for 26,000 wagons, 2,000 coaches and 300 locomotives.

So far as the matter of track renewal is concerned Rs.970 crores in 1993-94, Rs. 1024 crores in 1994-95 Rs.1150 crores in 1995-96, Rs.1128 crores in 1996-97 were provided for this purpose and this time despite shortage of resources and Rs. 3500 crore kept apart for pay commission the amount has not been reduced. If the amount of Rs.3500 crore was not to be kept for this purpose more funds could have been provided. This time Rs.1250 crore have been sanctioned. Likewise so far as the matter of gauge conversion is concerned Rs.910 crore have been provided from it. So far as the matter of signal is concerned, Rs. 152 crores in 1992-93, Rs. 156 crores in 1993-94, Rs. 169 in 1994-95; Rs. 208 crore in 1995-96 have been provided. For this purpose this time we have given 201 crores. In the same way you see electrification, last year Rs. 230 crores were provided for this purpose but this time the amount has been increased to Rs. 350 crores. The development of tribal and backward areas can not be undertaken till the new infrastructure and new lines are improvised in 1993-94 Rs. 252 crore were given for it, in 1994-95 Rs. 240 crore in 1995-96 Rs. 218 crore, and last year Rs. 284 crore were provided for it and now maximum amount of Rs. 400 crores has been sanctioned for this purpose. Besides, there is a provision for other purposes such as staff quarters etc.

There is shortage of resources, due to which we have compromised as in the matter of safety signal and doubling in some cases.

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : How much amount has been provided for doubling for this year as compared to the last year?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : This year we have provided Rs.195 crores for this purpose and last year the amount was Rs. 206 crores. Because of it our credibility has declined. I assure you that this amount would be increased.

Our budgetary support was falling and it came down from 75 percent to 15-16 percent. I am happy to say that we have reversed it and it has again been increased from 15-16 percent to 22 percent. I thank the hon'ble Prime Minister for it. Our many friends of Kerala met him today. They were saying that other members of Kerala were also agitated.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South): What about Bengal?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I have mentioned about all the States. I feel in that our friends of all States have put forward their demands and we are not able to fulfill their demand in its ratio. But I have only said that we are making our efforts to improve the situation. I am confident that our resources will increase and I assure all the Hon'ble members that we will provide more funds under various heads as compared to the last year.

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, earlier, the Indian Railways had given priority for unigauge system. From this Budget, we come to know that Indian Railways are going back from that.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, you need not answer that question.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell hon'ble Member that railway network is spread in 62000 kilometres area of the country and earlier there was no railway line from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. But now Kanyakumari and Kashmir will be connected and our slogan from Kanyakumari to Kashmir will come true.

We had introduced a system under which there must be uniform track. Last time I had stated in the House that under the unigauge system 12000 kilometre long railway line would be laid in the tribal and remote areas and the areas which have not been covered thereunder. It was presumed that it would be converted into broad gauge gradually. Last time I had stated in the House that metre gauge has its own importance. In areas where gauge conversion can not be undertaken the metre gauge plays an important role to provide many of transportation to the people. Therefore, we had decided that metre gauge would be used continuously. We are trying to convert metre gauge into broad gauge in the case of maximum number of lines and some arrangements would be made in the case of remaining metre gauge line. We have started the use of old tracks and locomotives. Maintenance of them would be undertaken. If required, new coaches would be manufactured and where there are metre gauge and narrow gauge these would be used for the welfare of the people.

Mr. Speaker, so far as borrowing from the market is concerned, I am not happy with it. We will increase our resources. Regarding private participation I had said that last time our "Own your wagon scheme" succeeded and it earned profit But Bolt Scheme is not doing well. I am not an economist. I do not have sufficient knowledge of economics. On the basis of suggestions made by hon'ble members we have drawn this conclusion that we are at a fault to a certain extent in any way. At the time of planning for railways we say that hundred crore rupees would be spent on a particular project and it would be completed within two years. Instead, it takes ten years and its cost increases to four or five hundred crores rupees within these ten years. If a private investor is interested to participate in this field, we will see if he can spend hundred crores rupees in two years or not? If he says, no we are sorry for that. Hence we have asked Railway Board to give details of the completion and the amount incurred on a project.

If a private investor wants to invest in it then what is the amount he intends to spend if we compare both these figures they are sure that BOLT Scheme will succeed.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Has any offer been received so far?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Naik I did not provide opportunity. The discussion is going on for the last two years, since I have held this office, I considered seriously this matter and have decided to call a meeting on the next month and would like to discuss the matter with open mind with the hon. Members willing to participate in discussions on 'BOLT Scheme' and if the need arises, I would also like to change the policy.

The matter regarding utilisation at railways land is raised time and again. I would like to know as to what is utilisation. I have no difficulty in utilising railway land I hail from a middle class families and want that the prevailing corruption should be contained. Unless the corruption is uprooted, the society cannot be cleaned. Therefore, the executive heads should chalk out such policies which leave no room for corruption. If you have gone through this year's Budget, you will note that I have stated that a transaction worth Rs. 7000 crore is made in my Ministry and the rate at which goods are purchased. I would invite tenders and if any one can supply one cheaper rates, I shall consider his proposal. If we could save even 2-3 percent amount, Rs. 2000 crore can be saved in a year automatically. Besides earning profit, there will be transparency in our deal also.

Likewise, there is matter regarding railway land. I know that the Railways has huge property. Go to any station and you will find empty land there. If we make efforts save railway land in Mumbai only, the Railways will be able to mobilise crores of rupees and we can easily overcome our resource crunch. But the fear is that the Pandora box would be opened. Whenever the Railways need that property, it is obtained after holding discussion with the State Government concerned by once this right is handed over to any one else, there is possibility that one more door may be opened for corruption. Though, I know that even if the land is handed over to some one else, the ownership right will be with us. Still, even if any minister be it Ram Vilas Paswan or anyone else takes this matter seriously and execute this work with full devotion, he is sure to be blamed. I have a case with me in which a railway officer sold the railway land. If the railway land is utilised properly, the economic problem of the Ministry of Railways can be solved.

Sir, whenever there is increase in rail fare or freight charges, it is criticised. When I took the charge of Ministry of Railways last year, I tried my best not to increase the same and freight charges, though I had to bear Rs. One thousand as a burden of Fifth Pay Commission. On the other hand, by all means be it imposition of tax or increase in fare or freight charges, the total revenue collection comes to the tune of Rs. 900 crore. This year, the Ministry has to bear an extra burden of Rs. 3500 crore while it will be getting Rs. 1800 crore through freight and fare increase and the imposition of tax. Had the Government Rs. 3500 crore with it, it would not have put extra burden on public. Instead it would have given relief. Had the Government not to give Rs. 1000 crore last year, it would not have put a burden of Rs. 900 crore and it would

have managed the amount from any other source. This unexpected situation has arisen before the Ministry of Railways. The Ministry will have to face a difficult year since it had to spend Rs. 3500 crore.

Now, I would like to tell you about my internal resources. Our total internal resource is to the tune of 45-50 percent in which 25-27 percent is borrowed from the market 10 per cent from private capital investment. Last year our Budgetary support was 15-16 percent which has become 20 percent this year. Thus, the increase in fare or freight charges comes to 5 percent of our total income which is likely to become 8 percent this year. The inflation rate rises to 4-5 percent which is an extraordinary situation. Under this compulsion, we have to increase the fare and freight charges, though unwillingly because Rail Budget is not a deficit budget. We have to incur expenditure equal to the amount collected from all sources. We have no freedom to contribute the profit money to any future planning. Therefore we need the fund urgently. This year due to helplessness, we have to spare Rs. 8300 crore for plan side. In case there are any resources in future we shall think of increasing funds for plan side but this year I did what the resources allowed. I am cutting my coat according to my cloth.

Sir, the hon. Member have given very good suggestion regarding accidents. I want to assure you that I will try my best to obtain the latest technology, be it for signalling, for communication between driver and guard or communication between next station and either driver or guard. In spite of all these some factors responsible for accidents are beyond our control such as human error which is cause of our concern. Besides, our rail line is compared with the foreign rail line but India is the only country in the world where one crore and ten lakh passengers travel by train daily. We do not have infrastructure for this. There are atleast four rail line in Calcutta, Mumbai, Delhi or Chennai but if you go out of city, you will find only one rail-line. We do not have a separate dedicated line on which we may introduce super fast trains, Rajdhani or Shatabdi. The trains are running on only one line.

15.00 hrs.

I was looking into a file related to various political parties which consisted of my colleagues from BJP and Shiv Sena and Shri Sharad Pawar. The issue was regarding the stoppage of train at Thane. I would like to tell the hon. Members that sometimes when train is stopped at a particular station on the requests of the hon. Members, I invite wrath of the people who opposed this move. I do not recall the name of the train but the issue was related to its stoppage at Thane.

When I was studying the files, I found that the reply was in the negative. The negative reply was of 5-7 members had replied in the negative but how it could be. When I started looking into the file, I found that the issue related to the issue of providing stoppage to the train for two minutes may be provided. Big leaders have been writing but the train can not be stopped there for two minutes. At this the officers of the Railway Board asked us to see if the whole track is vacant.

They started showing. A train was moving followed by suburban train and when it seached in the middle, the train stopped and then picked up the speed again then it was found that at least two suburban trains were to be withdrawn to accommodate this stoppage. Then they said that this decision is to be taken by you whether you want to have a halt for two minutes for these trains or want to get these two suburban trains withdrawn. Then I met those hon. member and told them. I said that there was no additional rail line. We have one line and if an accident occurs the trains gets late. Secondly even the people become angry due to some other issue they give vent to it by damaging the railway track. The agitation takes place on the railway track and the trains get late. We have the Rajdhani train, suppose it goes to Guwahati and comes back from there.

SHRI P. R. DASMUNSI (Howrah) : This initiative was taken by you . Now everyone including we are doing so.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Most of the trains return. But if the train is three hours late than it will reach the destination three hours late. We have been making arrangements in this regard. We have said that as far as possible, the trains should be introduced on daily basis. On the other hand if one train is late then the other trains should not reach late or we should have additional arrangements. If one train gets late then we can make arrangements from the other train.

Sir, there is the question of dacoities and theft on trains. Therefore, I have repeatedly said that such a subject should not be raised on party lines or State line or any other line. The passengers who travel are not ready to listen the Railway Minister when he says that it is the responsibility of the State and the State says that it is the responsibility of Railway. I agree with it and the responsibility of railway. I agree with it and therefore I never let it be an issue of prestige. I left it upto you since in each State there is the rule of different party. Ours is a federal structure and under the federal structure the State Governments have been given various responsibilities. Till date the question of accidents, thefts and dacoities come under the law and order situations. Therefore, I have said that the question of law and order is the responsibility of the State Government, but it does not mean that Railway Ministry is running away from its responsibility. We have met the Hon. Home Minister in this regard and talked to him. We have talked to the Hon. Prime Minister in this regard and we are talking with the Chief Minister of the State. I have said that if need be the persons of the Railway Ministry would solve the problem by holding talks with the Chief Minister of the concerned States the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Home Minister neither we are backing out nor we are trying to run away but we do not want to violate the constitutional dignity.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : Will it solve the problem? Would you consider setting of separate railway force or will you hold the meeting only and hush up the issue? Even if you talk to the hon. Prime Minister and the Chief Minister(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : The situation is deteriorating. Even today if you go through the newspaper you would find that the incidents of dacoities are still happening. What is the impact of these things?

SHRI P. R. DASMUNSI : The hon. Minister is a good person. Do not involve yourself in these things. Talk to Indrajit Babu and Laloo ji.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Take a serious initiative in this regard....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Likewise incidents of bus colliding with the train somewhere are also happening.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Speak something on dacoity. What will be the outcome of the meeting? Would you consider setting up of a separate force of the protection of railways....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Do not politicise it. I have said whatever I wanted to say.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : You are giving it a political colour. The dacoity incidents in Bihar are being seen in the perspective of dispute between you and Laloo ji. We are not concerned with it but the incidents of dacoities are still happening....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : It is a humanitarian issue and I had said on that very day that it is not confined merely to a single State. There are so many States where such incidents have been happening and I would like to make it clear that we do not hold talks with the Chief Minister of Bihar. We had talked to him and he has transferred many officers from top to bottom. But the State and the Central Governments, the Hon. Home Minister and the Railway Minister should collectively remove the fear from the minds of the people....(Interruptions) Mr. Speaker Sir, I take my seat. If you say....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Nitish Kumar, you cannot initiate a debate.

.....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : The compensation has been given to the police officers who are killed but what are you going to do for the common passengers so that the fear may be removed from their minds? If a passenger shows courage then he should also be encouraged and he should also be compensated....(Interruptions)

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT (Agra) : The hon. Minister should announce an action plan so that fear from the minds of the railway passengers could be removed.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We have announced it and the leader of the opposition have and stood it. As far as bravery is concerned we have asked for the names from Shri Brahamanandji and he has given us the names. If a Government employee or a police officer or whosoever takes the risk to fight against a criminal, the Railways reward him and we have done accordingly.

If a bus collides with a running train on the railway track then what can railway do in the matter, We have been making efforts to see that there should be no unmanned railway crossings. I have asked the officer of the Railway Board regarding the suggestion given by the hon. Member that the unmanned railway crossings should be converted into manned one.

We are going to man all those crossings. But don't think that we are going to man 24 thousand crossings. There is no part of the world where there is no unmanned crossing and if we want that all the crossings be manned then it is not possible nevertheless the responsibility lies on us. Similarly, responsibility also lies with the driver of bus or truck passing through the railway crossings. When speed breakers are there, when there is danger to the life of the people then it is the duty of the bus driver to see that the track is free but the drivers drive recklessly and as a result they collide with the train and sometimes with the gate. Such accidents are in fact unfortunate. So I would like to tell you that wherever the fault lies with the officers/staff of railways, they will not be spared and whenever any passenger is killed in accident due to negligence on part of railways, for that matter the hon. Members have asked me as to why I do not insure the life of passengers.

I would like to say that Rs. 2 lakh rupees insurance provision is already in existence. A bomb explosion occurred in Kokrajhar and Ambala. Two lakh rupees as compensation had been given to the families of those person who were killed in the explosion.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a question of welfare of casual labour. When I made announcements regarding casual labours then many of the hon. member thought that I am making this announcement for gaining cheap publicity as a Railway Minister. I had made announcement regarding 56 thousand casual labourers and today I would like to inform you that we will regularise 30 thousand casual labourers out of 56 thousand and the remaining would be regularised by 1997-98. In addition to this many casual labourers claim more. For instance, there are lakhs of labourers, who are working through contractors in Earth working field, who are doing soil extraction work. You are well aware of the Government policy. They want to limit the expenditure. Earlier we had 19 lakh staff in the railways. Today, it has come down to 16 lakhs, when if we try to make even a slightly increase, then there is a uproar not only from outside but also in the press. when we say that we would regularise the casual labourers, then there will be news published in the newspapers that the Government money is being misused. We had said there were three thousand safai karamacharis who were

working under contract system and we further said that we will abolish the contract system and we have abolished the contract system after 31st December and all the safai karamcharis are being reinstated. People are also questioning as to whether the three thousand persons have been appointed on sanctioned posts or not. How they have been reinstated and what has been done in this regard etc.? I would like to tell you that there are 14-15 thousand casual labourers and don't do they have a right for secured future. It will also secure our future.

Mr. Speaker, there is a matter concerning the porters. Even today, porters are not considered as a part of the railways. They are considered to be separate/different from the railways. Last time, we had announced leaves for 75 per cent porters and at that time itself I had said that we will issue free passes to them and this time we have issued 100 per cent passes. These porters have been benefitted or not is not a question but the porters of the country are feeling a sense of self confidence that there is someone to look after them to listen to them. Hence, how much money they get, what facilities we have been provided to them is not the question. The fact is that now the poor people have started realising that the Government is not only paying attention towards big people but also paying attention towards the problems being faced by the poor people as well.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, similarly, yesterday our hon. members have raised questions regarding Mandal Commission. We have started implementing the Mandal Commission recommendations in railways. As per the recommendation a provision for 27 percent reservation has been made w.e.f. 1993. Some hon. members had asked me as to why we are not filling up the backlog vacancies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It brings bad name to us. I will not give any chance to any body to criticize us. There will be no case of corruption. People will only say that Ram Vilas has turned Rail Bhavan into Dalit Bhavan. When every one visits Rail Bhavan then why Dalit can't visit? Tribals have also a right to visit. I am not talking about you, I am talking in general.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : No one says like this. If someone says like this, then it is wrong. Atleast we have not heard this. It is not published in the newspapers too. If you want to get it published in then it's a different matter because this is also a way of publicity.....(Interruptions)

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR (Bareilly) : No one has said like this in their speech..... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I don't want to point out the name of any hon. members here.

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West): We should atleast know who has called it Dalit Bhavan.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I have already told you to read two month old edition of 'India Today' The head line was this is not Rail Bhavan but Dalit Bhavan. It is not that only you have said this. I also don't want to say that they have written

it with any ill feelings. They might have seen poor people coming here. Since we talk about poor people so I feel that it should be the policy of the Government and State Government to look after the interests concerning poor people. One of our friends have raised the question of reservation. I would like to assure you that as far as the question of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes including Backward and Minorities is concerned we have appointed 9 non-official members in each Board so that they can look after the interests these castes. Among them three members from backward castes and three from minorities. You can point out any mistake / loopholes if you come across in the country. We want that interests of all the castes are protected.

You will not find any person from the Tribal areas Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim etc. in R.P.F. and in any railway force. It doesn't mean that they are not efficient.

Here, the case is different they can not join R.P.F. due to short height. Our Gorkha Regiment is considered to be the best.....(Interruptions)

In the present times why should the question of height should be raised. I fail to understand what difference this would make when our technology is so advanced. If the recruit in the army are of high calibre and the army is good what else do we need..... (Interruptions)

SHRI SARAT MEHTA (Surendra Nagar) : The Chinese are short statured.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : That is what I am saying Bravery is not related to height, caste or religion. Exploit is all that is relevant.

I was saying that recently we had made changes in the rules. And I have also written to the R.P.F. to reconsider regarding the height of the people from the tribal areas. I think that we need to reconsider the provisions made for the tribal areas.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : For a correct decision in this regard, you should become the Defence Minister and Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav should become the Railway Minister.....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I have taken too much time. Several issues came up before us. Regarding the catering service, I have said at the outset that I am not satisfied with the present system. Because neither the Railway canteen nor the private contractors to whom this had been entrusted are working satisfactorily. Our colleague from Itarsi knows this. We took the sternest possible action. In spite of this I fail to see any improvement. We had even thought of entrusting this work to the canteen corporation, so that they would cater in a better way. But I have been informed that this proposal has been opposed by the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry. We would again take up this matter with them. Our view is that one independent Body should be set up.....(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Nothing has been done for Himachal Pradesh or Gujarat. What have you done in this regard? Tell us about this also.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am coming on the general topic. Similar is the issue of drinking water. I know that it seems to be a minor issue. But water causes a lot of diseases. Pure drinking water is not available at the railways station or at any place you go. Impure water causes diseases. Summer season is round the corner. What would be the situation if you do not get drinking water in summer? The person who provides drinking water, would again be appointed in sufficient numbers in the bogie. At present this is available only in A.C. two or three tiers. This would also be provided in the ordinary class. I would personally monitor this so that the pure water is provided at the railway stations.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have said several times and do not want to waste the time of the House. Regarding the South Eastern region. Which is a backward region, I have requested two or three things from the Government. I am asking the Government to enhance the budgetary support. Backward areas are a strain on the Railways. There are seven passenger trains in this region on which the revenue is only 60 percent, i.e., loss of Rs. 40 in Rs. 100. We suffer loss on the passenger trains. For this reason I am requesting the Prime Minister and the Government. I will be sending a note to the Cabinet also regarding the fact that similar facilities should be provided to the backward areas, as has been done for north-east. This would help us immensely to create a infrastructure for the railways.....(Interruptions) Please listen first.

Similarly, I want to move another appeal. As I had said earlier also that in the five years Rs. 30,000 were spent on the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. At times we get a return on this and at times we don't. But Railways is such on Institution that returns on investment can be had after five years. If the State Governments spend their money or funds from Jawahar Rozgar Yojana or from other schemes, on infrastructure then we would have to spend only one-third or one-fourth of the required amount and we can say a network of rail lines in the country therefore, I would request the State Governments to cooperate with us in this regard.

Regarding Konkan Railway, it is a matter of great concern to us. We had thought of starting the Konkan Railway by March. I had been to Goa on 2nd January and inspected the tunnel for two days. Our engineers are working very hard. A part of the tunnel remains to be completed. A part of it is in old Goa and the other in new Goa. The part in old Goa has been completed. And the remaining part is dangerous. Twice engineers have been called from abroad. But it collapses after being completed. We are fully confident to open it by June, before the Monsoon. In Goa, track has been opened one way. And we will strive to open the route both ways, till Goa. If the Konkan rail line is opened, it would be a big achievement.

I want to tell the Members that Railways works on a war footing. The 436 km. Mehsana-Ahmedabad railway line was

thrown open to traffic within two months. Work started on 15th December and on 15th February the 432 km. route was open after spending Rs. 236 crores. when we take up a project we scrutinise it, we have to purchase the land, negotiate with the State Government. At this stage we allot a small amount. In the second stage this amount is increased a little. In the last stage we take up the project irrespective of the amount. Therefore, now(Interruptions)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri) : You mentioned the Konkan Railways. But you did not speak regarding starting train services on this route from Dadar.....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to say that today we are discussing on vote on account in this House. As I told you, I have with me the suggestions given by the hon. Members of Parliament and the action taken in this regard but I will not tell all these things because at present it will be of no use, since you are not passing the budget. Keeping all these things.....(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) : You had told the Members of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh that when reply would be given to the budget then they will be informed.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You please listen to me.

You are not passing the budget now. Our entire budget will be sent to the Standing Committee, then the Standing Committee will discuss on it and then again the budget will come into the House. I know that whatever be the matter is, the Member of Parliament, Shri Ram Naik will find way out through cut motion for everything.

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai - North) : Yes, I will have cut motions for everything

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Then you people want to discuss on it again. We were sitting here upto 6. AM, but then I(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMESHCHENNITHALA (Kottayam) : You have neglected some States, please tell something about it(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : It is not possible.

[Translation]

You please let us listen.

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You please first listen to me(Interruptions) You please listen to me for a minute.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have with me all the State-wise projects and suggestions given by the Member of Parliament and there is no need to read it. Our friends from Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, Rajasthan or Uttar Pradesh, We have with us.(Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can give reply to all queries but if I give reply today then whether will I not be compelled to give reply again? Because, this is a vote on account. We are seeking your permission on this vote on account for two months. Hence, I leave it up to you. We will follow your directions.

Now, I put vote on account for the first two months of 1997-98, Supplementary demands for Grants for 1996-97 and additional Demands for Grants for 1995-96 for consideration of the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats.

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record.

....(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Paswan, you do not have to listen to them. Nothing is going on record. All the Cameras are off.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : Just listen to me(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Jena, please sit down.

15.34 hrs.

At this stage, Kumari Mamata Banerjee and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No, no. Shri Paswan, keep quiet. Do not say anything

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing is going on record.*

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Demands for Grants on Account (Railways) for 1997-98 to vote

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please go back to your seat

.....(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : You will have to expel me(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, you are expelled and you have to leave the House now

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is my order.

.....(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Yes, I would leave the House.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, you leave the House. Get out from here.

.....(Interruptions)

1537 hrs.

At this stage, Kumari Mamata Banerjee had thrown a shawl and left the House.

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : Sir, you name her.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : That is too much

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : What is this?

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : You name her, but you cannot say get out(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You run the House then.

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : You name her, but you cannot say get out.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : There is limit to it.

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : You name her(Interruptions)

* Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down now. Enough is enough.

.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Upendra, you do whatever you want to do. You run the House

.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : I am not running the House

.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Sir, you can name her but you cannot say get out(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : I may also have to tell you that

.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : You cannot say get out.(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHANDEV (Silchar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir let us take it in a very calm and cool manner.

MR. SPEAKER : Then you have to become the Speaker.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : No, Sir. I am not challenging your authority(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : I am not interested in running the House like this. What is this? There is a limit to it. We all are responsible people of this country. We are talking of parliamentary democracy. We say that this is the supreme body and what not and you do not even know as to how to behave yourselves

.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : What the 940 million people of this country are thinking of us? You all know as to what they think about us.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHANDEV : Sir, would you allow me for a minute?

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, you are allowed for three minutes.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, the background of this excitement is not to cast any aspersion on the Minister of Railways. He made an exercise and met the Member of Parliament from various States one by one and he was able to persuade them.....(*Interruptions*) some of them, and assured them of some schemes.

The general expectation was that today reply will come from the hon. Minister and Members will be able to tell their constituents about it. Anyhow, in your wisdom or in the wisdom of other Parties, we do not know as we were not

involved - it has been decided to send it to a Standing Committee without voting. We are not challenging it. We accept it. The Hon. Minister has now completed his speech without giving any decision that has been taken. As Chairman of the Standing Committee, we know that we cannot dictate as to what he should do. We can only analyze the Budget. We can only add or subtract something. Since the hon. Minister is showing a list, if possible, if he can spell out the things that he is considering - it will not be a commitment - I think it will console the whole House.

If there was anything wrong on the part of the Member from my Party, I beg unconditional apology. Knowing you fully well for the last few years, I do not think you can say, 'Get out' and it was out of excitement only. This also should not be there. I think you did not mean it this is my request to you.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : My Speaker, Sir, you don't get so much upset over this.

[*Translation*]

After the speech of the Railway Minister, Members are always given an opportunity to ask for clarifications and information. Whatever is asked will be clarified by the Minister and discussion continue. But this time it did not happen so, the Members are agitated. The time we have wasted in noisy affair. If during that time Member were given chance to say this point of view, then they will not have to repeat it. I agree with you. The something is repeated again and again. I did not speak on railway budget I want to speak now. I received a telephone call from Lucknow that the electrification work between Kanpur-Lucknow is going on for a long period. You did not raise it. Now, I raise it and ask if Electrification will be done or not?

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Please listen to me. As long as Members stand on their feet in their respective seats to raise certain matters - be it in 10, 15 or even in 100 number - I do not intervene. I have been patiently asking them to sit down. My only plea is that everyone will get a chance in case they stand one by one. How can a Member of Parliament rush to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and the Minister of Railways and argue with them? Is it the way the Members of Parliament should behave? Are we fit to be the Leaders? This is where I am angry.

I am trying to uphold the dignity of the Member of Parliament. I know very well that impression does the country have of the Members of Parliament. Every day I get hundreds of letters. That is why I am trying to say, let us behave in a decent manner. Members should stand on their feet one by one. I will allow everybody. I have been allowing everybody. You cannot expect me to allow you if you come in the well of the House. In that case, I have on choice either to tell the Member to go back to his seat or adjourn the House, which I refused to do. I do not think I am discharging my responsibility by adjourning the House. I will not adjourn the House easily. Therefore, my only plea is, you are leaders of

this country and you should behave like a leader. That is all my advice.

In this debate, 96 Member took part and 24 hours and one minute was spent on it. I was myself here till midnight. My friends in the Panel of Chairmen were here up to 5.30 in the morning. Why can't we be sincere like this? This is my only plea. Let us behave in a manner that people appreciate us.

That is all, I do not want anything else. If anybody wants to raise questions, all right. Mr Upendra, would you like to raise your point.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Yes.

MR. SPEAKER : You raise it

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Then we have to start the debate again.

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR : It is only for asking queries.

MR. SPEAKER : I know, but when I allow one query everybody will make a ten-minute speech again.

I have allowed you, Mr. Upendra.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was trying to draw your attention only to point out that this is the first time the reply of the Railway Minister did not contain any specifics. He indulged in general replies. It has always been the practice that after spending 24 hours, if some of the points he could concede, the Railway Minister always used to say, "All right, I am considering this; I will concede this; I will do this; I will do that". Nothing of that sort has been done. This time it has simply been thrown to the Standing Committee. We have been experimenting with the Standing Committees for the last four years. It never happened so far. Would the Standing Committee know that suggestions the Minister has received, what discussions he has held with various groups of Members? They do not know about it. They go by the Budget. They analyse the Budget. That is all I want to say.

The Minister can at least say, "I will write to the Members on what we are conceding." It could have gone to his credit if he had conceded on some point. That is what I wanted to point out.

MR. SPEAKER : Let me say something. I have been following the Railway Budget thoroughly. It was so nice of the Minister that when a Member asked a question, wherever it was possible for him to concede, during the debate itself the Minister has been conceding to the Members by saying, "Yes, I will do it; I will look into it". Therefore, you cannot blame the Minister. He has been doing his best. And I can tell you that no Railway Minister will ever be able to satisfy 545 Members of the House. That is not possible.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Yesterday, he called the Members from Andhra Pradesh and asked for views. We gave them in writing. He indicated that today, in the course of his reply, he would announce certain things. We had been eagerly waiting for his announcement. Now he talks of Standing Committee April, and May. Now what reply should we give to the people in the Constituency and the State?

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH : All the MPs from Madhya Pradesh had met the Railway Minister. They also met the Prime Minister - There was a matter regarding railway zone in Bilaspur and about Indore, Khate Dam, Urmi new railway line and also about a new railway line from Bhopal, Raisen, Gairatgunj, Begumgunj to Sagar. There was also a matter in regard to connecting the most backward area in the country, Baster with a railways line to Dandi, Rajhera and Jagdalpur. The Minister has told us that after given reply to the discussion, he will include these matters. 'If I fail, you can interrupt me and then I will reply' he has said but he has not even said a single word about this. I would like to ask the Minister as to what he is doing about the railway zone in Bilaspur and he had given assurances regarding some demands, which I don't want to repeat, I would like to ask him to clarify what is his outlook opinion in this regard.

[English]

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Mukundapuram) : Mr. Speaker, Sir as instructed by you we were all waiting in the House till 5.30 in the morning. You know that we were all cooperating to the maximum extent with the Railway Minister. I know for certain that the Railway Minister cannot satisfy all the 545 Member in the House. But there are very major omissions, discrepancies which have crept into this Budget, knowingly or unknowingly, that some States are grossly neglected. I am sure that the Railway Minister did not mean it nor did he want it. But the fact remains that some States, for example Kerala, have been grossly neglected. I am not speaking about the schemes. While Rs. 126 crore were provided last year, this year it was only one fourth of that. That if there is a proportionate cut in the allotment, we have to suffer it. But we could convince the Railway Minister that something happened wrongly to Kerala and many other States also, The hon. Minister was kind enough to consider that. We were just waiting to hear that major anomalies would be rectified. It is not done here today, when will it be done? We know the functioning of the Standing Committees. The Standing Committees are not empowered to go into these details. That is our worry. We should be given some solace. Otherwise, what is the purpose of having this kind of an exercise?

MR. SPEAKER : Kerala's position has been ventilated. Let us here Orissa now.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK (Bolangir) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we the Member of Parliament from Orissa have expressed our views regarding development projects and the backward districts of Orissa. One train is going from Delhi to Sambhalpur.

In the name of Orissa, the Minister has given one train but it is covering only two stations in Orissa.

But it covers only two stations in Orissa. We have five backward districts. We have requested him to extend the train up to Titlagarh. It will take only three hours. According to his speech, he is the champion of development of the backward people of India. The hon. Chief Minister of Orissa along with all the Members of Parliament from Orissa met the hon. Railway Minister and submitted a Memorandum to him regarding all the projects.

The people of our State are interested to know from the hon. Railway Minister something about the extension of this train to Titlagarh.

Sir, I request him to give a reply on this.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : Sir, I want to make a request to you. Kindly recall Kumari Mamta Banerjee to the House.

MR. SPEAKER : No question. Do not embarrass me.

SHRI SAT MAHAJAN (Kangra) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Railway Minister was kind enough to give us a categorical assurance when we met him twice, along with our Leader, Shri Sharad Pawar. We have told about his assurance to the people of Himachal Pradesh. We were waiting for that. Sir, last time also, he made a promise but unfortunately it could not materialise. But this time, we were expecting through you Sir, that whatever promise he had made before our leader, Shri Sharad Pawar will be carried out totally. He had assured us that he will do it. I hope he will do it. That is why he did not interfere in the debate.

[Translation]

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH (Bhind) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was sitting here upto 4 o'clock in the morning to speak. I had requested the Minister that last year Rs. 35 crores were given to Guna-Itawa railway line but this year only Rs. 13 crores have been provided whereas there is already a liability of Rs. 24 crores between Shivpuri and Guna. I had also requested that only Rs. 10 crores is needed to connect Gwalior and Bhind and even if you provide only Rs. 33 crores, as provided during the last year, then also railway line would be connected from Guna to Bhind. I had requested only this much but the hon. Minister has said nothing about it.

Secondly, Pitambara teerth is a major pilgrimage place in Datiya. Then Chambal Express has stoppages at small stations and it plies between Jhansi to Allahabad as a passenger train. If orders are issued to make its stoppage in Datiya, then it will be good. I had requested him these things but hon. Minister has not paid any attention.

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT (Agra) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will conclude my speech in very brief. My request is that Bandi Kui-Agra Gauge conversion work is pending for the last three years. Token money of one crore

rupees be provided for it. The Army is facing a lot of inconvenience in absence of this line. We have difficulty in sending the army to Jodhpur. Hence, army itself has requested to take it up soon. If Mr. Mulayam Singh will see record, then he will agree with me. but no work is taken up there at present.

Secondly, there is a matter concerning doubling of Tundla-Agra. Only one crore rupees has been provided for it. There is no mention about Mathura-Agra Gauge conversion in this budget, whereas it has been passed by the Planning Commission. Mr. Minister has said about introducing a new train between Agra-Kanpur. I would like to request the hon. Minister to extend it upto Lucknow but not Kanpur. Lucknow is the Capital of Uttar Pradesh. I hope he is listening to my request. Marudhar passes from Jodhpur to Varanasi via. Lucknow. Now it runs four days a week. My request is to run it daily. If it runs daily then the problem relating to delay in reaching Lucknow will be solved. In the end I would like to say something about the area of Defence Minister. The survey work of Agra-Itawa railway line be completed at the earliest.

SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA (Serumpore) : Sir, on behalf of the State of West Bengal, we had submitted a lot of proposals to the hon. Minister. Our expectation was that, at least, to some of the genuine cases he would positively respond.

Now, Sir, I have a positive suggestion to make to the hon. Minister. Through you, I would request the hon. Minister to say in this House that he would taken up all the issues with the Members of Parliament of different States so that we can be enlightened about the affairs of the Railways and as to which proposals have been accepted or rejected. Otherwise, we are in dark and we do not know exactly what is happening in the Railways.

I have another submission to you, Sir. A little while ago, out of excitement something had happened in this House and two of our colleague had to leave the House. May I request you to recall these two hon. Members who had to leave the House. It would be better if you allow them to attend the House, that is my humble submission before you.

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMANLAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, work on Udhampur railway line was started in 1983. Now it is 1997. This line was of only 52 kms but hon. Minister has said that he is going to connect Kashmir to Kanya Kumari through the trains. My request is that previously a corporation was set up for Konkan railway and the work had finished in record time. Similarly this work should also be completed in a record time.

My second point is that despite of the announcement made by the Rail Minister at several places outside the House for providing some relief, say half tickets in rail travels to the journalists, he has not said anything in this regard in

the House so far. I want him to apprise this House of the factual position in this regard.

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI (Jhansi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had urged the Rail Minister to double the Jhansi-Kanpur rail route and electrify the same. The second thing I have said that Lalitpur is an important station linking Madhya Pradesh to Uttar Pradesh, therefore here stoppage of Cochin-Gorakhpur, Gorakhpur-Cochin and Hyderabad-Cochin and Gorakhpur, Hyderabad trains should be provided. Earlier the Punjab Mail used to halt at *Talnet* but now it does not have the stoppage point there. Its stoppage should be restored there. To my delight the Minister has committed in the House for allocating Rs. 1.25 lakh for laying Satna-Lalitpur line. Now I request him to fix a date for taking up the work of the important line and closing it for rail services in Bundelkhand which is a backward region. If Lalitpur-Satna line starts, it would open the venues for development in that area. Therefore the Minister should make a prompt announcement in the House for its date of inauguration.

[English]

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR (Karol Bagh-Delhi) : Sir, I want to make a submission to you. A little while ago, there were some heated exchanges and now that the matter is over, I would request you to ask Mamataji to come back.

MR. SPEAKER : Please do not press for that. I know when to decide that.

SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR : It is a request, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI (Darbhanga) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I neither have to demand a rail line, nor any project from the Minister, as all that I wanted to say have already been said yesterday. My only point is that yesterday the Rail Minister had privately assured me, and made an announcement in the House that arrangements would be made for selling tickets in all the central universities through the computers. My submission is that the Rail Minister should announce in the House today that in all the university through out India, such as in Jawahar Lal Nehru University - Aligarh University, Banaras University and all other Universities and residential Universities computerised reservation facility would be provide subject to the condition that site should be provided by the Universities for the same.

16.00 hrs.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HUSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I feel afraid while saying in the House. The Minister himself has admitted to fact that resentment breeds in him when somebody says anything against him. We too receive scores and scores of letters seeking out explanation as to what we are doing here. It puts us in trouble. In the

Common Minimum Programme provisions have been made for backward region but not for backward districts. My district is still backward. Over these 17 years we have raised this issue 34 times. Question are raised here regarding the cutting of district, rail line etc. But so far nothing has been done there. Electrification was done on Lal Guda section but the lines from Katwa to Murshidabad were left. This electrification work started from Howra but the area from Latwar-Murshidabad were not covered. Then there is the third line which runs via Golpur and Satia. Many north Bengal bound trains emanating from Delhi cross the Farakka barrage but even then no stoppage has been provided at Farakka except for the stoppage of the Bhiwani Express but God know when that Bhiwani Express starts. Through you I want to request the Government to think of the development of Backward Districts along with the backward areas. Will we get any specific assurance from you in this regard.

SHRI BHUPENDRA SINGH HUDA (Rohtak) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, last time the Minister has stated in the reply that the proposal for Rohtak-Rewari line would be forwarded to the Planning Commission. It has been shown under survey whereas the survey has already been completed but we do not know about its latest position. On our request on Rohtak-Rewari line EMU was plied between Rohtak and Delhi. The EMU was plied there but in exchange two trains were cancelled and this way the very purpose has been defeated. That line has heavy traffic load. The trains cancelled should be restored there.

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bangalore city has a population of 50 lakh persons and we do not have any public transport. According to a survey we have got 7,90,000 vehicles now and by 2,000 A.D. we will be having 16,00,000 vehicles there. Therefore, the pollution will be 500 gras pollutants for each individual of 50 lakh persons. We have been time and again requesting for a Metro Rail Transport System for Bangalore city. I had met the hon. Prime Minister and the hon Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and requested for the Metro Rail Transport System. And for that, they had assured that they would be considering the matter and a survey would be conducted. But there has been no assurance in the reply of the hon. Railway Minister in this regard. Therefore, I am requesting the hon. Railway Minister, through you Sir, to assure us that he will conduct a survey for the Metro Rail Transport System and the Circular Rail and he will begin the work as soon as possible.

[Translation]

SHRI VISHWESHWAR BHAGAT (Balaghat) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I through you, want to invite the attention of the Minister to Bilaspur. It is a very sensitive issue. The Prime Minister and the Rail Minister had given an assurance in the House that they would make an announcement in this regard. Similarly the Delhi Rajhara-Jagdalpur line would

supply iron ore to Bhilai Steel Plant. Our Bhilai Plant would not get supply of iron ore if this line is not completed in time. Similarly the Vihramipur-Ambikapur line has been sanctioned by the Planning Commission. This would help in the movement of coal extracted from the collieries and prove beneficial for the railways. The work on Indore-Damoh-Makasi line is continuing on a tardy pace. Samata Express is plying between Vishakhapatnam and Hazrat Nizamuddin via Nagpur. It runs twice in a week whereas though it traverses Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. This is the only train there. I request the Minister to run the Samata Express daily.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Why do you not keep quite. This is in response to the request of Srikanta Jena and Shrimati Meira Kumar. The manual says this and I will read out from the manual :

"The Member who has been directed to withdraw from the House should express his or her regret to the Speaker before the latter can accord his permission to another member to make a request to the House to rescind the order of withdrawal."

So you have to first ascertain from her whether she is expressing regret or not. Then I will rescind my order.

[Translation]

DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR (Hapur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, right since the Tenth Lok Sabha I have been requesting that the Shatabdi Express and Kashi Vishwanath Express should be provided a stoppage point at Ghaziabad and telling you that people of Hapur had been demanding stoppage of Shaheed Express. It does not involve much money but the people there are faced with lot of inconvenience. No train comes from Muradabad, the number of trains emanating from Muradnagar should be increased. More than one Lakh people travel from Ghaziabad, therefore the number of EMUs should be increased there. The Rail Minister is talking of development but one provision has been made in this budget for doubling of Muradabad-Saharanpur route : The same is the case of lines between Ghaziabad and Gajrola.

Through you I want to make a request to the Railway Minister that a stoppage be provided to Shaheed Express at Hapur; at Babugarh, Nauchandi Express and at Ghaziabad Shatabdi Express and Kashi Vishwanath Express should be provided a halting point as compared to the previous sanctions, less amount was sanctioned this year for Muradabad Saharanpur line and Ghaziabad - Gajrola line. This amount should be increased.

SHRI PARAS RAM MEGHWAL (Jalaur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday night I had made request to the Minister for making arrangements for imparting education to the children of Railway class IV employees including the Gangmen etc. living in forest areas(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Now you are raising the new points. How it will go like this. This debate on the Budget will never end. Now adhere to the limit of half an hour.

SHRI ASHOK SHARMA (Rajanandgaon) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the last budget session I has attracted the attention of the Minister the Sarnath Express. He had given me an assurance the Sarnath Express plying between Durg and Chhapra would go enroute Dumgargarh. I alongwith several other Members had called upon him in this regard. I request the Minister to, he may cover this issue in this reply.

[English]

SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Sir when the hon. Minister of Railways was making a speech, he himself had mentioned that in regard to Surendra Nagar-Bipavave line, the second clearance had not been received and he would get it within a few days, I want to know whether that clearance has been given or not.

My second point is I have not asked for money. But the people are willing to give more money. The Dhangodhra-Kooda railway line has been promised to me. What is the position? That I want to know and nothing more.

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR : In Maharashtra also, we have got certain grievances. I want to place them before the hon. Minister, If only you allow me.

MR. SPEAKER : I know, but how long can we go on like this?

SHRI RAM NAIK : From Maharashtra, we have three or four Members.(Interruptions) There are only two issues relating to Maharashtra. One is about the formation of an autonomous corporation of Mumbai Suburban Railway.

The second request is this. All the Members from Mumbai have requested that the two trains of the Konkan Railway may start from Dadar which is a predominantly central area of Mumbai instead of from Kurla as they are doing now. All the passengers of the Konkan Railway are Konkarnites who stay in Mumbai. That is why the request is that the two trains may leave from Dadar.

[Translation]

KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Thank you. When a delegation of the Member from Orissa had called upon the Minister he had made two promises to us and said that he would make a mention of it in his reply. There is a provision of Rs.3 crores for Ruksa Banbarinesi Project, but he had made an announcement for sanctioning Rs. 2 crore separately. He had also stated that orders would be issued for its survey and extension. Similarly it was stated that Vadan Pahar would be linked to Tata Nagar. The Minister had agreed with 88 percent recommendation of that delegation and had assured us to make a mention of it in his reply in the House. But we could not attract the attention of the Minister, now I request you to include our demand in the Budget.

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Simla) : The five demands made by us included laying a line between Kalka and Parvanu. This year itself and the Minister had also agreed to lay it. The second demand was to conduct a survey for Kangra-Johinder Nagar line. The third was with regard to laying a line from Una to Talwara and a line between Bhanupalli and Bilaspur but the Minister did not make any mention of these in his reply. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we never entered the well of the House during these five years but this time we were compelled to enter it for which we beg your pardon.

[English]

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS (Jalpaiguri) : I come from North Bengal. I request the hon. Minister to treat North Bengal as a backward area in the field of Railway connection. We have some problems. Out of them I would like to mention only three to be solved.

One is, the Rajdhani Express from Delhi to Guwahati should run daily.

The second one is a special train, a fast one, may be started from North Bengal to Calcutta. The third problem is for promoting tourism the Himalayan Railway has to be improved.

These are the three problems I want to place before the hon. Minister for execution.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYADEO SINGH (Balrampur) : The borders of Uttar Pradesh are adjacent to the international borders of Nepal. It has major Buddhist centres also which are thronged by the foreign tourist and pilgrimages in the large number. There is a railway line from Gonda-Balrampur-Tulsipur to Navagarh-Gorakhpur and people are demanding the gauge conversion of this track from long time. I would also urge upon you to include it in your work plan. The survey work of Balrampur to Khalilabad via Autraula was carried out in 1977. I would like the hon. Minister to his views on these two projects. You should declare a clear cut policy on the gauge conversion and the railway level crossing. You should set up railway level crossing near Khaliabad. I would like the hon. Minister for Railways to express his views on these three points.

MR. SPEAKER : This way it will never end.

[English]

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA (Tezpur) Mr. Speaker, Sir, twelve percent hike in freight rates is going to impose a backbreaking burden on the people of the North-East because bulk of the consumption items, apart from food grains which are excluded from the like are imported from the Indian mainland. So, my suggestion is that there should be a cap on the hike of twelve per cent in freight rates. Instead

of twelve per cent on the entire distant. The increase should be restricted to a maximum kilometrage of 1200 kilometers or 1500 km. so far as to reduce the impact of the hike on remote areas. That should be the maximum hike in freight rates so that the people of the North-East are relieved of the burden of extra freight on huge quantities of goods going to the North-East. This is essential to provide some relief.

SHRI HARBHAJAN LAKHA (Phillaur) : Sir it is very important to have a railway link from Phagwara to Nawan Shahr, Balachaur, Ropar and Chandigarh. Only 27 km of railway line is left to be completed. Also, we would be saving at least 40 km. All the important cities, that is, Amritsar, Pathankot, Jammu and Ludhiana will be interlinked with Chandigarh via Ropar. As a Member of the Northern Railway Consultative Committee, have submitted this proposal to the hon. Minister of Railways, but he has not made any reference to this in his Budget speech. So, I am submitting this to him again, through you.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Sir the issues in respect of Kerala have already been agitated. So, I am not going into those issues. I would only raise a technical question. From the date of the presentation of the Railway Budget, many news items have been coming out in the newspapers that many delegations were approaching the hon. Minister of Railways and many assurances were given by him to those delegations. Even yesterday, a delegation from a chamber of commerce has approached him. I now raise a technical question. Only Parliament is the proper forum, this is the supreme body, where he can give those assurances. I would urge him to give his assurances to us here, on the floor of this House.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam) : Hon. Speaker Sir, through you I would like to request and remind the Railway Minister that he had promised to allocate funds for Kerala last time too, however nothing was spent out of the allocated funds. I would like to know as to why these funds were not utilised. The funds allocated this time in the budget are very less. All the Members have been requesting the Railway Minister to ensure the utilisation of funds for some developmental work. This time Kerala has been grossly ignored so therefore you should do something for it. The survey work of Kottayam to Pudurail line which is being demanded since 1993, has been completed and it was promised to incorporate it in the budget, however, this demand has not been met, you should give us assurance in your reply so that more and more developmental works could be undertaken in our state.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Hon. Speaker Sir, the Konkan rail project has been completed in the record time. Today the public is raising a very small demand that the train passing via Kurla should instead go via Dadar. Dadar is the main centre in Mumbai for taking transport to all directions, therefore the people want that the Konkan rail should go via Dadar instead of Kurla. If this popular demand is not met

then, the people will resort to agitation press for their demand. I would earnestly request the Railway Minister to make an announcement in this regard.

SHRI LAXMAN SINGH (Rajgarh) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister that the Rajdhani Express trains are available to all State capitals however, there is no Rajdhani Express Train from Bhopal to New Delhi in Madhya Pradesh which he had promised last time. Similarly Nagpur is the sub capital of Maharashtra. There is a train from here which runs thrice in a week. If this train runs for all seven days then, it will fulfil the demand both for Bhopal and Nagpur. My constituency Betul is also adjoining to Nagpur and this train will also provide transport facility from Betul to Nagpur. Therefore, Mahamaya Express should run for all seven days of week and this is my only demand.

[English]

SHRI M. SELVARASU (Nagapattinam) : Sir, I represent the State of Tamil Nadu. The other Member belonging to Tamil Nadu who participated in the Railway Budget expressed their own view. They have put many demands. I would like to point out to the hon. Minister of Railways that the State of Tamil Nadu has been neglected in general, and my constituency, in particular. Last year they had assured conversion of Trichy-Nagore line into broad gauge line. But in this year's Budget, there is no mention of Nagore. So, I request the hon. Minister of Railway to take up this work in my constituency, that is from Trichy-Nagore, immediately. This is my humble request.

SHRI T. GOVINDAN (Kasargoda) : Last year the hon. Minister of Railways assured that doubling of Shoranur-Mangalore line would be completed by the year, 2000. But in this year's Budget, no amount has been provided for that purpose. All other new lines which were assured last year have been rejected. We are totally disappointed. The Railway Board and the Administration is running hopelessly. My humble suggestion is that Railway Board and Administration should be dissolved and in their place, Regional Boards and Administration should be set up.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, people have to travel unnecessarily for 375 km. to reach Mumbai and Calcutta. Therefore I request the hon. Railways Minister that Agra and Pandikui have been excluded from the BOLT scheme. I demanded Rs. 150/- crores. I had demanded Rs. 100 crore yesterday for this purpose but you have just given Rs. 1 crore. This is a very petty amount. When the train to Haridwar will be introduced from Jaipur. 'When the zonal office which you are mentioning will be opened? Hon. P/ me Minister had inaugurated it however it has not yet been opened. I think that the train does not stop at Durgapur. If a halt is provided at Durgapur, it will provide relief to the local people. I would request you to make arrangements for reaching Haridwar from Jaipur.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : They are repeating the same demands. What can I do?

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The same thing is being repeated.

[Translation]

SHRI MANVENDRA SHAH (Tihari-Garhwal) : Karnal has NDRI and I.C.R.I. centres. Some of students and Professors of North East come there. But no superfast train stops there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The same thing is being repeated you want to have first round of debate, second round of debate and third round of debate. I cannot help it.

[Translation]

SHRI MANVENDRA SHAH : It does not have any financial implications. The meter guage line has not yet been converted into the broad guage. I would urge upon you to provide a two minute halt of Superfast train there.

SHRI LAXMAN SINGH (Rajgarh) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, devastating rail accident occurred four days back and a train accident had also taken place at Guna four days back. In a collision between bus and train 20 people got killed and 30 people were injured. Those who were killed were largely dalits. You were in Bhopal that day. But you did not reach the spot. It would have been better if you should there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I do not know how to run the House. Why don't you yourself decide as to how the House should be run.

[Translation]

SHRI LAXMAN SINGH : I would like to know as to whether you are extending any assistance to the family members of those, killed in the accident.....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I am not able to run the House. I am very sorry. You have to find another man to run it.

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry. I have no ability to do this job.

.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Somewhere we should stop it.

.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Whosoever want to speak can speak now. I am prepared to sit here.

.....(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would request the Minister to allocate money for the matter I raised in my speech
.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Go on speaking as long as you wish. I am ready to wait.

.....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR (Mangalore) : Sir, I have a question to ask about the policy. During the construction work, if there is a necessity to construct a road over-bridge or an under-bridge or in the case of construction of a level crossing, it is the policy of the Railways that the cost will be borne by the State Government or the local bodies including the recurring cost.(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : That is enough

.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR : May I know whether the Railways will take a decision that the cost would be borne by them?(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : All right. You have made your point

.....(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we were sitting in the House yesterday, Shri Kalpanath Rai was also present. I was intervening in between and at times. I was warned by the Chair but I had said at that time as many as 96 Members have spoken and each Member is giving 5 to 6 suggestions. If I as the Railway Minister give reply to them, it will take at least 15 days or a month. I was trying, this is a part of the record if I had given you assurance at that time then, it is not so that it was not part of the record at that time and the assurances. I am going now are also the part of the record. Therefore, I had asked at that time not to send the budget to the Standing Committee and let me give full reply to each Member which would satisfy all the Members. But I was told that the committee had objected for not sending the budget to it last

time. I think this objection is justified. When an Act has been passed then it should go to it. This time you are sending it to the Standing Committee. This is our proposal. Let us see whether the House approved it or not and what the Standing Committee does with it. Therefore, I had asked at that time that let me give the final reply the same day only and I had asked for time. We can sit together and think over it. I have with me the views expressed by the Hon'ble Members. I shall give the reply statewise. We should know that we are seeking the approval of the House on the vote on account for two months. We should be allowed to spend and we shall discuss when the full budget is presented. If the discussion is to be carried out later on then we should be given full time. I have received your suggestion and Hon. Speaker, Sir, I through you assure all the Member that they shall receive the written replies to their suggestion made till 21st April before the Parliament session starts on 21st April. If still there are some problems then you could raise them when the budget is presented. We shall give replies to them at that time.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Demands for Grants on Account (Railways) for 1997-98 to vote.

The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, on account, for or towards defraying the charges during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1998, in respect of the head of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 1 to 16."

The motion was adopted

*Demand for Grants on Account (Railways)
for 1997-98 submitted to the Vote of the Lok Sabha*

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grants on Account submitted to the Vote of the House
1	2	3
(Rs.)		
1.	Railway Board	6,00,76,000
2.	Miscellaneous Expenditure (General)	28,23,30,000
3.	General Superintendence and Services of Railways	201,62,50,000
4.	Repairs & Maintenance of Permanent Way & Works	392,87,93,000
5.	Repairs & Maintenance of Motive Power	222,81,85,000

1	2	3
6.	Repairs & Maintenance of Carriage and Wagons	405,15,66,000
7.	Repairs & Maintenance of Plant and Equipment	209,22,22,000
8.	Operating Expenses-Rolling Stock Equipment	319,90,98,000
9.	Operating Expenses-Traffic	1324,39,10,000
10.	Operating Expenses-Fuel	744,69,11,000
11.	Staff Welfare & Amenities	147,21,59,000
12.	Miscellaneous Working Expenses	182,75,71,000
13.	Provident Fund, Pension and other retirement benefits	418,84,00,000
14.	Appropriation to Funds	1177,66,67,000
15.	Divident to General Revenues, Repayment of Loans taken from General Revenues and Amortization of Over-Capitalization	4,28,11,000
16.	Assets-Acquisition, Construction and Replacement	
	Revenue	7,50,00,000
	<u>Other Expenditure</u>	
	Capital	1608,67,21,000
	Railway Funds	682,59,67,000
	Total	8084,46,37,000

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) for 1994-95 to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the consolidated Fund of India to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1995, in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 8, 14 and 16.

The motion was adopted.

Demand for excess Grants - (Railways) for 1994-95 submitted to the Vote of the Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grants submitted to the Vote of the House
		(Rs.)
8.	Operating Expenses-Rolling Stock & Equipment	1,57,81,798
14.	Appropriation to Funds	366,39,46,659
16.	Assets-Acquisition Construction and Replacement	
	<u>Other Expenditure</u>	
	Capital	23,53,27,736
	Total	391,50,56,193

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1996-97 to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That the respective supplementary sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1997, in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 1 to 4, 6 to 8, 11, 13, and 16".

The motion was adopted.

Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1996-97 submitted to the Vote of the Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grants on Account submitted to the Vote of the House
1	2	3
		(Rs.)
1.	Railway Board	1,16,300,000
2.	Miscellaneous Expenditure (General)	3,45,39,000
3.	General Superintendence and Services on Railways	22,61,44,000
4.	Repairs & Maintenance of Permanent Way & Works	56,35,56,000